

MUMC At-Home Worship: August 1, 2021

Dear friends, it has been a tremendous joy to worship with you using the at-home guides all throughout these last months! With the transition back to in-person worship, we have seen the desire for at-home worship guides decrease and have made the decision not to offer new at-home guides after August 22. If you plan to continue worshipping from home, I encourage you to reuse old at-home guides, which we would be happy to send to you or can be found on our website! We will also discontinue use of the Sermon-By-Phone line at the same time. Sermons can still be watched on our website and heard on our podcast, and I can assist you in accessing either. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Now ... let's worship! ~ Pastor Dillon

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 *Leaning on the Everlasting Arms* United Methodist Hymnal #133

What a fellowship, what a joy divine, leaning on the everlasting arms;
what a blessedness, what a peace is mine, leaning on the everlasting arms.

Refrain

Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms;
leaning, leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.

O how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way, leaning on the everlasting arms;
O how bright the path grows from day to day, leaning on the everlasting arms.
[Refrain]

What have I to dread, what have I to fear, leaning on the everlasting arms?
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near, leaning on the everlasting arms.
[Refrain]

"Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" Words by Elisha A. Hoffman, 1887; music by Anthony J. Showalter, 1887; and both are in the public domain.

Scripture Lesson

Mark 2:1-12 (CEB)

After a few days, Jesus went back to Capernaum, and people heard that he was at home. So many gathered that there was no longer space, not even near the door. Jesus was speaking the word to them. Some people arrived, and four of them were bringing to him a man who was paralyzed. They couldn't carry him through the crowd, so they tore off part of the roof above where Jesus was. When they had made an opening, they lowered the mat on which the paralyzed man was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Child, your sins are forgiven!"

Some legal experts were sitting there, muttering among themselves, "Why does he speak this way? He's insulting God. Only the one God can forgive sins."

Jesus immediately recognized what they were discussing, and he said to them, "Why do you fill your minds with these questions? Which is easier—to say to a paralyzed person, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take up your bed, and walk'? But so you will know that the Human One has authority on the earth to forgive sins"—he said to the man who was paralyzed, "Get up, take your mat, and go home."

Jesus raised him up, and right away he picked up his mat and walked out in front of everybody. They were all amazed and praised God, saying, "We've never seen anything like this!"

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

Reflect:

1. This scripture is familiar to many, often taught in Sunday School and Bible study settings. Reading the story again, what would stand out to you if you had never heard it before? What might make this story so compelling?
2. There are two things standing in the way of this paralyzed man's healing and forgiveness: the physical barrier of the roof and the spoken disagreement from the scribes. What might be some physical barriers that stand in the way of people finding Jesus today? What spoken words might be standing in the way of people finding Jesus today?
3. The four friends, while nameless, are the instigators of this whole story. What might it look like to be this sort of a friend to those in our lives? Have you ever considered the act of friendship to be "holy" work?

Hymn *Freely, Freely* United Methodist Hymnal #389

God forgave my sin in Jesus' name, I've been born again in Jesus' name,
and in Jesus' name I come to you, to share his love as he told me to.

Refrain

He said "Freely, freely you have received, freely, freely give.
Go in my name, and because you believe, others will know that I live."

All power is given in Jesus' name, in earth and heaven in Jesus' name,
and in Jesus' name I come to you. to share his power as he told me to.
[Refrain]

"Freely, Freely" words and music by Carol Owens, 1972. © 1972 Communiqué Music, Inc.

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

Lord's Prayer

Hymn *God of Grace and God of Glory* United Methodist Hymnal #577

God of grace and God of glory, on thy people pour thy power;
crown thine ancient church's story; bring her bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.

Lo! the hosts of evil round us scorn thy Christ, assail his ways!
Fears and doubts too long have bound us; free our hearts to work and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of these days,
for the living of these days.

Cure thy children's warring madness, bend our pride to thy control;
shame our wanton, selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, lest we miss thy kingdom's goal,
lest we miss thy kingdom's goal.

Save us from weak resignation to the evils we deplore;
let the search for thy salvation be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, serving thee whom we adore,
serving thee whom we adore.

"God of Grace and God of Glory" words by Harry Emerson Fosdick, 1930; music by John Hughes, 1907. Words by permission of Elinor Fosdick Downs.

Closing Prayer: Almighty God, pull the roof off your church and break down any barrier that stands in the way of all people knowing your loving grace. We commit ourselves to the holy work of friendship, guiding your beloved children home to your presence. In the name of Christ, who welcomes all, we pray. Amen.

(Blow out the candle)