



First United Methodist Church of Hanford

Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.



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Sunday, July 5th 2020

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use while we are unable to use Church premises. 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

Jesus, I come to you to celebrate your love and to receive your word.

You taught that we must worship God in spirit. I long to worship with your people, but I know you are with me, in these difficult times. Amen.

Hymn: "Praise to the Lord" (139)

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

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNq0WtMSmIY>

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty,
the King of creation!
O my soul, praise Him,
for He is thy health and salvation!
All ye who hear, now to His temple draw
near, Join me in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so
wondrously reigneth,
Shelters thee under His wings, yea,
so gently sustaineth!
Hast thou not seen how thy desires
e'er have been
Granted in what He ordaineth?

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy
work and defend thee!
Surely His goodness and mercy here daily
attend thee;
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do

If with His love He befriend thee.

Praise to the Lord, O let all that is in me
adore Him!

All that hath life and breath, come now
with praises before Him!

Let the amen sound from His people
again; Gladly forever adore Him.

Words by Joachim Neander (1680), Translated by Catherine Winkworth (1863), Music by Stralsund Gesangbuch (1665) Public Domain

Let us pray together:

Lord God, I am in wonder at the world you
have created and the life you have given
me. I thank you for that gift of life and the
joy of sharing my life with others.
I have not always lived my life as you
would wish. Yet, even as I confess this to
you, I know your forgiveness by the
suffering and death of your Son, Jesus
Christ, my Saviour. Amen.

Today's letter to an Early Church: Romans 7. 15-25a

Today's Gospel Reading: Matthew 11: 16- 19, 25-30

Time to Reflect

Matthew 11: 28-30

**'Come to me, all you that are weary and
are carrying heavy burdens, and I will
give you rest. Take my yoke upon you,**

and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

Jesus' says that he is offering a new way to God. Like the old way, it aims for salvation, but He offers us strength and comfort on our path to God.

He calls us to accept the need for forgiveness, and the salvation He offers to us. Then we can receive the Spirit to follow God's way with the knowledge of His Love.

Jesus says people criticise him for not conforming to their expectations. Those who fear his message point to how he lives his life, as they had done regarding John the Baptist.

If, through our calling, we receive or fear such criticism, we must rise above it. Seeing others we should look to what their words and actions mean for us, rather than judging their outward appearance.

It is reported that when Sydney Carter wrote the well-known hymn "Lord of the Dance" he expected the Church to dislike it because it was different. Happily it was accepted, perhaps not as quickly as it deserved, and is now a familiar celebration of Jesus' life.

Jesus speaks of the word of God being hidden from the wise, of those who allow wisdom or knowledge to hide the love of God, and who see the detail of the Law as overriding God's calling that we should love God and our neighbour.

In the tale of the 'Good Samaritan' it was a priest and a Levite (someone who would assist the priest in the Temple), who would know the Law, who walked by.

In writing to the Romans, Paul speaks of the conflict between following the Law and accepting the call of Jesus.

This does not mean that we can disregard the Law. Indeed often the Law shows us how to love our neighbour, but the love God shows us is not following a set of rules but a supreme act of love through suffering. Our call to respond should also be through Love.

All this is through God's love for us, shown in the grace we are offered when he sent His Son to die for our forgiveness and salvation.

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

I thank you Lord for the gift of your Son: for His life, His sufferings and death and for His Resurrection and Ascension, for the witness, salvation and hope He gives.

I thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit to those who have come to you, and especially for the gift of that Spirit in your Church.

I rejoice in the work and witness of your Church and pray that it may continue to strive to fulfil your work and proclaim your Love.

I pray for the needs of the world, thinking especially at this time of those affected by the Coronavirus, but remembering too all who suffer including those whose difficulty seemingly goes unnoticed. Be with all those suffering in any way. Especially be with.....(people known to me)

Be with those whose lives impact others: leaders in government, or the workplace, health care workers, teachers, emergency workers and all those on whom people depend. Grant them the wisdom and the strength to know and to follow your way.

Lord, I commend all men, women and children to your unfailing love through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: Listen to "Lord of the Dance" (261)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-KHPnmPUiY>

or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

I danced in the morning
when the world was begun,
and I danced in the moon
and the stars and the sun;
and I came down from heaven
and I danced on the earth,
at Bethlehem
I had my birth.

'I danced, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the Dance,' said he,
'and I'll lead you all wherever you may be,
and I'll lead you all in the Dance,' said he.

I danced for the scribe
and the pharisee,
but they would not dance
and they wouldn't follow me;
I danced for the fishermen,
for James and John;
they came with me
and the Dance went on.

I danced on the Sabbath
and I cured the lame:
the holy people
said it was a shame.
They whipped and they stripped
and they hung me on high,
and they left me there
on a Cross to die.

I danced on a Friday
when the sky turned black;
it's hard to dance
with the devil on your back.
They buried my body
and they thought I'd gone;
but I am the Dance
and I still go on.

They cut me down
and I leapt up high;
I am the life
that'll never, never die;
I'll live in you
if you'll live in me;
I am the Lord
of the Dance, said he.

Sydney Carter (1915-2004)

A prayer of blessing

May the blessing of God the Father, Son
and Holy Spirit rest and remain with each
of us sharing His worship today and
always.

Based on Liturgy by Ralph Frankland
Adaptation Rev. Pablo Rovere

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

Give online at:

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

Romans 7: 15-25a

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing

good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but 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. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks 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.

Matthew 11: 16-19, 25-30

‘But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market-places and calling to one another, “We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;

we wailed, and you did not mourn.”

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, “He has a demon”; the 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.’

At 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; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All 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.

‘Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.’