



"A Community Of Many Faithing Communities Where All Belong!"

Living Waters Contemplative Life Center | Divine Intervention Ministry to the Homeless  
Tippecanoe just.good.food Garden | Food Justice Site PCUSA  
Arts and Science Literacy Camps for Children

# Welcome To Worship

October 1, 2023

9:30 a.m.



**Welcome to this time of being with God and each other.**

***"I've been meaning to ask...where do we go from here?"***

***Rev. Trish Eckert***

✧ **Prelude: *Guide Me O My Great Redeemer*** ~ Tippe musicians

✧ **Welcome and community news**

- As we wrap up our 4-week worship series, “I’ve Been Meaning to Ask,” our Adult Education discussion group will be meeting again immediately after worship. Join in the conversation for further exploration of this community-focused series.
- “Cherished Memories” grief support group is being offered again this fall on Sundays for 6 consecutive weeks from October 15 through November 19 from 11:15 am – 12:45 pm. Diane Wirhanowicz and Carol Meverden will co-facilitate.
- Save these Sunday dates:
  - October 29 Judy Berdan will join us during worship to provide us a presentation about Divine Intervention
  - November 19 in our Congregational Meeting, which will be embedded in our worship service

✧ **Readying Ourselves for Worship**

***Surely God is in this place, Holy Ground!***  
***Surely God is in this place,***  
***Holy Ground!***

✧ **A Poetry Prayer as we Center Ourselves in this Moment ~ *Flashlight***

Prayer by Rev. Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)

I wish I could draw you a map  
of the next steps—  
the next conversation,  
the next brave truth,  
the next fumble,  
the next apology.

Wouldn't it be nice to know  
what's coming?  
Wouldn't it be nice to  
prepare our hearts?

But I don't know where to go from here.  
I am a child with a flashlight—  
deeply hopeful and a little nervous,  
all at the very same time.

What I *do* know is I don't want to go  
anywhere without you.  
So I'm hoping that you will  
take my hand.  
See this truth.  
Trust my voice.

Look for the good.  
And day by day,  
we can go from here,  
because we were never meant  
to go alone.

And maybe we'll get lost;  
but then again,  
maybe we'll be found.  
So if you're willing,  
if you'll just say yes,  
I will let you hold the flashlight.  
We can find our way,  
step by step,  
light in hand,  
abolishing shadows  
together.

Who needs a map  
when you have  
the light, anyway?

## ✧ **Becoming Present to God and Each Other - Our Check-in**

~ **The Joy of Passing the Peace** ~

One: May the peace that surpasses all understanding be with you

All: **And also with you**

One: Thanks be to God

## ✧ **Time for Young Hearts**

## ✧ **Gathering as God's People: Our Theme ~ *I've been meaning to ask...***



This series has encouraged us to consider, “How can we listen to one another? How do we find connection despite difference? How do we create space for compassionate dialogue and for seeking the holy in one another?” These questions are especially relevant as we live out our values as a community and as we seek to understand the leadings we sense for ourselves and for one another; discerning what is revealed to us and where we are called as a community in light of that discernment. .

In the last three weeks, we've explored together the questions, “where are you from” “where does it hurt” and “what do you need.” This week's final question, “where do we go from here,” is not meant to be the end of the journey; instead, it creates openness to explore together what is next. While stepping into the next chapter, our hope is that we keep cultivating curiosity, asking questions, having conversations, and seeking connection in order to humanize and care for each other. Ultimately, this final question invites us to foster hope and imagination.

Through our Bible Wisdom teachings today, we'll gain insights as we witness stories of people choosing to be in relationship despite the barriers of their time and place. Narrow understandings broaden, hospitality is shared and community is developed. May we apply these teachings to our lives today.

## ✧ **Gathering Hymn 301 *Let Us Build a House***

## ✧Opening Ourselves to God's Grace

If you come into this place  
with the hope of growing deeper,  
with the hope of connecting,  
with the hope of glimpsing God,  
and if all of those things take place,  
and your spirit is moved,  
and you swear God is near,  
and you feel more than lucky for the gift  
of faith,  
and then the service comes to an end,  
and it's time for you to leave,  
and you ask yourself,  
"Where do we go from here?"  
Then I would say to you,  
"Go out into the world  
to love and to share and to learn,  
but come back soon,  
because this is the beginning.  
This is only the beginning.

So come on in.  
Fill your cup here.  
Be present here.  
God is here."  
Let us worship God.



## ✧Call to Confession

One of the things I love about the prayer of confession is it allows us to claim that we are works in progress, and there is beauty in that.  
You don't have to be perfect here.  
You don't have to have it all figured out here.  
You don't have to have a five-step plan for what's next here.  
You just have to show up with your messy, beautiful self, and be honest.  
So friends, let us be honest. Let us share our innermost lives with God. . .

✧ **Sharing our Innermost Lives with God**

**ALL: Forgiving God,**

**We are naturals when it comes to stalling out.**

**We reach a certain point in the relationship, in the conversation, in our faith, and then we stall.**

**We buy property on the top of the plateau and build a house there, destined to never dig deeper or climb higher.**

**Forgive us for giving up on the things that matter.**

**Forgive us for confusing the plateau with the mountain top.**

**Forgive us for taking the easy way out instead of doing the hard work of curiosity, relationship-building, vulnerability, and connection.**

**Inspire us to see new paths for where we can go from here.**

**With hope and honesty we pray,**

**Amen.**

✧ **Words of Forgiveness**

Family of faith,

We are works in progress, but we are works in progress designed, created, and claimed by God.

No matter what you have done or left undone this week, today is a fresh start.

Hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

**ALL: God is with me on the mountain top, and God is with me on the plateau. I am loved, claimed, and forgiven. Thanks be to God! Amen.**

✧ **Special Music *We Will Go, God* by Shannon Cerneka and Orin Johnson**

I) We will go, God, where You would have us go, and we will do what You would have us do.

(II) Christ Jesus, we will follow you.

(III) We will be strong. We will be strong.

*Refrains may be sung consecutively or simultaneously.*

The original version of the song has been adapted by permission of the copyright holder.

© 2008 GIA Publications. Inc. All rights reserved.

Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-741852

## ✧ **Prayer for Illumination**

Holy One,  
we know that you are always speaking—  
through strangers and friends,  
through sunrise and sunset,  
through random acts of kindness  
and feelings that stir hope awake in us.  
We know that you speak through dreams and prayer,  
through a still, small voice and bursts of overwhelming joy.

We know that you are always speaking,  
but we also know that we are inclined to miss it.  
Settle our spirits now to hear your word fully.  
We want to be part of the conversation.  
Gratefully we pray, Amen.

## ✧ **Bible Wisdom Teachings**

### **Ruth 1: 1-22**

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there about ten years, both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had considered his people and given them food. So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The LORD grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband." Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. They said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the LORD has turned against me." Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

So she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." But Ruth said,  
"Do not press me to leave you  
or to turn back from following you!  
Where you go, I will go;  
Where you lodge, I will lodge;  
your people shall be my people,  
and your God my God.  
Where you die, I will die—  
there will I be buried.  
May the LORD do thus and so to me,  
and more as well,  
if even death parts me from you!"

When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her. So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them; and the women said, 'Is this Naomi?' She said to them,  
'Call me no longer Naomi,  
call me Mara,  
for the Almighty has dealt bitterly with me.  
I went away full,  
but the Lord has brought me back empty;  
why call me Naomi  
when the Lord has dealt harshly with me,  
and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?'

So Naomi returned together with Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, who came back with her from the country of Moab. They came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

### **Acts 10: 34-43**

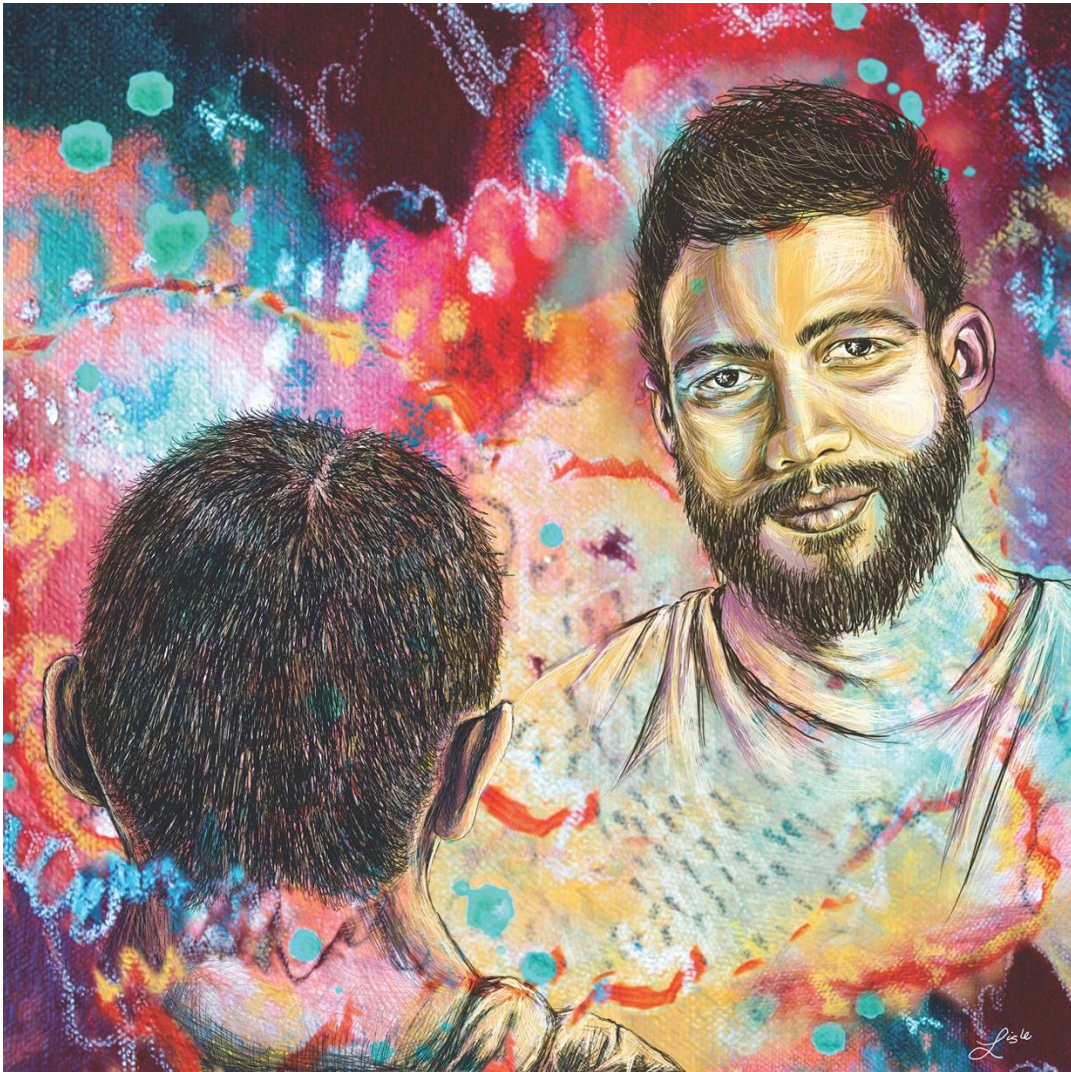
Then Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'



**One:** May we hear anew the origin stories of our faith and draw from the roots of our tradition.

**All: Thanks be to our God.**

✧ **Message** “I’ve been meaning to ask...where do we go from here?” Rev. Trish Eckert



✧ **Reflection Questions**

- How do we take with us what we’ve learned?
- How can we continue to be in conversation and relationship?
- What do you love?
- What gives you hope?
- What’s missing?
- What gives you energy?
- What’s next for us to continue this work in our community?

✧ **Short period of silent reflection for writing**

✧ **Sharing Our Wisdom with a partner**



✧ **Hymn *Speak Lord*** (songsheet)

✧ **Our gifts of support**

✧ **Community Prayers & the Pastoral Prayer**

✧ **Affirmation of Faith**

**ALL: We believe that God is a conversationalist,  
drawing close to us and asking,**

**“What do you need? Where does it hurt? Who do you long to be?”**

**We see this conversational God in Jesus Christ, God’s own flesh,  
who walked the earth speaking with the poor,  
the hungry, the lonely, and the outcast.**

**Therefore, we believe that our call as people of faith  
is to continue this holy conversation  
with those who look and think like us,  
as well as with those who share little in common with us.**

**We believe that through these conversations,  
we are able to catch a glimpse of the Kin-dom of God,  
so we continue the conversation in hope.**

**Amen.**

✧ **Words of Invitation and the Breaking of the Bread  
Communion of the People**

Welcome

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of conversation,

we are here, trying to be courageous.

We are here, trying to be curious.

We are here, trying to build connections.

It is easier said than done.

We need you like we need this community, like we need the sunrise every morning.  
So draw near to us. Teach us how to speak. Teach us how to listen. Teach us how to find  
you in the spaces between our words and our ears.

And as you do, meet us at this Table with open arms  
and holy conversation so that we might  
catch a glimpse of you in this meal and be changed.

God of conversation,  
we've been meaning to ask,  
"Where do we go from here?  
How do we speak truth?  
How do we listen for you?"  
Guide us.  
Be with us.  
Hold us.  
Unsettle us.  
Catch us.  
Feed us.  
Fill us.  
Meet us here.  
God, we are open.  
Pour into us.  
Gratefully we pray. Amen.

### ✧**The Lord's Prayer**

(A Traditional prayer in a different voice ~ Lyn Seils Robertson)

**ALL: Our Father/Mother who art  
in heaven,  
Our Creator, you are all around us  
and within us.  
Hallowed be thy name.  
We praise you with many different  
names.  
Thy kingdom come, thy will be  
done.  
Help us live as we understand we  
should  
from knowing you in harmony and  
connectedness  
with each other,  
on earth as it is in heaven,  
with all creatures of the earth,  
and with the earth and the  
universe itself.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
Help us to use your resources  
wisely  
so that we might be sustained,**

**and forgive us our sins as we  
forgive those who sin against us.  
Help us take responsibility when  
we fail to live harmoniously,  
and help us understand and  
forgive when others let us down.  
Lead us not into temptation;  
let us know you well enough that  
we are not  
tempted to live outside of your  
love.  
Deliver us from evil and empower  
us  
to work together to overcome evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the  
power, and the glory forever.  
We believe that you created the  
world  
and that you will be all around us  
and within us forever.  
Amen.**

## Words of Invitation and the Breaking of the Bread

### Communion of the People



### Prayer after Communion

Faithful and loving God, we rest in the truth that you are always with us. You strengthen our relationship in you as we share in the Bread of Life. You show your love for us as we share in the Cup of Salvation. May we reconnect and recommit to listening closely and hearing deeply what it is you have in store for us as we prepare to walk the journey that unfolds before us; secure in the knowledge that you walk with us and that we as a community accompany one another along the way. Amen.

### ✧ **Benediction**

Family of faith,  
as you leave this place, may God grant you  
the curiosity to counter assumptions,  
the vulnerability to befriend,  
the bravery to speak your truth,  
the wisdom to listen,  
the strength to ask for help,  
the resiliency to choose love, even when it's hard,  
and the awareness of the Holy Spirit always beside you.  
In the name of the Great Connector—Love itself,  
go in peace.

*Now that the worship has ended, may the service truly begin.*

### ✧ **Our Response:**

***Holy One, now we your servants go in peace. Your Word lives on in us.***

### ✧ **Postlude I, the Lord of Sea and Sky** ~ Tippe musicians

“I’ve been meaning to ask” series created by | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)  
Liturgical resources and communion service written by the creative team | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)

