

WATCHUNG AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GUIDE TO WORSHIP
FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST / COMMUNION

July 5, 2020

10:00 AM

"It is not that Jesus invites us to a life of ease. Following him will be full of risks and challenges, as he has made abundantly clear. He calls us to a life of humble service, but it is a life of freedom and joy instead of slavery."
~ *Elisabeth Johnson*

GODS PEOPLE GATHER

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GREETING

Jesus says: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." We have come together in the name of Jesus Christ to worship the God who loves us and sing with the Spirit who fills us. It is good that we are here. It is good that we are here by Christ's invitation. For his yoke is easy and his burden is light.

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive/responder)

Leader: Jesus says: "Come to me, all who are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

People: Let any who are feeling at odds with life, come, and find reconciliation.

Leader: Let any who are sad, come, and find comfort for your aching hearts.

People: Let any who feel worn and weary, come, and find rest for your souls.

Leader: Let any who are afraid, come, and find faith and renewed courage.

People: Let any who feel ashamed, come, and find unadulterated forgiveness.

Leader: Let any who feel unwanted, come, and find hospitality that is divine.

People: Let all who are feeling happy, come and have your happiness blessed.

Leader: Let all who wish to renew their vows, come and trust the Spirit of truth and joy.

People: Let all who love the Lord come, and let your lover overflow in praise.

OPENING PRAYER (one voice/una voz)

Let us pray: Holy Friend, bless us as we come, ready or unready, strong in faith or weak. Without you our worship is nothing and we are nothing. With your blessing we are the heirs to the wealth of your love and our worship is larger than words and songs can ever express. Holy Friend, bless us again, that this hour may openly celebrate that glory which, though veiled, will be present throughout all the busyness of this new week. Through Christ Jesus our Lord. *Amen!*

OPENING HYMN

#65, Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

THE PREPARATION

CALL TO CONFESSION

Remember that our Lord Jesus can sympathize with us in our weaknesses, since in every respect he was tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with boldness approach the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor. Please join me as we pray, saying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (together/juntos)

Holy One You breathed in us the breath of life, and yet we confess we do not always acknowledge Your presence. We get caught up in the ways of the world and are concerned only for ourselves. We put our wants above the needs of others. We put our desires above the needs of the church. We put our ways above Your ways. Forgive us, O God, when we have turned away from You, from a brother or sister in need, or from the church, our family. Call us back to the path of right-living, so that we might walk in Your ways. Turn us away from the control of sin, and let us be filled with Your love, so that it might guide our path. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS (responsive/responder)

Leader: Jesus calls us to forgive, and when we forgive others, we are forgiven ourselves.

People: When we love others, we feel God's love in us. We are renewed and restored for the journey of faith. Amen.

GLORIA PATRI

#582, Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me

THE HEARING / PROCLAMATION

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Romans 7: 15-25

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks Be to God.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Matthew 11: 16-19, 25-30

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord

People: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

HOMILY

"Come to Me"

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

THE RESPONDING

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *APOSTLE CREED* (together/juntos)

Let us confess our faith as we say:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE / PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER (together/juntos)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sinned against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

OFFERING MESSAGE

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (together/ juntos)

O God, we thank you for your great generosity. All that we are and all that we have is a gift from you. Help us to serve one another and so reflect your spirit and goodness. Accept these offerings and grant that the cause to which they are devoted may prosper under your guidance. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S SUPPER

A GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices, with choirs of angels, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever say to the glory of your name:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

DISTRIBUTION of BREAD and DISTRIBUTION of CUP

PRAYER AFTER SUPPER

Remembering all your mighty and merciful acts, we take this bread and this wine from the gifts you have given us, and celebrate with joy the redemption won for us in Jesus Christ. Accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving as a living and holy offering of ourselves, that our lives may proclaim the one crucified and risen.

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died,

Christ is risen,

Christ will come again.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (together/juntos)

Gracious God, you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth. You have fed us with the bread of life, and renewed us for your service. Help us who have shared Christ's body and received this cup, to be faithful disciples so that our daily living may be part of the life of your kingdom, and our love be your love reaching out into the life of the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

#182, I Heard the Voice Jesus Say

BENEDICTION (responsive/responder)

Leader: Sisters and brothers of Jesus, I do not have a clue as to the personal hard decisions, heavy responsibilities, or heartaches that some of you might face. But one thing I do know, which is forever certain: You will not have to face any trial on your own. God will be with there with you all the way. This I can promise you.

People: **We go in peace to love and serve the Lord, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

POSTLUDE

***There will be a zoom chat immediately following worship service.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ❖ **NOTICE:** Today's worship service will be pre-recorded and available on line. For details and to sign in, go to our website home page, **www.wapc.net**. Also visit our YouTube Channel.
- ❖ **FELLOWSHIP ON LINE:** Join us for a **zoom chat "coffee hour"** immediately following worship.
- ❖ **TODAY COMMUNION IS ONLINE:** Communion is held the first Sunday of every month. Please have your bread and drink ready to participate.
- ❖ **REMINDER: SESSION MEETING** is scheduled for Tuesday, July 14th at 7pm. Location to be determined.
- ❖ **CHURCH RE-OPENING INFORMATION:** With the stay at home restrictions lifted for church's, **WAPC will return to the sanctuary on Sunday, July 12th.**

The following health precautions will be used:

- wearing masks will be mandatory and one will be provided if not brought to worship;
 - 6 feet social distancing in the pews; no hand shaking for passing of the peace
 - hand sanitizer to be provided if supplies available
 - opened windows for better air flow
 - No socializing inside after worship; leave the building immediately and meet and greet outside
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- ❖ **Any time is a good time to use AMAZON SMILE!!** www.smile.amazon.com. Remember, when making purchases on line with Amazon, use this website address & **choose WAPC as your charity.** Amazon will donate .5% of your eligible purchase price to the church. Every little bit helps!
 - ❖ **USHER'S SCHEDULE:** will resume with worship on July 12th as follows:
July 12: Susan Durick
July 19: Susan Durick
July 26: Al Smith
 - ❖ **SEEKERS THURSDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY:** has begun meeting again at member's homes. For more information, contact the church office.
 - ❖ **OFFICE HOURS:** There will be no regular office hours. Our office administrator is working from home and only coming into the office when necessary. Messages left on the voicemail will be answered as soon as possible. *Thank you*

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Lay Reader: The passage in Romans, Paul tell us to live consistently in God's ways—not giving into the way of sin, but recognizing the saving power of Christ to transform our lives. Paul says we must turn away from that kind of hypocrisy in our own lives. Sin can control our actions, causing us to do the very things we hate, when we give into the passions of the world, as Paul describes it. But when we allow Christ into our life, Christ frees us from the sin that controls us, for we follow Christ's way, not our own way and not the way of the world.

ROMANS 7:15-25 NRSV

¹⁵I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. ¹⁹For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. ²⁰Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

²¹So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. ²²For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, ²³but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with my mind I am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh I am a slave to the law of sin.

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks Be to God

Matthew 11 speaks of the problem of religious hypocrisy, perhaps the number one problem that Jesus had with the Pharisees and other religious leaders. The leaders rejected John the Baptist and now Jesus but for different reasons. John lived a strict life, neither drinking nor eating beyond locusts and wild honey and the leaders claimed he must be possessed for living such a strict diet. Jesus came, eating and drinking with all, and was called a glutton and a drunkard.

In Jesus' prayer in Matthew 11:25-28, Jesus thanks God that it is not the wise and intelligent who understand—not the great scholars and religious leaders who kept the religious order—but the “infants,” the people who were in need, the people who were made to be outcasts and called unclean and were unfit to be part of the religious pure life—they are the ones who understand, who hear the message of Christ, who are embraced by God. Time and again, Jesus turns the tables on the ones in power, revealing that God desires to bring in the outcast and lift up the poor, and that those who think they are on the inside are often the ones who do not understand at all.

MATTHEW 11: 16-19, 25-30

¹⁶“But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another, ¹⁷‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.’ ¹⁸For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; ¹⁹the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”

²⁵At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; ²⁶yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. ²⁸“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord

People: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Come to Me – Matt. 11:16-19, 25-30

Let us pray: Let the sword of the spirit, the Word of God, live abundantly in our mouth and in our hearts; listen to what God is saying to us in the name of the Lord. Amen.

Finding rest and contentment in uncertain times by following the invitation of Jesus to "Come to me, all you that are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." What a sweet, sweet sentence. It is like a soothing balm to our tired ears.

When we look at the first part of our text today, we see Jesus talking to the people about living in a world of uncertainty, living a life of restlessness without peace and surety.

"But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another, we played the flute and you didn't dance; we played a funeral march and you didn't weep and cry."

¹⁸For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' John Lived out in the wilderness, he dressed funny, he ate some strange foods and he preached a hard message of repentance. He said things to the religious folks of the day like:

"You brood of Vipers, you snakes, who warned you to flee from the wrath that is coming"
"The axe is already laid at the root of the trees; those that don't bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

Some folks did not like John the Baptist or his message. Then Jesus came along, and he hung out with sinners, tax collectors, prostitutes, and many other undesirables. But he preached a message of:

Love and forgiveness. He healed the sick. Made the blind see. The lame walk and loved everyone. Guess what? Some people did not like Jesus and his message either. I am sad to say that we are no different today, we act like spoiled little children who are never happy. We are never happy with anything it seems.

Church folks are uncertain of what they want, as a matter of fact sometimes it seems that church folk are the most discontented people in the world. They complain about the preacher. Maybe they want a perfect pastor. What would a perfect pastor be to some church folks. Let us see.

The Perfect Pastor would preach exactly 10 minutes. He condemns sin but rarely mentions sin, so he never hurts anyone's feelings. He works from 8 a.m. until midnight, and is also the church janitor.

The Perfect Pastor makes \$40 a week, wears good clothes, drives a good car, buys good books, and donates \$30 a week to the church. He is 29 years old but amazingly has 40 years' worth of experience. Above all, he is good looking.

The Perfect Pastor has a burning desire to work with teenagers, and he spends most of his time with the senior citizens. He smiles all the time with a straight face because he has a sense of humor that keeps him seriously dedicated to his church. He makes 15 home visits a day and is always in his office to be handy when needed.

The Perfect Pastor always has time for church meetings and all its committees, never missing the meeting of any church organization. And he is always busy evangelizing the unchurched. The Perfect Pastor is always in the next town over!

The list goes on and on, and yet we are a discontented and uncertain people and the sad truth is nothing has changed in over 2000 years. The problem with the perfect pastor is that everything he does is not enough for some. Jesus was perfect in every way and yet it was not enough.

What is wrong with us? We are stressed out and tired over all kinds of things going on in our lives. But when you are invested in love, as Jesus was, the burdens of ministry is not nearly as heavy. Whether large or small, we all have difficulties to tackle in our lives.

Martin Luther King, Jr, once famously said, "I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear." The burdens of love, even when they are costly and painful, are not nearly as heavy as hate.

The problem is our churches have too many Martha's and not enough Mary's, do you remember what Jesus said (Luke 10:41-42) "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only one thing is necessary. Mary chose to listen. We are stressed and worried and uncertain and the truth is we do not have to be!

I think some of our problem is that we have truly lost sight of the main thing. We have lost our childlike curiosity and faith, Jesus condemned those cities where he performed many miracles then in verse 25 Jesus says "I praise you Father that you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants.

As Paul told the Corinthian Christians, it is important to transition from the milk of infants to meatier substances. But at the same time, in another sense we can--no, we must--be born anew and become as little children.

I think this verse alludes us to the fact that to understand better and be more content we must get rooted and grounded in a childlike faith. We must also remember to keep the Sabbath day holy by getting rest.

If you are stressed or struggling with illness or overwhelmed by work, you cannot hear "I will give you rest", and you will not feel comforted in some way. We call this verse of scripture "The Comfortable Words." There is something so comforting in this promise of rest. Rest is what is on our minds these days. We rest in summer more than any other season.

We rest when we do things we like to do, like reading a good book, or sitting in the park. It just feels great to get a break sometimes, to feel the re-creative Holy Spirit helping us to be sustained, refreshed, connected, rested. Rest is necessary for life.

But Sabbath rest is different from other types of rest. It is not a vacation. Whenever the Sabbath is mentioned in scripture, it is referred to as a responsibility, not an indulgence.

Now, to those who say Sabbath is the only day of the week you have to yourself, I would respond, "Everything you do during the week is ultimately for yourself." To those who say it cuts into family time, I would argue church has the potential of becoming an extended family capable of more support than you can imagine.

And on the other hand, there are people who claim that church is too boring, or they can worship God just as well watching an evangelist on TV, so they decide to stay home on Sunday morning. Because of the covid-19, we have resorted to listening to worship service via videos and other media resources. Which was great, but there is nothing like gathering together in church.

To those who claim they can worship God on their own, I say, "You're right, but what are you learning? How are you living into the community of God's kingdom?" And to those who ask, "What am I getting out of it?" I ask in return, "What are you putting into it?"

The fact of the matter is that the message of Jesus -- feed the hungry, clothe the naked, heal the sick, welcome the outcast, raise up the lowly -- doesn't appeal to the vast majority of people in our society today. Worship seems to not appeal to a lot of people, nor does working for the kingdom.

What apparently does appeal to the majority of people is being told that their wealth is a blessing from God and it's yours to keep. But it would behoove us to remember that "all things come of thee, O Lord, and of thine own have we given thee." How much of our wealth are we returning to God in thanks for giving it to us in the first place?

Jesus is speaking to us today because he lived, day in, day out, with the responsibility of keeping the Sabbath. He was raised to be a good Jew, to follow the laws and practices of his religion and to always remember to keep the Sabbath.

He had an intimate knowledge of the importance of resting and keeping that one day sacred and holy. But Jesus' understanding of what was sacred and holy was different from what he had been taught to believe.

Jesus saw holiness in prostitutes and tax collectors. Jesus saw sacredness in meals, in sitting in the homes of friends and talking and drinking and eating, spending time with people who were weak and poor and vulnerable.

They were not considered to be worthy and Godly - but Jesus loved them, he did not care what anyone else thought. And if you love someone that is not lovable, chances are, people are going to talk. People were gossiping about Jesus.

They complained that he was a drunkard and a glutton, that his friend John the Baptist was demon-possessed. Talk about being misunderstood. Jesus just wanted to lift up the things of this world that he saw were holy and good.

Jesus was not seen by his critics as a productive leader, because he did not strive to create an empire. He traveled around with a tiny band of friends, sharing meals, and telling stories about God and healing people.

This practice of ministry was not one that built a great congregation or great results. From the outside, it sure looked like Jesus was spending a lot of time eating and drinking and socializing and wasting time.

From the outside, it might have looked like God was not doing anything great through Jesus at all. I do not think it is wrong to expect great things from God. But we often do not see what God sees. We often miss the bigger picture.

We too fall into believing the myth that productivity reigns, that we should always be growing and getting better, that the measure of our lives will be in how we worked hard and made a good living.

The world tells us that we are what we make, but our faith tells us otherwise. We must learn, over and over again, that the worthiness of our lives is not bound up in what we produce. And, considering our Gospel lesson, what is the ministry Jesus calls you to yoke yourself to? Where is Jesus calling you to join him to do something loving in the world?

The only way to find what your heart is truly longing for is to answer the invitation that Jesus gives, "Come to Me." Nothing and I mean nothing can give you what you need except a relationship with Jesus Christ.

We are all children of a loving, gentle God who invites us to fruitful work in the world. The work is not easy, but his yoke of love is easy. Our burdens feel enormous at times, but his burden is light. And in him, you will find rest for your souls. "Come to me," Jesus invites, come, my beloved. Amen.

Let us pray: Dear Lord Jesus, - we are thankful that when we stumble - under the load of life's burdens, you are there to pick us up, and to help us on the way. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer for Matt. 11:16-19, 25-30

Lord - we come unto you - and we lift up our burdens to you - our worry - our anxiety - our fear - our tiredness - our pain - and we ask that you remove them from us, and put in their place your burden and your yoke.

You have called your church to live in peace and promised to be with us to the end of the age: Lead us to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Blessed Trinity, One God. Lord hear our prayer.

Your majesty is praised from all creation: Let the leaders of our nation and all in authority throughout the world live in the grace of Jesus, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit. Lord hear our prayer.

The whole creation is yours, O God, earth and sky and waters, trees and plants, birds and animals of all kinds: Bless everything that lives and protect your people everywhere, that all may enjoy the fruits of the earth, and be free from hunger, oppression and injustice. Lord hear our prayer.

You have led us into a good community where neighbors attend to one another and honor your creation with mutual care and accountability: Let us hear the call of wisdom and understanding, that we may live creatively as caring stewards of all you have made. Lord hear our prayer.

You have made humankind in your divine image; hear our prayers for healing and wholeness on behalf of those for whom we intercede, especially ____.

Accept our gratefulness for your goodness and blessing toward us, especially for all the joys in our lives.

Receive into your heavenly sabbath rest those who have died, especially ____.

Help us to learn from you, to rejoice in you, and to serve you. That we may find the rest you have promised. Make us your captives so that we might be truly free. Lord, hear our prayer...

Father - we come to you to this day not only for ourselves - but for others. For those who do not know your peace - for those who have not yet found any rest - for those who struggle with those things we have brought to you.

We ask your healing to be upon those who are sick --- your strength to be with those who are tired -- your wisdom and your love to be with those who live with despair and fear. Lord hear our prayer for those we lift before you now.... BIDDING PRAYER.... Lord, hear our prayer...

Finally, O Lord, we pray for your blessing to be upon this congregation and upon this church so that your presence to be seen vividly in what we and our brothers and sisters in Christ do each day.

We pray that your joy and your love will flow freely in us and through us as we take up your yoke and follow where you lead us. We ask all these things and we thank you and we adore you, in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior. And now let us sing the song Jesus Christ taught us, Our Father.....

PRAYER LIST

Healing, comforting, and/or supportive prayers for:

- *Jeremy Goodman, Amanda Lake's son, Tyler Goodman's uncle, recovering from injuries in a car accident.*
- *Harriet Stambaugh's brother, Tommy Estefan, recovering from sepsis.*
- *Pastor Madelynne Lindsey, recovering well from recent medical procedures.*
- *Valerie Reid's great nieces, Elizabeth & Grace, who were born early and are hospitalized.*
- *Marilyn Cortright, recovering at home and continued prayers for her husband, Tim Cortright.*
- *Amanda Lake for health concerns.*
- *Jim Roselli's sister, Joanne, currently in a Kansas City hospital.*
- *Susan Sendelsky & her sister, Kerry, members of Pastor Lindsey's former church family, Oak Tree Presbyterian, both fighting cancer.*
- *Jane Windbush, Pastor's sister & Stephanie Weaver, Pastor's niece, who both suffer from Rheumatoid Arthritis.*
- *Jackie Slattery & Sean Slattery, daughter & grandson of Estelle Kennedy during a difficult time.*
- *Gail Schmeisser, continuing to be challenged with mobility issues.*

Continued prayers for those people at home or in continued care:

- *Grace Landsperger, Margaret Herman-Angely, and Estelle and Betsi Kennedy at home.*
- *Bob Montieth, improving daily at his residence, Green Knoll Center in Bridgewater.*
- *Gail McKenna, at 2225 Kirkland Village Circle, Bethlehem, PA 18017.*

Prayers of support and thanksgiving for:

- *Maxwell Amado, born June 18th, 9 lbs. 2 oz., 21"; Andy and Ellen Lake's new grandson, Justin and Katrina's new son, and Ben's new little brother. All are happy and doing well!*
- *Jim Roselli*