

## MUMC At-Home Worship: July 18, 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 *O God, Our Help in Ages Past* United Methodist Hymnal #117

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,  
our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home!

Under the shadow of thy throne, still may we dwell secure;  
sufficient is thine arm alone, and our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood, or earth received her frame,  
from everlasting, thou art God, to endless years the same.

A thousand ages, in thy sight, are like an evening gone;  
short as the watch that ends the night, before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever rolling stream, bears all who breathe away;  
they fly forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come;  
be thou our guide while life shall last, and our eternal home.

*“O God, Our Help in Ages Past” Words by Isaac Watts, 1719; music attr. to William Croft, 1708; harm. by W. H. Monk, 1861. All are in the public domain.*

### Scripture Lesson

#### **2 Samuel 11:26-12:15a (CEB)**

When Uriah’s wife heard that her husband Uriah was dead, she mourned for her husband. After the time of mourning was over, David sent for her and brought her back to his house. She became his wife and bore him a son. But what David had done was evil in the Lord’s eyes.

So the Lord sent Nathan to David. When Nathan arrived he said, “There were two men in the same city, one rich, one poor. The rich man had a lot of sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing—just one small ewe lamb that he had bought. He raised that lamb, and it grew up with him and his children. It would eat from his food and drink

from his cup—even sleep in his arms! It was like a daughter to him. “Now a traveler came to visit the rich man, but he wasn’t willing to take anything from his own flock or herd to prepare for the guest who had arrived. Instead, he took the poor man’s ewe lamb and prepared it for the visitor.”

David got very angry at the man, and he said to Nathan, “As surely as the Lord lives, the one who did this is demonic! He must restore the ewe lamb seven times over because he did this and because he had no compassion.” “You are that man!” Nathan told David. “This is what the Lord God of Israel says: I anointed you king over Israel and delivered you from Saul’s power. I gave your master’s house to you, and gave his wives into your embrace. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah. If that was too little, I would have given even more. Why have you despised the Lord’s word by doing what is evil in his eyes? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and taken his wife as your own. You used the Ammonites to kill him. Because of that, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite as your own, the sword will never leave your own house.

“This is what the Lord says: I am making trouble come against you from inside your own family. Before your very eyes I will take your wives away and give them to your friend, and he will have sex with your wives in broad daylight. You did what you did secretly, but I will do what I am doing before all Israel in the light of day.” “I’ve sinned against the Lord!” David said to Nathan. “The Lord has removed your sin,” Nathan replied to David. “You won’t die. However, because you have utterly disrespected the Lord by doing this, the son born to you will definitely die.” Then Nathan went home. The Lord struck the child that Uriah’s wife had borne for David, and he became very sick.

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

### **Reflect:**

1. This scripture builds on the earlier story of David and Bathsheba, found in 2 Samuel 11:1-5. Read this earlier passage and consider what it reveals about David’s character at this point in his life. What is he like? Why might he do what he has done?
2. The prophet Nathan chooses to begin with a story rather than simply condemn David’s sin. Why might this have been the more effective technique? What might it say about us that we so often see the sins of others quicker than admitting to our own?
3. Troublingly, Nathan predicts the death of David’s son because of David’s sin, a reminder that forgiveness does not absolve us from the harmful effect our sin has on others. What might we learn from this reminder? Are there any ways you might wish to challenge the implications of this outcome?

**Hymn** *Change My Heart, O God* The Faith We Sing #2152

Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.  
Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.  
You are the Potter, I am the clay.  
Mold me and make me, this is what I pray.  
Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.  
Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.

*"Change My Heart, O God" words and music by Eddie Espinosa. © 1982  
Mercy/Vineyard Publishing*

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

**Lord's Prayer**

**Hymn** *I Surrender All* United Methodist Hymnal #354

All to Jesus I surrender; all to him I freely give;  
I will ever love and trust him, in his presence daily live.

Refrain

I surrender all, I surrender all; all to thee, my blessed Savior, I surrender all.

All to Jesus I surrender; humbly at his feet I bow,  
worldly pleasures all forsaken; take me, Jesus, take me now. (Refrain)

All to Jesus I surrender; make me, Savior, wholly thine;  
let me feel the Holy Spirit, truly know that thou art mine. (Refrain)

All to Jesus I surrender; Lord, I give myself to thee;  
fill me with thy love and power; let thy blessing fall on me. (Refrain)

All to Jesus I surrender; now I feel the sacred flame.  
O the joy of full salvation! Glory, glory to his name! (Refrain)

*"I Surrender All" words by J. W. Van Deventer, 1896; music by W. S. Weeden, 1896;  
both are in the public domain.*

**Closing Prayer:** Holy God, open our eyes to the sin we would rather not see that we might seek both forgiveness and reconciliation. In our service as your disciples, may we seek both to live in holiness and to heal a world split apart at our hands. In the name of Christ, who forgives, we pray. Amen.

*(Blow out the candle)*