

Centennial United Methodist Church
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Passionate Worship

September 27, 2020

CENTENNIAL MULTICULTURAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

September 27th, 2020 – 10:00am – Facebook, YouTube, and ZOOM

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost: Year A

GATHERING

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING PRAYER (in unison):

Faithful God, we come into Your presence with thanksgiving, deeply grateful for the unfailing love and faithfulness You have shown toward us, Your people. When we call out to You, You answer. When we are exhausted, You give us the strength to go on. When we find ourselves in trouble, You are there, standing beside us. And so, we come before You gratitude and praise, offering You the worship of our hearts and lives. Open our eyes to see and know You here among us; open our ears to recognize Your voice. And then send us out from here, to live and work in the world as Your faithful disciples. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Amen.

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Leader: Family of God, let us worship—

People: Come and worship!

Leader: Even if you are tired and worn out—

People: Come and worship!

Leader: Lay down the heavy things you are carrying—

People: Come and worship!

Leader: Listen to what Jesus wants to tell you—

People: Come and worship!

Leader: See if you can discover how Jesus wants to use you—

People: Come and worship!

Leader: For Jesus is humble and gentle, and he will give us everything we need to follow him.

HYMN:

All I Need Is You

TFWS 2080

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (in unison):

Almighty God, we are so quick to draw the line, to determine who is in and who is out. We fall into the patterns of binary either-or thinking that traps us. You came to erase the lines, to broaden our horizons. You came into our lives as one of us, showing us mercy and compassion and love. Help us to tear down the walls in our thinking, to erase the boundary lines we have drawn. Expand our hearts and minds to embrace Your beloved community, for all of us on this earth are Your children. All of us are important and belong. All of us have hearts that beat and souls that are known to You. Help us to hear Your call on our lives to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with You. Amen.

Moment of Silence

WORDS OF ASSURANCE:

"I waited patiently for the Lord; God inclined and heard my cry. God lifted me up from the desolate pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock. God put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise, and many will see and trust in God." God hears our prayers, lifts us up, and gives us reason to praise. Listen to the new song that God has placed in you, and sing your hearts out, for you are loved, forgiven, and restored. Go, sing God's praise, and share the Good News. **Amen.**

HYMN:

As the Deer (x2)

TFWS 2025

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER (in unison):

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. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY PRAYER (Unison):

Benevolent God, you see those who are hungry, poor, and marginalized, who too often we overlook. You recognize their humanity and their suffering and promise to overthrow the rejection they encounter in our world. Help us be part of that transformation. Take our gifts to feed the hungry and sustain the poor. Multiply our gifts to erase the margins of our society, embracing us all in Your inclusive love. Amen.

THE NEW TESTAMENT LESSON:

ACTS 2:42-47

A reading from Acts...

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Leader: The Word of God
People: Thanks be to God

THE GOSPEL LESSON:

JOHN 4:21-24

Hear the Word of God in the Gospel according to John the 4TH chapter, beginning with the 21ST verse...

21 "Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

Leader: The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
People: Praise be to you, Lord Christ

SERMON:

"Passionate Worship Part I"
Pastor Uziel Hernández Martínez

Good morning everyone! It is so good to be together again on this beautiful day. Today, we continue our theological reflection by discussing the second practice of five practices for fruitful congregations, passionate worship.

"Passionate Worship [is the means of grace that] connects people to God, to one another, and to the world around them."¹

Let us pray,

Holy One, thank you for your sustaining love, grace, and life on us. We know you have been faithful to us. And as we come to worship and encounter you in a special way please bless us with much compassion and justice. Let your Spirit equip and empower us to go into the world with confidence to serve you. Many times, this task can be difficult and with unexpected circumstance that can discourage us. But you are close to us and You remind us not to fear nor give up, you are carrying us. May your holy presence continue to restore our lives to face the days to come and to do your mission. We pray in the name of you Son, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

You can go online and google what is worship and you might find various definitions. But it generally summarized as the act of adoration and/or devotion expressed to something, someone, generally a deity and/or individual. Is that your understanding of worship? On many ways, it describes ancient practices of the Israelite community. It also describes worship practices all over the world in Buddhist, Hindu, and Shinto temples.

¹ Roberth Schnase, *Five Practices for Fruitful Congregations*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2018), Pg. 50

It could also describe adherents to various philosophies. In our current reality, it can describe our devotion and adoration to things like sex, money, power, celebrities, entertainment, hate, dominance or even ourselves. That definition, therefore, is insufficient when describing our Christian experience: worship.

When defining worship, we must include Jesus, the Christ. For all purposes and matters, we affirm that Jesus Christ is the means of salvation and the cornerstone of our faith. Jesus is at the heart of our worship. Saying this, Jesus never defined explicitly what worship is. He never said, "worship is. . .". But we do have the passage with the encounter with the Samaritan woman. He told her that the time would come when we would worship in spirit and truth. This might have been confusing for her as well as for us. But in all matters for definition, Jesus' definition of worship was visible in the way he lived, loved, and offered grace to all human beings. Jesus modeled worship through his life, death, and resurrection. Jesus modeled worship by the things he did; shared the word of God, taught, and interpret the Word of God, broke bread, baptized, prayed, healed, fed, liberated, disciplined and so on.

Daniel T. Benedict Jr., a member of our General Conference Board of Discipleship, defines Christian worship as "God encountering the community of faith through its use of the means of grace, initiating and sustaining the church's ministry of welcoming and transforming people for discipleship in all of life." We must realize first that worship is not a time and/or place where we merely come to honor God. That takes place in temples all over the earth; people pay homage to something or someone. In our worship experience, we come to experience and encounter God. We believe that we encounter the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit through worship.

We experience this encounter through Community. It is important to differentiate our personal encounters of God and our worship encounter. Our definition of worship reminds us that worship is "God encountering the community of faith." Worship is a communal encounter of God. When we come together as a community of faith, also known as Christ's Body; the Church has a quite different encounter, a community encounter. Watching the Cubs play baseball on TV at your home by yourself is a very different experience than being at Wrigley Field surrounded by people. "God encountering the community of faith through its use of the means of grace." The means of grace are those activities in which we can encounter God. They include a myriad of things from serving the poor, to financial giving. But in worship we participate in the means of grace instituted by Christ himself. Those are prayer, searching the scripture, preaching, baptism, and the Lord's Supper. These are things Jesus taught us and modeled for us in our worship together.

This communal encounter of God serves a purpose; not just to make us feel good but it initiates (begins) and sustains (continues) our ministry. Worship is the starting point and checkpoint of our journey together in ministry. Also, the purpose of our ministry helps us to continue the mission to be and make disciples of all people to transform the world, starting here in Rockford. Worship aids in our discipleship, and aids in our making disciples by bringing others together to be part of our community. It all starts in worship. So that is the definition of worship: "God encountering the community of faith through its use of the means of grace, initiating and sustaining the church's ministry of welcoming and transforming people for discipleship in all of life."

Bishop Robert Schnase expands this definition by including those who have been on the margins of our worship experience, the least, the last and lost. Many times, not having a concrete and focus understanding of our worship experience have allowed us to close ourselves to the opportunities to reach out to newer and/or younger generations. But Christian passionate worship is the key to revitalize the bridges to connect not only ourselves to God but others too. When we practice passionate worship, we reimagine our priorities and possibilities to include those who have not been part of our worship community.

Passionate worship connects us and others with God. When we come together to worship passionately, heaven and earth become one in time and space. We are connected to all the Christians and to Jesus from the past, the present and the future. For a moment, we experience God's infinite love, the fullness of the kin-dom of God and the richness of the Holy Spirit pouring us abundant grace. This responds to most innate human need of understanding our connection with the Divine and the transcendence of human history. Passionate worship brings us together as one people, one body and in one Spirit to explore what does this connection mean and how to encounter it.

Passionate worship is a community encounter with God and each other. God comes to us in the power of the Holy Spirit and embrace the believers, those who have been baptized by water and the fire of the Holy Spirit. In worship, we experience resurrection into new life. And we are empowered to continue in our journey of faith confidently that our Good God have come near to us to forgive and love on us. This also gives the opportunity for the community itself to be restore, be forgiven and revitalized with each other. The first task for ministry within the ministry of the faithful is to practice the love, grace, and peace we have received from God. We share this love, grace, and peace with each other. Human beings are social beings who in a point of time God's good news are needed and crave. If we affirm that we are made on God's image, then we can assume that God is the one who can satisfy our most inner needs like the need for love, grace, and peace. Jesus is the everlasting water to satisfy our thirst so we will not be thirsty again.

Passionate worship will also lead us to action and to live out our faith in discipleship. Authentic passionate worship will compel us to commit our lives to share the good news of the gospel to all we meet in all places we are creatively and with passion. We remember John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, was able to experience this when he stretched ". . . himself beyond his own traditional tastes and practices and, in his own words, 'submitted to be more vile' (Journal, April 2, 1739) when he began to preach outdoors in fields to reach those beyond the church's touch."² Passionate worship will empower us to share God's explosive and sharable grace to those who need it beyond the church's touch. The testimony of God's liberating good news will liberate the slave soul of any human being.

²Ibid., 60.

Authentic passionate worship connects the believers with God, each other, and those around as branches are connected to the vine in Jesus' parable. Passionate worship is the bloodline and the essence line to the everlasting life and grace God offer us and all humanity. Passionate worship is the "heartbeat of life in faith communities."³ It is the way our Good and Loving God embraces and care for us in a world that is hurt, broken, and lost. Let us worship passionately together to sing, pray, and listen to God's love reveal throughout our committed intention to worship Jesus the Christ with all our soul, mind, and heart. In the name of the God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PSALM OF RESPONSE (in unison):

PSALM 84

1 How lovely is your dwelling place, LORD Almighty! 2 My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. 3 Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young— a place near your altar, LORD Almighty, my King and my God. 4 Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you. 5 Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage. 6 As they pass through the Valley of Baka, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools. 7 They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion. 8 Hear my prayer, LORD God Almighty; listen to me, God of Jacob. 9 Look on our shield, O God; look with favor on your anointed one. 10 Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked. 11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless. 12 LORD Almighty, blessed is the one who trusts in you.

CLOSING HYMN: The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve (vs. 1,2,3)

TFWS 2241

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING:

Go now from this service of worship to the service of God's people near and far, refreshed by the living water that Jesus offers to you. Listen for the parched voices of the least of these; search out the dry places and the arid souls, and become for them a spring of living water.

And as you go, may the blessings of the God of life, the Christ of love, and the Spirit of grace be upon you this day and forevermore. **AMEN**

GOING FORTH

³ Ibid., 63.

CREDITS:

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**Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 27th, 2020
Hymns**

All I Need Is You

TFWS 2080

1. All I need is you, Jesus,
All I need is you. You are the source of
all I need. All I need is you.

2. All I want is you, Jesus,
all I want is you. You are the source of
all I need. All I want is you.

3. My only hope is you, Lord, my
only hope is you. You are the source of
all I need. My only hope is you

As the Deer (x2)

TFWS 2025

As the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs after
you. You alone are my heart's desire, and I long to worship
you. You alone are my strength, my shield; to
you alone may my spirit yield. You alone are my
heart's desire, and I long to worship you.

The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve (vs. 1,2,3)

TFWS 2241

1.The Spirit sends us forth to serve; we
go in Jesus' name to bring glad tidings
to the poor, God's favor to proclaim.

2.We go to comfort those who mourn and
set the burdened free; where hope is dim, to
share a dream and help the blind to see

3.We go to be the hands of Christ, to
scatter joy like seed and, all our days, to
cherish life, to do the loving deed.

****PRAYER LIST****

At W. Willows: Mae Foster, Henrietta Day, Art Huenkemeier.

At Home: Micaela Serrano, Aida Bejesus, Cleo English, Carol Waxler, Lee Magnuson, Aylin, Fredy & Eugenio Mejia.

Undergoing Treatment/Rehab: Nancy O'Leary, Keith Sodergren, Ken Dahlgren, John Paul, Jonathan Garcia, Maynard Wibom, Rev. Bettye Mixon, Tara & Ismael Arencibia, Jerald Grady, Chuck & Kim Whitmore, Silvia Duran, Pat Nelson, Ellen Dean, David Russ, Pastor Uziel.

BIRTHDAYS

9/28 Margie Sierra
9/29 Micaela Serrano
9/29 Keith Sodergren

9/29 Virginia Solis
9/30 Terryl Hendrix
10/1 Donald Robb
10/3 Omar Barrera

10/3 Terry Martinez
10/4 Rebecca Slade

Joys & Concerns

Our joys and concerns are updates on last week's emails

Aiden, the young man who had contacted cancer at the age of 2 and now has cancer again had surgery this past Friday. He had a portion of his kidney removed and they are running tests on his liver and spine. Aiden and his family need many prayers.

Kyle Montgomery, the young man that suffered a brain aneurism is still in a coma, but did briefly open his eyes. He has had many problems and now has a fever. Our continued prayers to him and his family.

Wayne Russ is still suffering from covid-19 and was taken to the hospital yesterday afternoon with a low oxygen level and is undergoing tests. Tammy and Faith are doing okay after their bouts with covid-19. Please keep them and Joyce in your prayers as they await his test results. As soon as I hear anything else regarding Wayne, I will send out another email. I just received a phone call from Joyce Russ. Wayne has pneumonia in both lungs and is on oxygen, he also has a blood clot in his lung that is being treated with blood thinner. He is feeling better since entering the hospital and he has been told there is a chance that he can return home in a few days. What good news. God is so good.

Jo Harrington's service will be at Honquest Funeral Home 4311 N Mulford Rd on Monday, September 28. Visitation is at 11:30 with the service following after the visitation.

We hope you will worship with us again.

Due to COVID-19, our physical building and office is closed but our mobile office is open Tuesday – Thursday - 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. You can call 779-444-0369, or email: Centennialumc.rockford@gmail.com if you need any assistance.

When you need to reach Pastor Uziel in the case of emergency, please contact him at 224-723-7003 or - centennialumc.pastor@gmail.com



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