Sermon Date: July 9, 2023
Sermon Title: The Yoke That Fits; or, What Humans Are For
Scripture: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Connecting
Take a moment to introduce yourselves.
Share a “High” and/or “Low” from the past week with the group.

Opening Prayer

Read Today’s Scripture: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

1. The sermon began with reference to a recent worship service in Germany where all the content, including the sermon, was produced by artificial intelligence. One of the people in attendance said the computer-generated sermon made sense, but lacked “heart and soul.” What do you think that person meant by heart and soul? Do you think a computer can deliver a good sermon?

2. The rise of artificial intelligence which very effectively duplicates human thinking raises the question: What are humans for? How are we different from computers? Why did God create us this way? Would life be easier if we were just machines that think? Are we sometimes judged by others on the basis of how efficient or effective we are? How does God judge us?

3. The sermon quoted Bill Gates, the founder of Microsoft, saying that “religion is not very efficient, just in terms of allocation of time resources. There’s a lot more I could be doing on a Sunday morning.” Do you sometimes feel that way about going to church on a Sunday morning?

4. How would you explain to a non-Christian what is accomplished by a Sunday morning at church of praying, praising God, reflecting on scripture, hearing the story of God in scripture, and being part of a community of faith?

5. Jesus uses the term “yoke” to describe what it is to follow him. Following Jesus is a yoke of sorts. It gives structure to life. Jesus sets out a path for us to follow—doing things like visiting the sick, caring for the dying, loving our neighbors as ourselves, forgiving others as we have been forgiven, working for God’s kingdom. Jesus says this yoke he gives us is not a burden but is easy and light to wear. Does it sometimes feel heavy? When does it feel light? How does this yoke give rest to our souls?

Closing Prayer