

MUMC At-Home Worship: June 6, 2021

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

Leader: What is the sound that calls us? Listen carefully.

Response: The beating of our own hearts calls us to ourselves. It calls us to be our true selves, our best selves. Calls us to be what we might become.

Leader: The breath of our neighbor calls us outside ourselves. It calls us to be companions, allies, partners.

Response: Let us heed the call of our own hearts, where love and truth, compassion and justice are born.

Leader: Let us heed the call of others, to gather together for some great purpose, where passion and fidelity, truth and equality are nourished.

Response: The silence calls us together that we may do the work we cannot do alone.

All: Let us heed the calls that come in the silence, that we may be well, and do good in this world together. Amen.

Hymn *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* United Methodist Hymnal #384

Love divine, all loves excelling, joy of heaven, to earth come down;
Fix in us thy humble dwelling; All thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love thou art;
Visit us with thy salvation; enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit into every troubled breast!
Let us all in thee inherit; let us find that second rest.
Take away our bent to sinning; Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its beginning, set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty to deliver, let us all thy life receive;
Suddenly return and never, nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy hosts above,
Pray and praise thee without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.

Finish, then thy new creation, pure spotless let us be.
Let us see thy great salvation perfectly restored in thee;
Changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before thee, lost in wonder, love and praise.

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling” words by Charles Wesley, 1747; music by John Zundel, 1870; and both are in the public domain.

Scripture Lesson

Prayer: Matthew 6: 5-14 (NIV)

⁵“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ⁶But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you

need before you ask him. ⁹“This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, ¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us today our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into temptation,^[a] but deliver us from the evil one.^[b] ¹⁴ For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Appeal for Steadfastness and Unity: Philippians 4: 4-9 (NIV)

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

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

Children’s message

Good morning! Today, I’m focusing on what it feels like to feel God’s presence. Let me begin by asking you to think about a time when you did something good for someone who didn’t expect it. Maybe you did a chore that your brother or sister was supposed to do or shared a toy that you really didn’t want to share, or maybe stood up for someone who others were ridiculing or maybe gave an unexpected gift that you know someone needed. Think about how you felt. When I’ve done something like that, especially when it was unexpected, I felt good, maybe even a feeling of peace, knowing I did the right thing.

Let me share a story. A young boy, Tommy, was moping around the house on a cold wintery day, being crabby and out of sorts. His mother asked him what was wrong. He really couldn’t say just that he felt bored and upset. His mother thought for a second then suggested he do something about it. (Not an unusual thing for a parent to say.) But she added something to it. She suggested he find someone who needed something to make them feel happier and secretly do something for them. Intrigued by the thought of doing it secretly, he gazed out the window to think of who that might be or what he might do. About that time, he noticed old Mrs. Evans trodding out to get her mail in her raggedy old slippers. She was known to be somewhat of a grump, rarely spoke to others and others mostly ignored her. But this time, Tommy noticed her slippers and then had a thought, maybe she would appreciate some new ones. He went to his mother and asked if she would take him to the local department store to do some shopping. With his mother’s help but using money he’d saved, he bought a pair of new slippers. He took them home and wrapped them up as a present. That evening after dark, he walked over to her house and placed the present on her porch next to her front door. The next morning, he watched as she opened the door to go get her mail and saw the package. A few minutes later, she stepped out to get her mail in her new slippers. Tommy was happy and proud of himself. He really wanted to tell his friends what he did, but his mother reminded him to keep it a secret and see how that felt. He did and the feeling lasted as did the desire to do it again.

Can you see how doing something good for someone else can lift their spirits and how keeping it a secret can lift yours? It is what Jesus was describing when he said to not

announce your good deeds to everyone but keep them to yourself. That good feeling you feel is your connection to God.

Prayer: Thank you God for being with us today. We will work hard to keep your loving presence in our lives and to share it with others, to glorify you not ourselves. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Reflect:

1. What does it mean to you to pray? What role does it play in your life? Are there specific prayers that hold meaning to you?
2. When you read the Lord's prayer, how might you change it to capture the meaning but in your own words?
3. What happens when you take time to listen after you pray? How might you connect meaningfully with God during those moments?

Hymn: *Spirit of the Living God* United Methodist Hymnal #393

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

"Spirit of the Living God" words and music by Daniel Iverson, 1926. © 1935, 1963, Moody Bible Institute.

Prayer Requests: Share prayer requests and have a moment of silent prayer
Lord's Prayer

Wear Orange Message

This weekend is designated as Wear Orange weekend as an observation about the impact of gun violence on our society. The significance of wearing orange goes back to the murder of Hadiyah Pendleton, a high school student, who one week after performing in President Obama's second Inauguration as a part of her high school band was shot and killed by a stray bullet. She was a victim of gun violence – as were her family, friends, classmates and everyone living in her neighborhood. Their lives were changed. Hers was ended. Her favorite color was orange, so her friends began this observation on the first weekend in June to honor her and to keep this issue in front of us.

Personally, I have had 15 people in my life, family, friends, students, and colleagues whose lives have ended due to gun violence. Suicide, murder/suicide related to domestic violence have been the causes. In the last week a good friend of mine shared that there was a drive-by shooting a couple blocks from his daughter's house in Kalamazoo along the route her children would take to go to school. She knew the victim's family.

I've spoken about prayer today. And as I noted, prayer is not a substitute for action. 'Thoughts and prayers' is a phrase that is nice to hear but unless we have the courage to act it is just words. It is time for us all to notice the pain and loss that comes from gun violence and how unnecessary it is. It is time for us to set aside our fears and act to replace the loss, the hurt, the rage that comes to all the victims of gun violence and listen to how we can make a difference. Amen. ~ Nic Cooper

Hymn: *They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love* Faith We Sing #2223

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored;
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love;
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,
We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,
And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land;
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love;
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

We will work with each other, we will work side by side,
We will work with each other, we will work side by side
And we'll guard human dignity and save human pride;
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love;
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

All praise to the Father, from whom all things come,
And all praise to Christ Jesus, God's only Son,
And all praise to the Spirit, who makes us one.
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love;
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

*"They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love" words and music by Peter Scholtes
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Benediction:

I'm going to use the words of Lord Wallace, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland as our benediction today:

May the exuberant Spirit of God, bursting with the brightness of flame into the coldness of our lives warm us with a passion for justice and beauty. May the exuberant Spirit of God, sweeping us out of the dusty corners of our apathy breathe vitality into our struggles for change. May the exuberant Spirit of God, speaking words that leap over barriers of mistrust convey messages of truth and new understanding. May the exuberant Spirit of God, flame, wind, speech; burn, breathe, speak in us, filling our world with justice and joy. Amen

(Blow out the candle)