

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany
February 7, 2021

(If you are home read the prayers and scripture readings and recite the Creed aloud, even if you are by yourself, in order to hear with the ears each one. Sing or read the final hymn aloud. If you are worshipping in person, please follow along silently.)

Prepare for worship: Sit in silence or with soft music for a few moments

Call to Worship:

Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus

Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face,
and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace.

From *The United Methodist Hymnal* Copyright 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House, 349.

Centering Words:

How can we keep silent if we truly know the awesome power, mercy, and love of God.

From *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2020*. Copyright 2019 by Abingdon Press, Used by permission, 30.

Prayer of the Day:

With all our heart, we take refuge in God most high, who created all things, the merciful Father, Source of all goodness. With all our heart, we take refuge in Christ, the Redeemer from sin, who restores our true nature, the perfect and mysterious Word. With all our heart, we take refuge in the One who embraces the universe, who at all times and in all places responds to our needs, the pure and tranquil Holy Spirit. This we pray in the name of the One who taught us to pray:

From *The United Methodist Book of Worship*. Copyright 1992 The United Methodist Publishing House, 457.

The Lord's Prayer:

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass 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.

Affirmation of Faith: Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick 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.

Prayer of Illumination:

Open our ears that we may hear and our hearts and minds that we may receive your word O Lord our rock and redeemer.

(After each reading take two to three minutes to reflect upon the meaning of the passage to you today.)

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 40: 21-31
Psalm 147

New Testament Reading 1 Corinthians 9: 16- 23

Special Music

Gospel Reading Mark 1: 29-39

Sermon *Jesus' Mission; Our Mission*

Hymn:

We've a Story to Tell to the Nations

1. We've a story to tell to the nations,
that shall turn their hearts to the right,
a story of truth and mercy,
a story of peace and light,
a story of peace and light.

Refrain

For the darkness shall turn to dawning,
and the dawning to noonday bright;
and Christ's great kingdom shall come on earth,
the kingdom of love and light.

2. We've a song to be sung to the nations,
that shall lift their hearts to the Lord,
a song that shall conquer evil
and shatter the spear and sword,
and shatter the spear and sword.

Refrain

3. We've a message to give to the nations,
that the Lord who reigneth above
hath sent us his Son to save us,
and show us that God is love,
and show us that God is love.

Refrain

4. We've a Savior to show to the nations,
who the path of sorrow hath trod,
that all of the world's great peoples
might come to the truth of God,
might come to the truth of God.

Refrain

From *The United Methodist Hymnal* Copyright 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House, 569.

Benediction:

Our mission is Christ’s mission; to heal brokenness and restore all creation to God’s glory. Let us go forth with this being the mission of our lives. Amen.

Response:

God Be with You till We Meet Again
God be with you till we meet again;
by his counsels guide, uphold you,
with his sheep securely fold you;
God be with you till we meet again.

From *The United Methodist Hymnal*, Copyright 1989, The United Methodist Publishing House, 673.

Leading in Worship Today

Pastor: *John D. Jordan* AV Assistant: *K. C. Warble*
Choir Director: *Christopher A. McCroskey*
Church Musician

“AS MEMBERS OF THIS CONGREGATION, WE WILL FAITHFULLY PARTICIPATE IN ITS MINISTRIES BY OUR PRAYERS...”

Pam Hook Oren Edwards Patsy Shuler John Ballentine Steve Aiello
Jimmy Grahl Steve White Esther Carter Latson Lewis George Taylor

Shut-Ins: Shirley Butler; Carolyn Hardee; Francis & Gillett Hipp; June Hutto; Georgeann Pace; Shirley Padgett; Jean Raynor; Claudia Sineath; Wayne Tallon; Irvin Wells

Family and Friends: *Dave Burrell (Business Associate of Tommy Gleaton); Gary Becton (friend of Mark Branham); Audrey Cassidy (sister-in-law of Mary Louise Robinson); Jerry Fowler (friend of Chris Derrick); Donna Walker (coworker of Jack Stevens); Gil Merrick (friend of Laurie Knapp); Kelly Knapp (wife of Laurie Knapp’s nephew); Paul Kidney (son-in-law of Charles & Jackie McNeill); Ruby Pennington (friend of Laurie Knapp); Sara Krisnow (niece of Marty Johnson); Rick Baldwin (nephew of Tommy Johnson); Judy Bauer (cousin of Marty Johnson); Iris Turlington (aunt of John Zeigler); Billy & Betty Jean Newton (brother and sister-in-law of Mary Kamoroff); Jimmy Brooks (Brother-in-law of Boots Morgan); Tonya Spires (friend of the Derricks); J. B. & Stephanie Martindale (cousins of Christopher McCroskey); Linda Hargett (stepmom of Christopher McCroskey); Ollie Shelly (friend of the Derricks); Brenlee Carnes; Danielle Spotts (co-worker of Kathy White); Vickie Edwards (neighbor of Kathy White); Greg Ammer, George Duke, Debbie Ranck, Vicki Beatty, Connie Mason, Brenda Grier (friends of Lynn Martin); Erma Ruff, David Price & Family, Mark Leonhart, Ty Moore, Julie Stroud, Fran Huck, George Dorn (friends of Kay Jordan); Teddy Derrick (uncle of Arvan Derrick); Haidee Baehr (friends of Ruth Frady); Dianne Schmotzer (sister-in-law of Gale Frady); Dan Connor, Denise Paul (cousin of Gale Frady); Billy Johnson, Max Johnson (friends of Gale Frady); Ray Culbreth’s Group House; Nellie Gantt (mother of friend of Ray Culbreth); Amelia Zinski (great-niece of Linda Maloch); Wayne Blair (son of Dot Johnson); Xavier Crane (grandnephew of John Ballentine); Janet Beck (friend of Jo Ann Heiting); Vera Von Glahn (sister-in-law of Jo Ann Heiting); Michael Carter (son of Esther Carter); Adam Lavender (son of Phil Lavender)*

OUR PRESENCE ...

In-Person Attendance 01/31 Worship: 22

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 01/31 \$ 3,900.00

OUR SERVICE ...

OUR WITNESS.”



Ministers
Pastor
Resident Bishop
District Superintendent

The Congregation
John D. Jordan
Jonathan Holston
Rev. Dr. Cathy Jamieson

Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Our vision is to Connect, Nurture, Inspire and Transform



And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message...

MARK 1:39, NRSV

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Jesus' Mission; Our Mission

2/7/2021

Mark 1: 29-39

This passage marks the beginning of Jesus' mission and ministry in Galilee. He is beginning to move from his home base in Capernaum and go throughout Galilee. He has had success in Capernaum and has called the first disciples: Simon, Andrew, James and John. People have recognized his authority to cast out demons and the authority in his teaching. He is now ready to go out into all of Galilee to carry out the mission to which he has been appointed.

What is this mission to which Jesus has been appointed? Mark presents the full mission of Jesus in this brief episode of healing Simon's mother-in-law. On the surface it appears that Jesus' mission is to heal and teach, but this episode goes beyond healing and teaching.

After leaving the synagogue, Jesus and the disciples go to Simon and Andrew's house. Simon's mother-in-law, who we may assume is the matriarch of the household, is in bed with a fever. Jesus goes to her, takes her by the hand, lifts her up and the fever leaves her. She is healed of her fever. She gets up and begins to serve them.

I know the fact that this woman who has been sick with a fever has to get up and serve guests, possibly uninvited guests, may offend our modern sensibilities. We would tend to think that since this woman has been sick, they should be serving her not her serving them. This is a case of us inserting our modern values into ancient culture. When we do that, we tend to miss the full impact of the story to the ancient audience and for us.

Hospitality was a central feature of life in ancient Palestine. There were no restaurants, so you couldn't take the visiting rabbi to Grecian Gardens after synagogue. You would take him to your home. The matriarch of the household would take the role of hostess and serve the guests the meal. She may not be expected to prepare the meal but she would be expected to serve the meal. For the matriarch not to do so would be very shameful. I could imagine the gossip mill the next day.

"Did you hear that Jesus, that wonderful young rabbi who taught with such authority and cast out that demon, went to Simon and Andrew's house for dinner after synagogue?"

"Yes, and I heard that Simon's mother-in-law didn't even get out of bed to serve him, she claimed she had a fever."

"Oh, the shame to let a little thing like a fever keep you from serving such an important person. If it were me, I would have crawled out of bed on my hands and knees to serve that nice young rabbi."

For Simon's mother-in-law it would have been very shameful not to be able to serve her guests. Her status in the community would have been greatly damaged. People's respect for her would have been diminished.

Jesus went beyond simply healing Simon's mother-in-law physically, he restored her. He not only took away the fever, he took away that which was keeping her from being able to fulfill her obligations. He took away that which would have caused shame and dishonor. He made her whole and enabled her to be able to meet her social obligations. His healing was physical, removing the fever; emotional, removing potential shame; and social, enabling her to meet her obligations. Jesus' healing was more than just removing the fever. He restored Simon's mother-in-law to wholeness so she could fulfill her mission for the day, serving her guests.

Jesus' mission was to restore wholeness. He was to restore wholeness to the people around him and to the society in which he lived. He was to restore wholeness by healing physical ills, emotional ills and social ills. He was to restore wholeness in all creation, in the world in which he lived then and the world in which we live now.

He restores wholeness by removing physical barriers that keep us from participating in his mission. This may not necessarily involve curing us from physical infirmities, but enabling us not to let our infirmities keep us from fulfilling our mission for God. My nephew, who was paralyzed from the chest down, will probably never be able to walk. But this has not kept him from doing what God has enabled him to do in spite of his infirmity. He is an inspiration for many.

He restores wholeness by removing emotional barriers that keep us from participating in his mission. He removes shame, guilt, anger, hostility, arrogance, prejudice, uncertainty, doubt and all other emotional states that maintains brokenness within ourselves and our relationship with God and others.

He restores wholeness by healing social ills. He removes the barriers of oppression and injustice which keep people “in their place”. He enables people to be wholly who they are so they can fulfill their part in God’s purpose to restore creation.

This is our mission also. Our mission as Christians is to bring healing and wholeness to the world. We are to be participants with Jesus in the restoration of creation.

We are to bring physical healing to others. I know we all think of doctors, nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, and other medical types when we talk about physical healing, but everyone of us can help bring about physical healing to someone. We may not be able to lift someone out of bed and cure them of a fever, but we may lift the spirits of someone who is sick by sending them a card, making a call, or a visit. We may bring healing by bringing food to a family who has a member going through treatment. I know when Kay was going through her cancer treatment there was nothing better or more healing than coming home from work and finding a meal ready to eat that someone brought that day. Most of all we can participate in the physical healing by praying for one who is sick. We may not be able to do the healing but God can.

We are to bring emotional healing to others. I know we may all think of psychologist, psychiatrist, social workers and counsellors when we think about emotional healing. We can all help to bring about emotional healing simply by being with someone who is hurting, providing a listening ear, not giving advice, but simply listening. Good therapists spend much more time listening than they do talking. We can bring emotional healing by breaking the stigma of getting mental health treatment. Again, we can pray for the emotional healing of others and ourselves.

We are to bring healing to our society. We can heal the brokenness in our society by first of all listening to understand. Listening to the others to hear and try to understand what it is like for them in our society. How many stories have we heard about white people and black people changing their perceptions of each other simply because they listened to understand each other? The same principle holds true for any race but also for the LGBTQ community, the immigrant, the poor person, the homeless or any other person who is different from us. When we listen to understand, we begin the process of bringing healing to our society. We can begin to bring down the wall that separates. And we can pray for the healing of our society.

Jesus healed Simon’s mother-in-law, truly healed her. He did not just cool her fever, he restored her to fulfill her mission for that day, to serve the meal. Jesus’ mission was to bring healing, restoring wholeness to creation. That began with Jesus, but it did not end with his death. It continued with his resurrection as God’s plan to restore creation was not halted by worldly powers. God’s healing and restoration of creation continues today. We are to participate in God’s plan to heal and restore creation by working as we can for the healing and restoration of creation. Jesus’ mission to heal and restore wholeness to creation is our mission.

Notice that Jesus did not get up and leave Capernaum immediately to fulfill his mission. He went out to a deserted place, a lonely place, to pray. He went out by himself to a place where there were no distractions, no disturbances, to talk to the Father. He went to a place where he could hear and discern the specifics of the Father’s mission for him. Then he went out to the towns and villages throughout Galilee.

We may wonder how we are to fulfill our mission of healing and restoration. Jesus gives us the example. We pray. We get alone, by ourselves with no distractions, each day to listen to our orders. It may be something within ourselves that keeps us from fulfilling the mission God has for us. We need to turn that over to God. It may be some relationship that needs mending. If at all possible, mend it or let it go. But most of all, we need to listen to what God is calling each of us to do so the mission of healing and restoration that started with Jesus may be completed.