



**FIFTH AVE. UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH**

323 South 5th Avenue
West Bend WI 53095

Eighth Sunday After Pentecost
July 23 2023

Sandy Blumenberg, Liturgist
Dave Bertelsen Pianist
Rev. Clarissa Martinelli, Senior Pastor

JOIN US IN PERSON OR ONLINE
Sundays, 9:30 A.M.

WELCOME TO FIFTH AVE. UMC
Whether you're just beginning to explore
your faith or have been following Christ for
years, you and your whole family can belong
at Fifth Ave. UMC

***Note: L - denotes worship "Leader"**
P - denotes "People"

~GATHERING GOD'S PEOPLE~

PRELUDE: "I Love to Tell the Story"

~WELCOME & CENTERING~

GREETING:

Pastor Clarissa: 847-721-1826; Ms. Ellen Johnson: 262-339-7673;
Email -rev.cmartinelli6@gmail.com

CENTERING MUSIC: "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus"

***INVOCATION:**

L: We thank you Loving Father for calling us to come to you today and to receive the food that our souls need if we are to grow as you have planned for us to grow. We thank you for your forgiveness and your mercy. Open our hearts and our minds to your presence, increase our love for you and for our brothers and our sisters. Guide us in this time of worship so that we might be persons who shine with the light of Jesus. We ask it in His precious name. Amen.

***CALL TO WORSHIP: (Responsively)**

L: Weeds and seeds, growing together.

P: Each will influence the other.

L: What will we learn from the weeds?

P: Trials and tribulations, choices that have not always worked out. Weeds can teach us about perseverance — consider the tough dandelion plant pushing its way up through the pavement — for some it's just a weed, but for others there are lessons to be learned.

L: What will be gained from seeds?

P: Inside each one of us is a special person, waiting to be nurtured to wholeness. Each seed is unique; each has its own gifts to offer.

L: In God's Garden, God's love extends to both — asking both to consider what each has to offer to a hurting world.

P: Lord, help us to be good seeds, bearing fruits of kindness, justice, and compassion. Keep us mindful of those for whom life has been difficult and yet they persist in trying to make each day better. Be in our hearts, O Lord, and in our lives. Amen.

***GATHERING PRAYER:**

L: God of surprises, we come here from the weariness of the week, from various triumphs, from fears and doubts. Open our hearts to receive your surprising message of hope for all people, for we ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

***OPENING PRAYER: (Unison)**

All: Merciful God, you plant each of us like seeds in the same field and together we are nourished and nurtured by the sun. We sway in the wind and are refreshed by the rain. We are blessed by the knowledge that You want us to grow towards what you call us to be. When we deprive others of that same opportunity, forgive us. When we want to uproot those whom we believe do not belong in our part of the field, forgive us.

When we label others as good or bad rather than accept them for who they are, forgive us. When we are reluctant to acknowledge that we ourselves are a mixture of weeds and wheat, forgive us. When we are afraid to look into the fields of our own lives to see what is growing there, forgive us.

O God, you know us inside and out, through and through. You search us out and lay your hand upon us. You know what we are going to say even before we speak. So, we pray that you will help us to reach out to the uprooted and rejected, the lonely and the outcast, and to develop and grow the good in ourselves, in others, and in the world. This we pray in Jesus's name. Amen.

***WORDS OF FORGIVENESS:**

L: Great news has come to us, dear friends. God, who is faithful and just, who cherishes us as we are, seeks restoration and healing for those broken places in our lives, forgives and loves us unconditionally. Receive the good news: you are forgiven! **All: Alleluia! Amen.**

***OPENING HYMN: "Precious Lord, Take My Hand" UMH 474**

~WE PROCLAIM~

***Matthew 13:24-32~Good News Translation (GNT)**

All: Jesus told them another parable: "The Kingdom of heaven is like this. A man sowed good seed in his field. One night, when everyone was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. When the plants grew and the heads of grain began to form, then the weeds showed up. The man's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, it was good seed you sowed in your field; where did the weeds come from?' 'It was some enemy who did this,' he answered. 'Do you want us to go and pull up the weeds?' they asked him. 'No,' he answered, 'because as you gather the weeds you might pull up some of the wheat along with them. Let the wheat and the weeds both grow together until harvest. Then I will tell the harvest workers to pull up the weeds first, tie them in bundles and burn them, and then to gather in the wheat and put it in my barn.'

L: The Word of God for the People of God. P: Thanks be to God.

***SERMONIC HYMN: "Surely the Presence of the Lord" x2 UMH 328**

SERMON: "Taking Care With the Wheat & Tares" Pastor Clarissa

~PRAYERS & CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE~

Pastor: God of all goodness: People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Summer is just about halfway over. Some of us have been able to travel, to spend special time with family and friends; but for others there is a sameness about this season. It brings pressures to work to provide for our families; it reminds us of the many people who are ill and

who are unable to enjoy some of the special delights that this season is supposed to bring. This morning we take a few minutes to name our dear ones and situations of pain and loss as we ask for prayers from this congregation. Some people will remain unnamed because of the anguish we feel about their difficulties. But you are with them, every step of the way, even when they don't feel like you care. You are there with them, offering them peace and hope. Let us turn our hearts to God as we silently offer these special people to your care.

[Silent Prayer]

Lord, you have heard the cries of our hearts. You see our tears and feel our pain. Be with us all. Give us healing for our broken spirits and bodies, for we ask these things in the name of Jesus, the Master Healer. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER:

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 that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

~2023 WEST BEND FARMERS MARKET~

~INVITATION TO SHARING OUR GIFTS, TITHES, & OFFERINGS~

***DOXOLOGY:** **"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"** **UMH 94**
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia!
Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

OFFERTORY PRAYER:

All: Holy God, we are living in days of division and polarization, and we regretfully confess that your church is not exempt from that statement. Regardless of where we stand, it is far too easy to look at those who see things differently and see them as weeds, stunting the good fruit we could bear. As we bring our offerings to you, the temptation to focus on our own agenda is strong. Help us to give generously without judging. Give us the faith to put them to your use, and humility to know that only you can see clearly what is wheat and what is weed. We pray in the name of Christ who knows all hearts. Amen. (Matt 13:24-30, 36-43)

***CLOSING HYMN:** **"Blessed Assurance"** **UMH 369**

~SENDING FORTH/BENEDICTION~

L: In the power of the Holy Spirit, go in peace, love, and care for one another as we now go forth into the world, to fulfil our calling as the people of God, the body of Christ. **Amen.**

Pastor: Go into God's world with confidence and hope. God's presence is with you in all that you do. Be those people who plant seeds of comfort and hope. God will bring about the harvest in due time.

***POSTLUDE:**

"I Will Celebrate"

Please join us for continued Fellowship during our Coffee Hour.