



First United Methodist Church of Hanford

*Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.*



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## Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup> 2020

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

### **Opening Affirmation**

We gather our voices and spirits in praise.

**O God, quiet our souls so we may listen.**

We seek within our heart Your call on our lives.

**O God, quiet our minds so we may ponder Your words.**

We long to join together in person;  
However, we know You are with all of us now.

**O God, unite us together as one in worship of You.**

**Hymn: "Shine, Jesus, shine"**

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BkxoTmKpDcU>

Lord, the light of your love is shining,  
In the midst of the darkness, shining;  
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us;  
Set us free by the truth you now bring us,  
Shine on me, shine on me.

*Chorus:- Shine, Jesus, shine,  
Fill this land with the Father's glory;  
Blaze, Spirit, blaze,  
Set our hearts on fire.  
Flow, river, flow,*

*Flood the nations with grace and mercy;  
Send forth your word,  
Lord, and let there be light!*

Lord, I come to your awesome presence,  
From the shadows into your radiance;  
By the blood I may enter your brightness,  
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness.  
Shine on me, shine on me.

*Chorus*

As we gaze on your kingly brightness  
So our faces display your likeness.  
Ever changing from glory to glory,  
Mirrored here may our lives tell your story.  
Shine on me, shine on me.

*Chorus*

### **Let us pray together**

Lord you have created a world full of people  
A universe full of planets and stars  
You sent us your Son Jesus  
To show us how to live in our world  
May we have the grace to follow Him.  
**Amen**

Loving God, we are sorry when we have wandered far from you. When we have not listened to your voice and listened instead to other voices –the voices of greed, and selfishness. You have offered us abundance of life, but we have settled for so much less.

Forgive us

### **Assurance of pardon**

In Jesus we have been forgiven. So let us live as one who is forgiven, in the name of Christ. **Amen.**

### **Today's Gospel Reading:**

#### **Matthew 18:21-35**

**Time to Reflect** – think about *unlimited forgiveness*, - *how easy is it to forgive*, - *can we move on from the hurt we feel*

In our gospel reading Peter wanted to know what he must do about forgiveness. We may find the word 'sorry', is easily said, often used and sometimes it is not really meant. Peter thought he was being very generous by saying that a person should forgive 7 times. The number seven was thought to be the perfect number. Jesus answers Peter that this is not enough, and even seventy times seven would not be enough. Seventy times seven at that time was thought to be an infinite number.

What Jesus is guiding Peter and us to understand is about forgiveness that it is not a worldly thing, but something that is at the heart of His teaching. Jesus told Peter the parable of the King and his unmerciful servants to illustrate that his followers should be willing to forgive and the consequences if they do not. In parts of the world they find it is difficult for people to forgive because their honour is at stake. When someone is hurt, they

want to hurt back. They want revenge for what has happened, but that is an endless route.

Revenge or retaliation is the way of the world and Jesus shows us that forgiveness starts from God. By accepting His forgiveness, we are transformed in His likeness so that we too should offer forgiveness to others in the same way.

To forgive someone when you have been hurt, or had your life affected is not easy. During this time of lock down, people will have been hurt, disappointed, and maybe angered by neighbours or people taking more food than they need. We need to let go of those feelings and embrace God's love. It is said that when a victim forgives, it stops the bitterness hardening their heart and ruining their life, that by forgiving, a person is changed from being the victim into a survivor. The generosity of what the victim has done may touch the life of the offender, to the extent that in some cases; the act of forgiveness, has changed their ways and in some cases made them friends. Some people have been surprised by their neighbour's help during the lock down, neighbours they have never spoken to.

God asks us to let go, and to lay all our burdens at His feet, this includes the hurt and suffering that we have received. By forgiving we are showing others God's love.

### **Take a time to sit quietly**

### **A time of prayer**

**God, give me a voice.** God of all that is, you have given me eyes to see, and the pain is so great that I cannot bear it. I see

children whose sense of self-worth is stolen from them before they are even old enough to go to school. I see young men labeled as “criminal” whose crime is the color of their skin. You have given me ears to hear. and the cries of your children tear at my heart.

I hear victims being blamed for the crimes that have been committed against them. I hear the gunshots and the screams of the mothers.

You have given me a sense of smell, and I am overcome by the odor of fear. Fear of scarcity; fear that my wealth is dependent upon someone else’s poverty. Fear of the unknown; fear that makes it easier to embrace nostalgia than to risk change. And yet, O God, you have also given me the gift of wonder. You have given me eyes to see the beauty of a young artist’s mural. You have given me ears to hear the soaring strains of music lifted in praise to you. You have given me the smell of bread being broken as you feed us with your body. And so I pray to you, O God, give me a voice. Give me a voice to declare the dignity of all your people. Give me a voice to demand justice where today there is no justice. Give me a voice to quell the fear and to declare the truth and the depth of your love. Lord, give me a voice that I may declare your praise. Amen.

*Sr Abbot Elizabeth Moore, O.S.L*

### **The Lord’s Prayer**

*Our Father .....*

**Hymn: Listen to “Sent out in Jesus’ Name”**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFukG02ABOI>

Sent out in Jesus’ name,  
our hands are ready now

to make the earth the place  
in which the kingdom comes.

The angels cannot change  
a world of hurt and pain  
into a world of love,  
of justice and of peace.  
The task is ours to do,  
to set it really free.  
O help us to obey  
and carry out your will.

### **A prayer of blessing**

May the love of the Lord rest upon your soul

May his love dwell in you throughout every day. May his Countenance shine upon you and be gracious to you. May His Spirit be upon you as you leave this place. Amen

Based on Liturgy by Linda Ashworth  
Adaptation Rev. Pablo Róvere  
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**If you have a praise or concern you would like lifted in prayer this week, please submit it to us in any of this ways:**

**EMAIL:**

**[office@fumchanford.org](mailto:office@fumchanford.org)**  
**[pastorpablo@fumchanford.org](mailto:pastorpablo@fumchanford.org)**

**PHONE: Leave message  
(559) 584 4075**

“Have patience with me, and I will pay you.” But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, “You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?” And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.’

### **Matthew 18:21-35**

Then Peter came and said to him, ‘Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

‘For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.” And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, “Pay what you owe.” Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him,