

Online Gathering for Worship
Cottage Grove and Junction City United Methodist
Churches
May 3, 2020

“Don’t Listen to Thieves and Bandits”

Words of Welcome

1 Peter 2:19-25 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

¹⁹ For it is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. ²⁰ If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God’s approval. ²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

²² “He committed no sin,
and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

²³ When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

Opening Song “Here in This Place” (Christopher Grundy)

Silence and Centering Prayer

Liturgist: Let us pause for a moment of centering in silence, allowing these words sink deeply into the depths of our being.

Silence

Psalm Meditation (from Psalm 23, compiled by Carolyn Willey)

Read bold print

The Lord is my Shepherd.

The Lord is my constant companion.

I shall not want.

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There is no need He cannot fulfill.

He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters; He restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for His Name's sake.

Whether my course points to the mountaintops of glorious ecstasy or to the valleys of human suffering, God is by my side. God is ever present with me.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil, for You are with me, Your rod and staff, they comfort me.

God is close beside me when I tread the dark streets of danger, and even when I flirt with death itself, God will not leave me. When the pain is severe, God is near to comfort.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup overflows.

When the burden is heavy God is there to lean upon. When depression darkens my soul, God touches me with eternal joy. When I feel empty and alone, God fills the aching vacuum with His power.

Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long (and forever).

My security is in God's promise to be near to me always, And in the knowledge that God will never let me go.

(Leader: The New Revised Standard Version; C: Congregation: Psalms/Now by Leslie Brandt, alt.)

Moment for Formation

Pastor Craig

Song

"The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want"

Scripture Reading

John 10:1-10 (NRSV)

10 "Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a

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bandit. ² The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." ⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. ⁷ So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

Sermon "Don't Listen to Thieves and Bandits" Pastor Craig

Song "Be Thou My Vision"

Prayers for Our World and One Another

Let us enter now into a time of prayer for one another and for our world. We will do what is called a Bidding Prayer. I will open, and then I will bid your prayers based around various categories. During the silence after each category is bid, I invite you to add your own prayers, either aloud or in silence. I will then close with a prayer, then the Lord's Prayer. Let us be in prayer.

Let us pray now for all who are ill, in hospital or at home, especially those affected by cancer or COVID-19.

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Let us pray now for all medical and emergency services personnel who are responding to the best of their abilities with the resources that they have at hand.

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Let us pray now for all those who are hungry or food insecure, and for all community and religious efforts to provide food and shelter.

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Let us pray for the leaders of nations around the world, not only regarding their response to this pandemic, but also that they may do everything possible to assure the health and welfare of their citizens.

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Let us pray for our friends, family, and neighbors for their health and well-being.

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Let us also express our thanks to God for the expressions of love and caring that we have witnessed in our families, communities, and world.

* * *

Let us express our gratitude for life and the myriad things that gladden our hearts.

* * *

These prayers, spoken aloud or in silence, we lift into the universal embrace of the One who is Love, and we make them in the name of the One who showed us what Love looks like in the flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord, and we now join our voices in the prayer he taught us, saying:

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

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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

Prayer Response "Leaning In" (by Christopher Grundy)

Blessing

**May the Lord bless you and keep you,
May the Lord unbind you and set you free.
May the Lord shine light upon your path,
And illuminate the Way of Christ before you.
Amen.**

Closing