

# MUMC At-Home Worship: June 27, 2021

*If available, place a candle in the center of your gathering space and light it with this prayer:*

## Opening Prayer

Holy God, our guide and guardian: you have led us away from the busy world into the quiet of your presence. Grant that our time in this space might comfort our souls as it renews our spirits, that we may worship you in word and deed all the days of our lives. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.

## Hymn *Blest Be the Tie That Binds* United Methodist Hymnal #557

Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;  
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne we pour our ardent prayers;  
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares.

We share each other's woes, our mutual burdens bear;  
and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part, it gives us inward pain;  
but we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet again.

*"Blest Be the Tie That Binds" words by John Fawcett, 1782; music by Johann G. Nägeli; arr. by Lowell Mason, 1845; and both are in the public domain.*

## Scripture Lesson John 15: 12-17 (CEB)

This is my commandment: love each other just as I have loved you. No one has greater love than to give up one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I don't call you servants any longer, because servants don't know what their master is doing. Instead, I call you friends, because everything I heard from my Father I have made known to you. You didn't choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you could go and produce fruit and so that your fruit could last. As a result, whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give you. I give you these commandments so that you can love each other.

The word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

## Reflect:

1. Who in your life has been a good friend to you? What qualities does that person have that has made them such a good friend? Picture that friend in your mind and say a prayer of thanks for that friend. Repeat this with as many friends as you would like.
2. What are the unique ways that people befriend one another? (Some friends offer help when needed; some offer the gift of laughter, some friends listen well, etc.) In what other unique ways do friendships show themselves?
3. The scripture passage from the Gospel of John shows us that Jesus chose to be in close relationships with those around him. Jesus calls us friends, too, and asks us to befriend others, saying, "Love one another as I have loved you." How does this change our understanding of what it means to befriend others? What does Christ-like love for one another entail?

**Hymn** *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* United Methodist Hymnal #526

What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!  
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!  
O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear,  
all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer!

Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged; take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?  
Precious Savior, still our refuge; take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer!  
In his arms he'll take and shield thee; thou wilt find a solace there.

*"What a Friend We Have in Jesus" words by Joseph M. Scriven, ca.1855; music by Charles C. Converse, 1868; and both are in the public domain.*

**Prayer Requests:** Share prayer requests and have a moment of silent prayer.

**Lord's Prayer**

**Hymn**   *Help Us Accept Each Other*   United Methodist Hymnal #560

Help us accept each other as Christ accepted us;  
teach us as sister, brother, each person to embrace.  
Be present, Lord, among us and bring us to believe:  
we are ourselves accepted and meant to love and live.

Teach us, O Lord, your lessons, as in our daily life  
we struggle to be human and search for hope and faith.  
Teach us to care for people, for all, not just for some,  
to love them as we find them, or as they may become.

Let your acceptance change us so that we may be moved  
in living situations to do the truth in love;  
to practice your acceptance, until we know by heart  
the table of forgiveness and laughter's healing art.

Lord, for today's encounters with all who are in need,  
who hunger for acceptance, for righteousness and for bread,  
we need new eyes for seeing, new hands for holding on;  
renew us with your Spirit; Lord, free us, make us one!

*"Help Us Accept Each Other" words by Fred Kaan, 1974, and music by John Ness Beck, 1977. Words © 1975 Hope Publishing Co.; music © 1977 Hope Publishing Co.*

**Closing Prayer:** Holy God, bless us as we go from this place that we might be witnesses to your gospel and messengers of your love. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.

*(Blow out the candle)*