



**FIFTH AVE. UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH**

323 South 5th Avenue
West Bend WI 53095

Twentieth Sunday After Pentecost
October 15, 2023

Kelly Louk, Liturgist
Dave Bertelsen, Singer
Deanna Gibeau, Organist
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: "With Every Rising of the Sun" Gilbert M. Martin

~WELCOME & CENTERING~

GREETING:

Pastor. Great indeed is the faithfulness of God, and yet our hearts are not so reliable. We stray. We argue. We forget. We divide ourselves with anger and bitterness and untruth. Let's try to come back together again, and let's start with the truth. Come, sisters and brothers and worship our Forgiving and Loving God together. Come all are invited!

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

CENTERING MUSIC: “Author of Life Divine”
Words: Charels Wesley, Music: Jackson Henry

***INVOCATION:**

Leader: With our world in crisis, we thirst for calm. Soothing God, reassure us today with your abiding peace. Amen.

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

L: Come! Now is the time to worship!

P: We come to worship God who invites us.

L: When the Israelites worshiped the golden calf, God listened to Moses and chose to correct instead of destroying.

P: God persistently invites us to return to God.

L: Jesus tells a story of a wedding banquet where the guests dismissed the invitation and harmed the messengers, so the king invited people off the streets and welcomed all who received the invitation in earnest.

P: God persistently invites us to return to God.

L: Too often we turn from God's ways, choosing our stiff-necked insistence that we know what is best instead of trusting God's provision, love, and guidance.

P: When we turn away and our love fails, God continues to offer us opportunities to return to God and join in the celebration of God's abundant love and life.

L: Come! Now is the time to worship!

P: We come to worship God who keeps inviting us for the long haul.

***CALL TO CONFESSION:**

L: Confession is not an easy or a pleasant thing to do. We would like to think that we have been good and faithful disciples, following your way. But we know in our hearts the many ways in which we have turned our backs on you and rejected your will for us. Merciful God, come to us this day with your healing power and help us again to be your disciples, offering hope and peace to your hurting and wounded world. Bend your merciful ear to us as we confess our sin to You and each other.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION: (Unison)**

Confession is not an easy or a pleasant thing to do. We would like to think that we have been good and faithful disciples, following your way. But we know in our hearts the many ways in which we have turned our backs on you and rejected your will for us. Like the people in the wilderness, we create for ourselves idols and worship them, only to discover their shallowness and emptiness for our lives. And we wonder what went wrong. Stop us in our tracks, O Lord. Help us to be open to your will for our lives. We know what you want us to do. Give us the persistence and the courage to do your will. Heal us from our wayward actions and attitudes. Remind us that we must reach out to others in compassion and peace.

Merciful God, come to us this day with your healing power and help us again to be your disciples, offering hope and peace to your hurting and wounded world. In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen.

***WORDS OF ASSURANCE:**

L: Another thing we forget is that God loves us very much. God loves us enough to forgive us again and again and again. God loves us so much that God lived among us, died, and rose again in Jesus of Nazareth. So, whatever you forget, always remember that God loves you and forgives you. **All: Thanks be to God! Amen.**

***OPENING HYMN:**

"Sanctuary" x3

TFWS 2164

~WE PROCLAIM~

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION - *Exodus 32:7-10 (NRSV)

L: Almighty God, give us ears to hear your story in these words of Scripture; give us eyes to see your story in the faces of those that surround us; and give us faith enough, that by your grace, we might serve you until the end of our days. Amen.

All: The LORD said to Moses, "Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!' The LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them, and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation."

L: The Word of God for the People of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

CHANCEL CHOIR:

"Draw the Circle Wide"

Dave Bertelsen, Director

SERMON:

"Stiff Neck People"

Pastor Clarissa

SERMONIC HYMN:

"Surely the Presence of the Lord" x2

UMH 328

~THE LORD'S SUPPER~

Pastor: Today we remember and give thanks for Jesus and the seasons of his life
– when he was full of life and hope and possibilities
– when life took him into unknown territory
– when life tested him to the limit
– when, in the depths of his Winter, he believed Spring would come.

This Pentecost season, we rejoice that his life and all that he lived for all that he believed and taught leads us to see beyond death and darkness and to believe in transformation beyond our imagining. In his memory, we gather once more around bread and wine symbols of nourishment of hospitality of friendship and of commitment.

We share this bread and wine today committing ourselves to be Easter people, people who see beyond the barriers, the pain, the darkness and hard times, people who live in faith, hope and love in all the seasons of our lives whatever the ups and downs.

We open our eyes, we open our ears, we open our hands, we open our minds, we open our hearts. We pray for one another: May you love the life within you may you love the life around you and may you know that a part of everything is here in you a part of everything is here in you.

We pray for ourselves: May I love the life within me may I love the life around me and may I know that a part of everything is here in me a part of everything is here in me. (Source: Michael Morwood)

L: And the table will be wide. And the welcome will be wide. And the arms will open wide to gather us in. And our hearts will open wide to receive. And we will come as children who trust there is enough. And we will come unhindered and free. And our aching will be met with bread. And our sorrow will be met with wine. And we will open our hands to the feast without shame. And we will turn toward each other without fear. And we will give up our appetite for despair. And we will taste and know of delight. And we will become bread for a hungering world. And we will become drink for those who thirst. And the blessed will become the blessing. And everywhere will be the feast.
(Source: Jan Richardson)

And so, with the host of heaven we gather around your throne, singing your eternal hymn of glory:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna
in the highest. Amen.**

Pastor: On the night that Jesus was betrayed he told us to prepare a place for him. And then he offered us a sign. A sign of how he would give himself to us to give us new life. He had always loved us, and now he showed us how perfect his love was. While his disciples were eating, Jesus took a piece of bread in his hands, like this, and he blessed it: Blessed are you Lord God of all creation; through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given, and human hands have made. It will become for us the bread of life. And then he said to them: This is my body broken for you, do this in remembrance of me.

Silence.

And then Jesus took a cup of wine, like this, and gave you thanks: Blessed are you Lord God of all creation, through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become for us the cup of salvation. And then he said to them: Drink this, all of you, this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.

Great is the mystery of faith.

ALL: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ. Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in one bread. Amen.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: We believe in one holy, universal Christian church, the unity of the communion of saints of the entire human family. And we believe that that this unity of the people of God must be manifest and active, in that we love one another; that we give ourselves willingly and joyfully to one another, that we share one baptism together, that we eat of one bread and drink of one cup together, that we confess one name, one Lord, for one cause, with one hope, which is the height and the breadth and the depth and the love of Christ, forever and ever. Amen.

~PRAYERS & CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE~

Pastor: God of all goodness:

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lord of hope and healing, you have heard the cries of our hearts. You know that we do want to serve you, and yet when things get tough, we buckle and cave in. We lack the courage and strength to work for you. You have reminded us that you will be continually with us and we need to place our trust in that fact. Your love will sustain and heal us. Your mercy and grace will give us courage and strength, joy and peace. As we have come before you this day, offering our prayers for those near and dear to us, let us remember that you constantly lift and carry us in your love. Bring us to the knowledge of your mercy and powerful love that will never leave us. Prepare us for ministry in areas of need and desolation. For we ask these things in Jesus' Name. AMEN.

We pray to You now as You taught us... The Lord's Prayer (words on screen)

~2023 WEST BEND FARMERS MARKET~

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

***DOXOLOGY:** (on screen) "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow" UMH 94

OFFERTORY PRAYER: (in unison)

Mighty and righteous God, as we bring our tithes and offerings to your altar, we confess we see ourselves in the stiff-necked Israelites in the wilderness. We are quick to lose sight of you, especially when our focus is turned in the direction of worldly treasures. Your anger and disappointment are so justified, and as Moses intervened for the Israelites, Jesus has advocated for us with his very life. Help us to keep our focus as you light the pathway you would have us walk. We pray this with gratitude for your love and in the name of your son, our Savior. Amen. (Exodus 32:1-14)

***CLOSING HYMN:** "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace" TFWS 2171

~SENDING FORTH/BENEDICTION~

L: Do what you have learned and received and seen and heard in Christ, and the peace of God will be with you.

All: And may that peace, which passes all understanding, guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Pastor: May you go knowing that God invites you today and every day to partake in the abundant life and love God has for you. So may we receive, honor, and celebrate the grace that softens our stubbornness and opens our hearts to share God's love with one another.

***POSTLUDE: "Open Now Thy Gates" Arr. Roger C. Wilson**
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The flowers on the altar are given by Roger & Mary Rogge in celebration of their 55th
wedding anniversary which was on Oct. 12.

The bulletins are given by Roger & Mary Rogge in honor of their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.