

ORDER OF WORSHIP with TEXTS
for MARCH 22, 2020
ROAD TRIP: *Playlists and New Friends*

WELCOME

Rev. Rachael Warner

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OPENING PRAYER*

With different gifts, with a variety of talents, with an array of interests, we come to worship you, our creating God. We are here to unite our spirits, to be made one in Jesus Christ, to be merged in hope as your children. Bless our differences, that the unique gifts and perceptions of each may strengthen our oneness. Drawn into your Spirit, we give you the thanks of our hearts, in the name of the living Christ. Amen.

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HYMN

Morning Has Broken, UM Hymnal #145, vs 1

Text: Elenor Farjeon, 1931 (Lam. 3:22-23)

Music: Trad. Gaelic melody

Morning has broken like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning
Praise for them springing fresh from the word

READINGS

***What It's Like to be a Seven* from The Road Back to You**

I'm always the first person up for a last-minute adventure.

I am an optimist to a fault.

I don't like making hard and fast commitments to things.

I suffer from FOMO - fear of missing out.

Anticipation is the best part of life.

People close to me say I can be argumentative and act superior.

Variety and spontaneity are the spice of life.

Sometimes I get so eager for the future I can hardly wait for it to get here.

It's hard for me to finish things.

When I get close to the end of a project I start thinking about the next thing,
and then I get so excited I sometimes just move on.

I usually avoid heavy conversations and confrontations.

When people I care about are having a hard time,
I help them look at the bright side of the situation.
Other people think I am sure of myself, but I have lots of doubts.
I'm popular and have lots of friends.
I don't like endings, so I usually wait for people to break up with me.
I quickly get bored with the same routine and like to try new things.
I think people worry more than they should.
Life is better than people imagine. It's all about how you explain things to yourself.
I don't like it when people have expectations of me.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

OFFERING

*Rachael invite people to pause and offer our praise to God.
Share about why our offerings matter - invite offerings to UMCA, ACBC, Good Sam Fund
Laura post link to online giving, mailing address for church*

DOXOLOGY

*He Has Made Me Glad
The Faith We Sing, #2270
Songwriters: Dp / Jonathan Jr. Du Bose
He Has Made Me Glad lyrics © Universal Music Publishing Group*

I will enter His gates with thanksgiving in my heart
I will enter His courts with praise
I will say this is the day that the Lord has made
I will rejoice for He has made me glad
He has made me glad, He has made me glad, I will rejoice for he has made me glad

He has made me glad, He has made me glad, I will rejoice for he has made me glad

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Holy God, even in times of struggle, we are deeply blessed because we know that you are with us. As we find new ways to give generously to one another and to our neighbors, open our minds to creative possibilities and open our hearts to work for the common good. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

John 15:9-17

Jesus said, "As the Father loved me, I too have loved you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy will be in you and your joy will be complete. This is my commandment: love each other just as I have loved you. No one has greater love than to give up one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I don't call you servants any longer, because servants don't know what their master is doing. Instead, I call you friends, because everything I heard from my Father I have made known to you. You didn't choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you could go and produce fruit and so that your fruit could last. As a result, whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give you. I give you these commandments so that you can love each other."

Sermon for UMCA

3/22/2020, Rev. Rachael Warner

ROAD TRIP: Playlists and New Friends

On an actual road trip, there's nobody better to bring along than an enthusiast, or a type 7 on the Enneagram. Sevens will be up for any and every adventure. They will make a high energy playlist so that the soundtrack of your time together will keep everyone awake and singing along. They will always have a game on hand when things get a little bit dull. They will not be afraid to try new things or change plans at the last minute when an amazing opportunity presents itself. They'll make friends at every rest stop. Sevens are fun to have around - they are the embodiment of joy.

In case you've missed the previous weeks in this Road Trip series, here's a quick recap. We have already known that 2020 is a year when we might all be tempted to cut ties with each other and go our separate ways. And now, a virus threatens to separate us even more as we become more and more concerned about coming into contact with other people and/or as we argue about whether or not we should be concerned about the virus at all. And let's be honest - we're looking at several weeks of minimizing our contact with other people - so for some of us, we feel isolated at home. Others of us long for a break from our beloved roommates.

Since the time of Jesus, followers of the Way of Christ have been called to live counter-culturally, to be in the world but not of the world, to resist the temptations of fame, wealth, and popularity, to value community and to put the needs of others before their own needs. In our road trip series, we dare to suggest that the most counter-cultural thing we could possibly do as Jesus followers in 2020 in Anoka, Minnesota is stick together even when every force around us seems bent on dividing us, pitting us against one another, and keeping us always on the lookout for a reason to argue. That's even more true now than it was 10 days ago when I drafted this sermon.

This is not to say we will never disagree. Quite the contrary. We disagree all the time, even about things that are really important to us. But somehow, we dare to believe that even so, there is value in taking this journey together. And as we get to know ourselves and one another better, especially the ways we see things differently, we grow and learn and love and experience the presence of Jesus gathered with us.

So, we're taking this now-virtual road trip together, and as we travel we're learning with this tool called the Enneagram about the different ways some of us are wired - perfectionists and helpers, achievers and individualists, investigators and loyalists. Today: enthusiasts, the seventh type described in the framework of the Enneagram. Not only do all kinds of people add value to our community, but also each of us comes with needs to be explored, with strengths to be appreciated and weaknesses to be worked on. And all of us, when we meet Jesus, discover that he has something meaningful to offer us, right where we are.

Let's jump right into our case study for this series, which will help us get to know our sevens. Each week we're talking through the same scenario to show that while all of us might behave in a similar way when someone needs help, our specific actions and motivations will be different. To quickly summarize, the scenario is that a woman has had a bike accident out in front of the church, and comes limping through the south entrance, where you happen to be standing. She is clearly injured and needs help. I assume you'd help her, right?

We'd all help her! We're followers of Jesus - that's what we do. But the sevens, well, we might not realize they are helping at first. Sevens fear pain and suffering. The average seven might see the woman in pain, care very much that she is hurting, and be very uncomfortable. Our seven might respond in a few different ways, like running to get someone else to help with the actual bandaging and tending to the wounds. Then, as the woman is being tended to by someone else, our seven would try to cheer her up with a song, a funny story, or by reassuring her (and himself) that everything is going to be just fine. Nothing will be more satisfying for the seven than seeing the woman smile or laugh, taking her mind off the pain.

For sevens, this is really what it's all about: avoiding pain. Sevens who get to a really healthy place learn to embrace the full range of human emotions, including the difficult ones, and stop

avoiding suffering. A seven in her sweet spot is still fun and ready for adventure, but is also well-grounded.

Until reaching that place of equilibrium, though, sevens often manufacture happiness whenever they can. They paint a sunshine on the rainiest day. As you can imagine, this makes sevens quite popular. They are the life of the party, they bring the joy wherever they go. And also, they jump from one thing to another and can have a hard time planning ahead or seeing things through to completion.

Sevens who are struggling try to avoid pain at all costs, which can lead to destructive behaviors that provide temporary numbing of pain but don't solve the deeper problems. Right now Sevens are those of us scanning for cheap flights and feeling incredibly stuck being asked to stay home.

Sevens are more prone to addiction than any other type. Author Ian Crone of *The Road Back to You* notes,

All of us have ways of defending ourselves against pain. For Sevens, it's keeping things lively and positive. The question Sevens are always asking themselves is, How can I jam as many pleasurable experiences into this moment as possible? Their source of satisfaction is never found within them or in the present moment; it's always external and in the far-distant future. There's always something they haven't tried, something more to do, some new exploit to plan. All this hopped-up behavior is how Sevens divert their attention away from the unacknowledged and unintegrated losses and anxieties that haunt them.

Whew. We love Sevens. They are fun. We see them as pure, undefiled joy. They help us smile and see hope even on our darkest days. They are easy to love because they don't ask us to go into the hard places - they don't want to go there themselves.

And so many of our beloved Sevens are hurting. Or avoiding hurting by avoiding their own suffering. They don't only fool us - often they even fool themselves.

This morning we started with a reading from Ecclesiastes - a reminder to all of you Sevens. There is a season for everything. Life is good, and life is hard. We have great seasons and really rough seasons, and all of these seasons together are what life is about. Don't be afraid - we love you enough to sit with you in painful seasons. You do not have to be happy all the time in order to be worthy of love.

Crone suggests that "the healing message Sevens need to hear and believe is God will take care of you." Appropriate, isn't it? We all need to hear and believe this message right now.

Jesus tells us exactly this - and defines that knowledge and belief in God's sovereignty as exactly what Sevens most seek after: joy.

We encounter Jesus today, in John 15, in the middle of what is known as his farewell discourse. Jesus' words to his disciples in chapters 14-16 of John's gospel are to prepare the disciples for

what is about to happen: suffering, death, and resurrection. Jesus is directing the disciples to look to the future and see their lives beyond the difficult days that are immediately before them. Of course, this is confusing for the disciples. They have no idea what is about to happen. Still, everything Jesus offers them in his parting actions - washing their feet and serving them bread and wine - and in his parting words, is to fortify them for what will soon take place.

Even as Jesus is preparing his disciples for a time of great suffering - not only his own, but also their suffering as his followers - he is speaking to them about joy. Joy...deep, abiding joy...is the greatest tool he can offer them to navigate the difficult days ahead when they will experience grief, loss, heartache, fear, persecution. He doesn't suggest that joy is the antidote to suffering, rather that because of God's enduring and saving love, they will experience joy even in the midst of suffering. And all they have to do to tap into that joy is abide in the holy presence of God.

Jesus offers a challenge and a gift to our Sevens. The greatest love is not love that ignores suffering or sugar-coats pain. The greatest love lays down one's very life for the sake of others. The greatest love enters into suffering with others out of a deep realization that God will take care of you.

For a Seven, this probably doesn't sound noble. It probably sounds awful. Why do we have to enter into suffering at all? Let's just eat, drink, and be merry! (That's in Ecclesiastes, too.) But Jesus calls us into the best version of ourselves, and Sevens, Jesus offers you a deeper joy than all the best songs and jokes and adventures and adrenaline rushes this world can give.

The first step is to remember, and perhaps even start to believe, God will take care of you.

Sevens, we are deeply blessed that you are part of our community. In fact, you are some of our favorite people. You are fun, you make us laugh, and you keep us from taking ourselves too seriously. You are interesting and engaging and we can't get enough of you. We want to be around you all the time. You show us the joy of living in the moment and encourage us to try new things.

Here's the hard truth you need to hear: pain is unavoidable. And here's the other truth you need to hear: we will love you even in times of pain. You are worthy of love, even when you're not feeling happy. We want to share in your sorrow as well as in your joy.

Please join me in speaking a word of love and blessing to the Sevens in our congregation:

A BLESSING FOR THE SEVENS

May the Lord bless this grace-filled journey home to your true self.

May God the loving parent direct you with insight as you consider your commitments.

May the heart of Jesus, the man of sorrows,

infuse you with joy and be your solidarity in suffering.

May the Holy Spirit ground you to live with limits and deprivations.

Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE
(Susan Burkett, Monroeville, PA)

DEEP BREATH.

God of wonders and healing, we gather today in a new and unfamiliar way. But still we gather as your people, as your body, to share your love with one another and the world.

We pray for our congregation, for all of our members and extended family; for those persons whose lives are touched by our in-person ministries that we've had to stop temporarily; for wisdom as we earnestly seek how God is calling us to respond to the needs around us; for our congregation's vitality even as we cannot meet in-person; and for our pastors and staff as they work harder than ever to guide and support us in a profoundly different context.

We pray for the people whose jobs support us during this time:
those in healthcare (direct patient care, indirect patient care, and those who keep the facilities clean, safe, supplied, staffed and well-administered);
those in government, utilities and public works;
those in military, first responders and emergency management;
those in other essential services like financial services, postal/delivery service, and news media;
those at grocery stores and pharmacies, those manufacturing- or farmers growing- the items we buy, and those transporting the items;
those in a leadership position that they would make wise decisions for their organization;
and those performing other critical jobs (outside the home and/or within the home).

We pray for the people who have lost their jobs or whose incomes have plummeted as a result of the pandemic. Also pray for the students, teachers and families who have been disrupted by the necessary school closures.

We pray for the people who are separated from their loved ones as a result of the pandemic.

We pray for people living with anxiety and/or depression, and people living with alcohol or substance addiction, that for each of them this time of heightened stress would not aggravate their medical challenges, and that they can locate alternative forms of support while in-person support meetings are not possible.

We pray for the people who are ill, for healing. Also pray they will recognize Christ's presence with them as they self-isolate at home or are treated at a hospital with contact precautions in place.

We pray for the people who are waiting for test results, that their time of waiting and uncertainty would be a time of peace and not fear or anxiety.

We pray for those most vulnerable to life-threatening effects of the virus, either due to age, underlying medical issues, or compromised immune systems, for wisdom and safety. Many must still leave their home to receive chemo, dialysis, etc. We pray for people currently hospitalized for any reason, that they would receive proper care as hospitals prepare for a large influx of new patients with COVID-19.

We pray for grieving families whose loved ones have passed away. In many cases the isolation restrictions prevent them from holding a timely funeral or even from being physically present with their ill family members in their final days.

We pray for our neighbors next door and around the world. This pandemic seems to have an impact on nearly everyone, but perhaps in slightly different ways. We pray for a receptive heart to ask others how this affects them, to fully listen to them, and as we are able, to help them.

We pray for those of our neighbors who don't have the hope and peace that we have as followers of Jesus. For all whose security has been dramatically shaken and who are looking for confidence by having, for instance, "just one more" package of toilet tissue on the shelf. Give us hearts of compassion for them, and lead us to opportunities to introduce others to the hope and peace you offer.

God, we are ever grateful for all you have done, are doing, and have promised to do. We serve you, a mighty God, with all our hearts. We pause now before you in silence as we each lift the names before you of those for whom we pray today.

(PAUSE)

We pray now, united by the words Jesus taught us to pray:

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 trespass against us.**

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,

for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

HYMN

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee, UM HYMNAL #89, vs 1-2

Text: Henry Van Dyke

Music: Ludwig van Beethoven; Arr. by Edward Hodges

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee,
God of glory, Lord of love;
hearts unfold like flowers before thee,
opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
drive the dark of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness,
fill us with the light of day!

All thy works with joy surround thee,
earth and heaven reflect thy rays,
stars and angels sing around thee,
center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
flowery meadow, flashing sea,
chanting bird and flowing fountain,
call us to rejoice in thee.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.

May the face of the Lord shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

May the Lord's presence with you give you peace.

Amen.