“God can do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine. . .” – Ephesians 3:20
Scripture for Meditation:

John 10:10-11 “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep.”

What does it mean to live life to the full? Living to the age of 80 or 85? Or, having all the material possession that society tells you that you should? How does the Shepherd laying down his life for you change your answer?

In the book, The Me I Want to Be, John Ortburg defines this as a starting point: Life is the power to make something happen. Throw a rock, and it soon stops moving. But, put a seed in the ground, and something happens – it sends out a root, takes in nourishment, and grows up to fruitful. To be spiritually alive means to receive power from God to have a positive impact on your world.

How can we have a positive impact, and help others to live a more full life, through the Imagine No Malaria ministry?

Scripture for Meditation:

John 4:51-53 “While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, ‘The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour.’ Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, ‘Your son will live.’ So he and all his household believed.”

When he was just five-years-old, Wilson Marimi walked 20 miles to the nearest clinic to seek treatment for malaria. His mother had two other young children and was unable to take him, so Wilson walked alone. Today, Wilson is a student in a seminary in Ohio. After receiving a new lease on life, he later came to know Christ and has inspired many to walk closer to the Lord.

How have you seen the Lord work through healing or through mission in your own life? How does ministry with the poor relate to an invitation to spiritual wholeness and reconciliation offered through Jesus Christ? By providing treatment for malaria, we may offer life to a future doctor, president, nurse or evangelist. Who of your friends or family has overcome illness and accomplished great things?

Scripture for Meditation:

Luke 9:1 “When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.”

When is the last time you had an opportunity to heal someone? Unless you are a physician or nurse, probably not lately. Yet, Jesus has asked all of his disciples to take up his healing ministry and care for the sick. The Lord has blessed us all in different ways. Is sharing through Imagine No Malaria one way that you can share your blessings with others?
Focus the service on our opportunity, in Jesus’ name, to share from our abundance to meet the needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ in Africa who are dying each day of malaria. Personalize the service by adapting the scripture, sermon, and personal witness to the church.

OPENING MUSIC

- Recommended:
  - Open the Eyes of My Heart (By Paul Baloche)
  - Here I Am to Worship (By: Tim Hughes)
  - UMH 451 “Be Thou My Vision”
- Alternate: Select from your repertoire

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Express your thanks for the presence of friends and guests

Welcome to a very special worship service to save lives through Imagine No Malaria.

Nearly a million lives are needlessly lost each year. Every 60 seconds, another child is lost to a preventable disease. Malaria is bleeding a continent, draining the lifeblood of a people and its future. Entire nations are slipping away - slipping through life's precious net.

But not if we hear the buzzing inside of us, if we feel the call to act, to get involved, to imagine a world without malaria, and then make it happen.

The United Methodist Church committed to uniting to support Imagine No Malaria. Bill Gates shared the following statement: “You are 11 million people armed with the conviction that all the world is your parish. That makes you the most powerful weapon there is against malaria.”

Malaria constitutes a global crisis and the faith-based community must respond. To sit back and let vast numbers of women, children and youth die from diseases and practices that are distant memories if not completely forgotten in the comfort of our churches in the developed world is unconscionable.

The church is in a position to meet the needs of the people of Africa. Indeed, it is our responsibility to do so. The world needs the church.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Transition from greeting and overview to the service of worship
OPENING LITANY
Leader: It is time to worship!
People: So we thank God for providing in ways more than we can ask or imagine.
Leader: It is time to worship!
People: So we praise God for the privilege of gathering with a song in our hearts.
Leader: It is time to worship!
People: So we seek to honor God through our responses and our gifts today.
Leader: Let us worship God!

OPENING INVITATION AND PRAYER
What a joy it is today to gather with our brothers and sisters. We are, indeed, a connected people. We gather with the assurance that God is with us. God is with us whenever we seek to be instruments of healing and wholeness. This day we gather with the conviction, that God is raising us up to make a difference in the lives of so many who are affected by malaria. The scriptures declare that there is a balm in Gilead and this day we will be a healing balm. O God, be present in our witness and praise. Amen.

HYMN
- There is a Balm in Gilead
- Or chorus “I Love You, Lord”

INTRODUCE AND PLAY INM OVERVIEW VIDEO (ON DVD)
- Since 2006, The United Methodist Church has focused on the life-saving power of a $10 net through Nothing but Nets. Now we must do more if we are truly serious about winning the war against this disease. Prevention has made an enormous difference. Now is the time to build on our momentum.

- Imagine No Malaria is more than just nets. It is a comprehensive approach to make sustainable victory over malaria possible. Through Imagine No Malaria, The United Methodist Church is working in partnership with our brothers and sisters in Africa to eliminate death and suffering from malaria.

- PLAY VIDEO (2 minutes, 36 seconds)

ANTHEM OR ANOTHER HYMN
- “The Summons” page 2130 in The Faith We Sing
- Alternate: select from your repertoire
SCRIPTURE – Several options offered

Psalm 140: 12  
Isaiah 58:6-9  
Isaiah 65:17-25  
Matthew 10:8  
Matthew 22:39  
Matthew 25:31-40  
Luke 12:48  
Romans 15:25-26  
Ephesians 3:20-21  
1 Timothy 6:17-19  
James 2:14-17  
1 John 3:17-18

SERMON/PRESENTATION

- Through Imagine No Malaria we have the opportunity to make an investment in the lives of countless children across Africa. What plans might God have for them, and how will God be glorified by their lives? We will likely never know the full impact of our gifts. Yet the joy is in imagining how those children might come to experience abundant life and the amazing ways God can use their lives to reach out to others.

- You may have heard the “Nets Plus” language: through Imagine No Malaria, we are creating a sustainable solution for malaria in Africa that goes beyond prevention to include education, treatment and communication.

- This program is truly making a dynamic shift in the way we do mission and the way the Church is partnering with organizations that will enable us to make a difference on a systemic level.

- Hundreds of thousands of men, women and children will have a better chance at health and life because of The United Methodist Church in Africa.

- This reminds me of another story that involves a net: “Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. ‘I’m going out to fish,” Simon Peter told them, and they said, “We’ll go with you.” So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. He called out to them, “Friends, haven’t you any fish?” “No,” they answered. He said, “Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.” When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.” John 21:1-6.

- Through God, all things are possible. Working together, we can empower our brothers and sisters in Africa to achieve victory over malaria.
INVITATION TO RESPOND – Casting the Net

- We have learned about a ministry of our church that is saving lives. It is a ministry in which we can all participate to ensure deaths from malaria cease on the continent of Africa.

- I know it seems daunting to imagine 2,000 children dying each day and you might not know how you can make a difference, but this is the moment when I get to remind you who you are.

- You are the people of the United Methodist Church...a unified global church dedicated to eliminating death and suffering for our brothers and sisters in Africa.

- You have the power to save lives. You have the power to make sure children live to see their fifth birthdays.

- This is an amazing opportunity for us to serve as the salt of the earth and the light of the world. This is our chance to actively show those who are suffering from malaria that God loves them and God’s grace extends to them.

- You have been called to be the light of the world and to let your light shine before men, “so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

- I am committed to saving lives through Imagine No Malaria and I am asking you now to join me.

- If you believe in your ability to make a difference and you know you can share what you have been blessed with to offer hope to God’s children then I ask you to share your blessings.

CLOSING SONG

“Sent Out in Jesus Name” page 2184 The Faith We Sing

“We Are Marching” No. 2235-b The Faith We Sing

Or, another Joyous Hymn to go with the offering – something familiar that they can sing while the bring their offering and commitment cards forward

PRAYER CIRCLE AND SENDING FORTH

We are called to be family together, to pray for one another, to shoulder one another’s burdens. We are a connected people – connected not simply with those who are here today but with saints who have lived before us and set us an example of bold vision and global witness. We also remember that we are bound together with fellow Christians all around the Holston Conference, and with Children of God even far away in Africa. As we go forth we go inspired by the Holy Spirit of God to be God’s witnesses and instruments to do all the good we can for those who are in need – God give strength, God give us power, and God give us assurance that, with God’s help, we can do great things.
CALL TO WORSHIP
Leader: Thank you God for providing for us in ways we cannot ask or imagine.
People: We are grateful for your blessings.
Leader: Thank you God for taking care of us and our loved ones with gifts that surprise and delight us.
People: We are grateful for your blessings.
Leader: God because of our gratitude, we feel called to respond to others.
People: We are grateful to have resources that we can share with others.
Leader: God hear our prayers that we will give from the goodness that has been given to us.
People: We are grateful to be a blessing to others.

HYMN: Amazing Grace #378

LITANY OF REMEMBERANCE
Leader: We remember the children in Africa who die every 60 seconds from malaria.
People: We give thanks that we can save the lives of children by offering bed nets to sleep under.
Leader: We remember the medical staff and community health workers who work to educate communities in Africa about the dangers of malaria, and treat those who suffer from this preventable disease.
People: We give thanks for the generous souls who share the gift of knowledge to help protect the vulnerable.
Leader: We remember that educating a family on malaria prevention and treatment can save that family the devastating grief of losing a loved one to malaria.
People: We give thanks that we have the opportunity save families.
ALL: We give thanks that our gifts allow others to see the love of God through us.

HYMN: Have Thine Own Way #382

PRAYER
Loving God, we thank you for the blessings you have bestowed upon our lives, our families, and our communities.

Today, we are free from malaria. Our children thrive. Our communities flourish. Today, we are grateful that malaria was overcome in our country and among our most vulnerable citizens.

We pray for the hearts, the spirits, the minds to reach out to other vulnerable children, families, and communities and imagine a world for them with no malaria. We pray that one day they can watch their children grow to adulthood because they have the gift of living without malaria. We are grateful we can respond to God’s love and generosity to us by giving to others with that same love and generosity.

We thank you God for the enthusiasm for giving. We thank you that we can help the people of Africa imagine no malaria. We send our gifts with grateful hearts to save children, families, communities, and the world.

SERMON
HYMN:  Great Is Thy Faithfulness #140

BENEDICTION

Eternal God, we are amazed by the abundance of your provision. You have cared for us lavishly and extravagantly. We confess that we have not trusted your abundance when faced with media reports that challenge our faith.

However, the good news is you have given us an opportunity, through Imagine No Malaria, to strike a blow against fear and to emulate your extravagant generosity through our actions.

Help us move beyond our tendency to see only the headlines of doom and gloom and risk extravagant care for others that the world might be healed, that the world might be saved. Amen.
Prayers

A Prayer of Dedication for the Imagine No Malaria Offering

Holy God, you have blessed us abundantly with life and health. We remember even today the great and wondrous gift we have in your incarnation, you have come in Jesus to live among us, to teach us, and to give us the gift of salvation and healing. As we have been blessed, we seek to be a blessing to others. Take these gifts, O God, multiply them with gifts of fellow Christians from throughout the world and use them to save and heal those whose lives are being threatened even today by the scourge of malaria. You, Lord Jesus, are the great physician: use these gifts to bring healing to your children. In your most holy name, we pray. Amen.

Prayer for Imagine No Malaria

Dear God, This day I pray for an end to malaria. I ask that you bless, not only this church and its members, but all those as work to bring hope to all people who suffer from malaria. Thank you for all the leaders of the “Imagine No Malaria” campaign: give them wisdom and strength and open the hearts of others to the beauty of compassion and the joy of giving. For those who suffer this day I pray your healing touch. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Prayers for Africa

- Dear God, thank you for your unconditional love, grace, mercy and forgiveness. We are grateful for the hope, peace and joy you bring to our lives. Help us to widen our circles of prayer and faith beyond our zones of comfort and across the world. Help us to pray for our brothers and sisters in Africa, many who live in conditions we really can't begin to imagine or understand. May your healing hand prevent future cases of malaria and comfort those who are suffering and affected as a result of these diseases.

- May our brothers and sisters in Africa be blessed with sufficient, but not excessive, rainfall during the rainy season to provide for bountiful crops. We pray for peace throughout the lands during elections and ask your blessing on the leaders. Help us all to remember that you have already provided us with everything we need. Help us to remember that our strength and security rests in you. Help us to be grateful for your abundant blessings through all of our individual and unique circumstances. May we renew our faith and grow in our relationship with you daily. Help us to keep you at the center of our lives and trust in your plan and purpose for our lives. In all that we do, help us to give praise and thanks to you. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Prayer of Confession

Eternal God, we are amazed by the abundance of your provision. You have cared for us lavishly and extravagantly. We confess that we have not trusted your abundance when faced with media reports that challenge our faith. However, the good news is you have given us an opportunity, through Imagine No Malaria, to strike a blow against fear and to emulate your extravagant generosity through our actions. Help us move beyond our tendency to see only the headlines of doom and gloom and risk extravagant care for others that the world might be healed, that the world might be saved. Amen.
Prayers of Thanksgiving

- Loving God: We thank you for the gifts of our lives, our families, and our communities who no longer have to live under the death threat of malaria. Today, we are free from malaria. Our children thrive. Our communities flourish. Today, we are grateful for the eradication of malaria in our cities and among our most vulnerable citizens.

- We pray for the hearts, the spirits, and the minds to reach out to other vulnerable children, families, and communities to save their lives by sending bed nets. We pray that one day they can watch their children grow to adulthood because they have the gift of living without malaria. We are grateful we can respond to God’s love and generosity to us by giving to others with that same love and generosity. We thank you God for the enthusiasm for giving. We thank you that we can help people through Imagine No Malaria. We give our gifts with grateful hearts to alleviate malaria suffering and save the lives of children, families, and of entire communities.
Suggestions for Imagine No Malaria Personal Witnesses

How to use: Including a testimonial from one of your church members who has already chosen to support Imagine No Malaria with a gift is a wonderful way to encourage others to give. It provides an opportunity for clergy or a lay servant to witness to the great blessings of God and how they are choosing to share those blessings with others. This testimony can be a part of the Sunday Service, a Sunday School hour, or a special event.

• Recap the facts about malaria - every 60 seconds a child in Africa dies of malaria; one in five children do not reach their fifth birthday.

• Share your motivations for participating in this life-saving ministry. Perhaps you imagined what it would be like if it were your own child suffering.

• Remind group that just $10 saves a life. Share examples of how easily $10 can be spent. Challenge group to look beyond saving just one life—opportunity to give sacrificially to save lives.

• Share how the Lord has blessed you to be in a position to share with others. Might the Lord be blessing others through this gift? Perhaps you will save the life of a future president, nurse, or doctor.

• It’s time to unite faith and action. We cannot just pray for them, let us act now. Invite the congregation to join you in saving lives through gifts. Be specific, “I am asking YOU to consider this opportunity.”

Suggested scriptures: Mathew 25:40; 1 John 3: 16-19; John 10:10
Unifying Faith and Works

“When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleaning of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and alien. I am the Lord your God.” (Leviticus 19:9-10)

Biblical Foundation
From the beginning, our Creator required a sense of compassion towards the impoverished and a moral obligation to assist them. Whether through feeding, healing or clothing those less fortunate than ourselves, we not only remember the importance of this instruction, but we live out what Christ referred to as the second most important commandment – “Love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39)

As Christ walked the earth, an embodiment of compassion and attention to social justice took shape as never before experienced, and in the format of parables, Jesus expressed how God would view our service to others. “I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.” (Matthew 25:40)

Consequently, our service to others becomes a tangible and outward expression of our love for God, which we are called to share with the world. “If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.” (1 John 3:17-18)

We have seen the need in Africa. We have seen our brothers and sisters dying by the thousands of a completely preventable and treatable disease, so we will express our love for God by participating in a healing ministry.

We will do this because it unites our faith with works and because we must follow Christ’s example. While we know the importance of healing miracles to Christ’s ministry, as they are the most numerous of all miracles listed in Biblical accounts, knowing the impact they had on our Savior is far more important. In Luke 7:11-17, we hear of a widow who had lost her only son. In response to seeing her grief, the Bible says Christ’s “heart went out to her” and was so moved that he brought her son back to life.

The things of this world that caused Jesus to take action should move us to take action. Therefore, we will follow in Christ’s footsteps and heed the directive of Paul. “Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy…put it into practice.” (Philippians 4:8-9) Imagining an Africa free of malaria is noble and making it a reality is right. We will heal the sick and prevent the tragedies of unnecessary deaths. We will do so in service to our Savior.

Wesleyan Tradition
"Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as ever you can." – John Wesley
As United Methodists, we have a history of serving others. We have established schools, built hospitals, and offered free medical clinics as a means of taking the church beyond the confines of a building. John Wesley said, “I look at the world as my parish.” He fervently believed in the connection between health and spiritual well-being, and the connection between one Christian’s wellbeing and service to others. The Wesleyan tradition of health ministry is the reason our presence in Africa is already very strong. Now, that presence is on fire with renewed purpose. We, The people of The United Methodist Church, will unite our faith with works through Imagine No Malaria.