



First United Methodist Church of Hanford
Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.



505 N. Redington Street Hanford, CA93230
559-584-4075 (voice) 559-584-5438 (fax)
office@fumchanford.org www.fumchanford.org

Sunday, October 4th 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 Prayer

You may like to be still, light a candle, and listen to a calming piece of music as we gather in worship.

Holy God, as we come to worship you, help us to remember, that though apart, we belong to your church, your people, your world, we are not alone. The Psalmist writes of the heavens declaring the glory of God. As we worship today may we, like the heavens, declare your glory, be assured of your love, experience your grace and be restored in our hope. Draw us together by your Spirit as we worship. Amen.

(Prayer based on the words of Psalm 19)

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim these words...

Hymn: Oh the life of the world

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jy4t01ZWQFc>

Oh the life of the world is a joy and a treasure,
unfolding in beauty the green-growing tree,
the changing of seasons in mountain and valley,
the stars and the bright restless sea.

Oh the life of the world is a fountain of goodness, overflowing in labour and passion and pain, in the sound of the city and the silence of wisdom, in the birth of a child once again.

Oh the life of the world is the source of our healing. It rises in laughter and wells up in song;
it springs from the care of the poor and the broken and refreshes where justice is strong.

So give thanks for the life and give love to the maker,
and rejoice in the gift of the bright risen Son,
and walk in the peace and the power of the Spirit till the days of our living are done.

Kathy Galloway (b.1952)

Let us pray together

Eternal God and Father, you are the source of all life, the fount of all wisdom, the well-spring of all grace. Your days are without end, your loving mercies without number. We depend on you: and we remember your

goodness to us and to those who have gone before us.

We tell your story in every generation:
God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,
God of Sarah, Rebekah and Rachel,
God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
God of a pilgrim people, your Church.

You are our God, ahead of us, leading us,
guiding us and calling us;
you are the Lord God,
the all-wise, the all-compassionate.
To you we lift up our hearts and we worship
you, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

Today's Reading from the New Testament James 2: 1-17

When we think of faith and works we Methodists often think of John Wesley. As you remember John Wesley was a priest in the Church of England. He and some other young priests formed a "Holy Club". The members of this club would rise at 4 am every morning for prayer and meditation. They would keep prayer diaries and methodically study the Scriptures. They would minister to the poor and counsel condemned prisoners. That's some pretty righteous looking stuff!

John Wesley tried to make himself holy so that he would be acceptable to God. He was trying to earn his salvation by his works.

One day as he listened to Luther's introduction to the book of Romans being read, in a Moravian meeting house, he realized that salvation was a gift God had given him, not something he had to earn. At that point his heart was "strangely warmed." And what did he do? He rose

every morning at 4 am to pray, and he went to the prisons, and ministered to the poor, and preached the Gospel.

His actions didn't change, but his heart did. Usually this story is told to illustrate the fact that works alone don't save. But let's turn it around. What if after his heart was strangely warmed John Wesley stopped doing all those Godly things? Could we still say he had faith? No! He might have had belief, but what good would it have been? There would have been no worldwide Methodist movement to spread Scriptural Holiness and minister to the needy and transform the world.

John Wesley is such an important example because he is the opposite of most of the people in the church today. There are very few people in the church today that are trying to be saved by their works alone. On the other hand there are a lot who are trying to be saved by faith alone. Not the kind of active life changing verb faith of John Wesley, but the passive noun faith that does nothing. They believe that Jesus is the Son of God, but they don't apply that belief to the way they are living their lives. And it does them no good. The Bible says it doesn't save them.

How many of us believe that Jesus is the Son of God? How many of us believe that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son to die for the sins of the world? How many of us believe that Jesus died for our sins. How many of us believe that Jesus has the power to free us from our sins?

We believe those things, but do we have faith? How are your beliefs lived out in your daily lives?

Time to Reflect

A time of prayer

Holy God, we come to you today with our prayers:

We pray for our world...

Your kingdom come, your will be done.

We pray for the Church and our pastors and lay leaders...

Your kingdom come, your will be done.

We pray for our leaders of this nation...

Your kingdom come, your will be done.

We pray for all those striving for justice...

Your kingdom come, your will be done.

We pray for those suffering with COVID-19 and its effects...

Your kingdom come, your will be done.

We pray for those who have died because COVID-19...

Your kingdom come, your will be done.

We pray for those we know and love who need our prayers...

Your kingdom come, your will be done.

We offer all our prayers in and through the name of our living Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: Love divine, all loves excelling

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sw5ZCZeS32M>

Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesu, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.

Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return, and never,
never more thy temples leave.

Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation,
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation,
perfectly restored in thee:
changed from glory into glory,
till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise!
Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

A prayer of blessing

'Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.' Amen

(Philippians 4:4-7)

Based on Liturgy by Rev Miriam Moul
Adaptation Rev. Pablo Róvere
Hymns reproduced under CCLI 657359



Please mail gifts to First UMC of Hanford,
505 N. Redington St, Hanford, CA 93230

Give online at:

<https://onrealm.org/fumchanford/-/give/now>

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
pastorpablo@fumchanford.org

PHONE: Leave message

(559) 584 4075 Epistle Reading

James 2: 1-17 New International Version

My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?

If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. For whoever keeps the

whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. For he who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.