



"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

September 24, 2023

9:30 a.m.



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

"I've been meaning to ask...what do you need?"

Rev. Trish Eckert

✧ **Prelude** Zo Trembley

✧ **Welcome and community news**

- Join us after the worship service today for our 3rd Adult Education discussion group, further exploring our 4-week worship series, “I’ve been meaning to ask...” There will be one more session next Sunday, October 1st. These gatherings are giving us the opportunity to delve more deeply into the themes embedded in this series, and we’ve had some really rich discussions so far. No need to have attended before. Everyone is welcome.

✧ **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 ~ Here if You Need Me** Prayer by Rev. Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

I got the call and almost
rushed right over.
I wanted to hold your hand and
tell you it would be okay.
I wanted to start a meal train.
I wanted to bring casseroles and flowers
and hope of better days.
I wanted to take my heart
out of my chest
and put it in yours
so that the ache might fade.
I wanted to speak, and fight,
with the person in charge.
I wanted to get justice,
I wanted to make it fair.
I wanted to start a campaign.
I wanted to rewind time,
to easy, better days.

There is so much that I want to do,
but it’s not about me.
It’s about you.
So tell me—
what do *you* need?
I am here.

I am listening.

✧ **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 *You're Here for a Reason* ~ Nancy Tillman**

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



This series encourages 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 discern way forward together as a community, as we seek to understand our call in our current context – what missions and ministries are we led to engage in? How might we assess our capacity for the work we feel led to do? This journey is only possible if we come to know one another more fully and enter into discernment with intention.

In the previous two weeks, we’ve explored together the questions, “where are you from” and “where does it hurt.” This week’s question, “what do you need,” recognizes that we all have needs and that we need each other. It reminds us that we each have unique needs; we can’t assume to know what is best for others. It also prompts us to reflect on our own needs, priorities, and desires, which can sometimes be difficult to discern from one situation to the next.

In our Bible Wisdom teachings today, through the First Testament, we will witness that in the midst of Job’s afflictions, three of his friends promptly leave their homes and come to him. They tear their garments, weep loudly, and sit with him for seven days, saying nothing. Their response is the ministry of presence, of true solidarity, of

seeing his excruciating pain and joining him there. In this morning's Gospel reading, Paul, who has been beaten and imprisoned, writes to Timothy with a simple request: "Come quickly." He lists those who abandoned him, but says, "I hope that God doesn't hold it against them!" In his greatest moment of need, Paul doesn't need revenge, but instead asks for companionship. In essence, this is what we all need—for someone to come quickly, to gather the items we want, and to simply show up.



© a sanctified art | sanctifiedart.org *Paul in Prison* by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman
Inspired by 2 Timothy 4:9-19 Hand-carved blocks printed with oil-based ink on paper

✧ **Gathering Hymn 807 *When We Must Bear Persistent Pain***

✧ **Opening Ourselves to God's Grace**

Family of faith, this must be the place.

This is the place for connection and growth,
for community and hope.
This must be the place for questions like,
"Where are you from?" and, "What do you need?"
For whispers of: "I've been thinking of you,"
and, "I've been meaning to ask. . ."

This must be the place,
because all belong here.
All are welcome here.
All hurt and joy, needs and prayers,
dreams and love, are welcome here.

Take two minutes to turn to someone near you and share one thing that has brought you deep joy this week so that we might begin our service with joy, gratitude, and connection.

God is near. Let us worship together.

✧Call to Confession

How many of you have ever had a bad day
and found someone offering you unsolicited advice?
How many of you have ever had a bad week and had someone rush in
with dozens of suggestions for how you might fix things,
as if you hadn't thought of that before?

We have all been there, and we have all done that.
It is part of our humanity.

Our scripture reminds us today that often in the face of hurt, what people really need is
not a list of advice or solutions, but the simple presence of love.

So let us pray to God today, acknowledging that we are works in progress,
and that relationships always come with mistakes and confession. Let us pray:

✧Sharing our Innermost Lives with God

Gracious God,
sometimes life feels like cooking with flour—
it looks like it should be easy, but we always make a mess.
This is particularly true when it comes to our relationships.
We so desperately long to say the right thing,
to be the right thing, to find the right solution,
that we overstep the line.
Forgive us for assuming the place you fill.
Forgive us for imagining that we, in all our humanity,
could possibly fix all the hurt in this world.
Instead, give us the grace and the strength to stand by our loved ones
in their moments of need to witness their hurt without trying to fix it.
You are God. We are not. Teach us how to be a friend.
Teach us how to ask, "What do you need?"
Teach us how to point to you.
Gratefully we pray. Amen.

✧Words of Forgiveness

Family of faith, no matter how many
times you have
spoken without listening,
assumed without knowing,
offered without asking,
or rushed without waiting—
you are forgiven.
God knows your desire and your intent.

God knows when we try and miss the
mark,
and God surrounds us in grace.

So hear and believe the good news of the
gospel:

**ALL: Every day is a new day for
love.**

We are claimed. We are forgiven.

We are invited into relationship.

**Thanks be to God for growth and
grace that know no end. Amen**

✧ **Special Music *Speak Lord, I'm Listening***

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✧ **Prayer for Illumination**

God of long winters and longer summers,
in the words of Paul, do your best to come to us quickly.

Come to us with loud praise and joy,
or appear to us in a still, small voice.

Come to us through friends,
or come to us through strangers.

Come to us in this text and in this hour of worship,
and come to us quickly if you can.

We are seeking you.

We are always seeking you.

With grateful hearts cracked open by love, we pray. Amen.

✧ **Bible Wisdom Teachings**

Job 2: 11-13

11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all these troubles that had come upon him, each of them set out from his home—Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They met together to go and console and comfort him. 12 When they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him, and they raised their voices and wept aloud; they tore their robes and threw dust in the air upon their heads. 13 They sat with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

2 Timothy 4: 9-18

9 Do your best to come to me soon, 10 for Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. 11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful in my ministry. 12 I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus. 13 When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments. 14 Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will pay him back for his deeds. 15 You also must beware of him, for he strongly opposed our message.

16 At my first defense no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! 17 But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed, and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. 18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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...what do you need? ”



© a sanctified art | sanctifiedart.org *Break Open* by Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity
Inspired by Job 2:11-13 Digital painting with mixed media collage

✧**Reflection Questions**

If you are hurting right now, may this image remind you: you are not alone. God’s heart is breaking open for you. —Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity

- What do you need to feel seen and heard?
- What do you need to feel whole?
- What do you want, prioritize, desire, hope for?

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

✧**Sharing Our Wisdom with a partner**

✧**Hymn 772 *Live Into Hope***

✧Affirmation of Faith

ALL: We believe in relationships.

**We believe in asking hard questions,
in showing up for one another,
and in sitting together through the pain.**

**We believe in listening with grace,
learning with curiosity,
and apologizing with sincerity.**

**We believe in asking for help,
saying what we need,
and trusting that no degree of vulnerability
could strip us of God's love.**

**We believe in trying our best
and offering grace
when our best is not enough.**

**And we believe that God is in all relationships—
modeling for us the value of community
through the relationships of the Trinity.
So we love today,
and we strive to love
even more tomorrow.
Let it be so. Amen.**



✧Our gifts of support

✧Community Prayers & the Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

**ALL: Beloved,
our Father and Mother,
in whom is heaven,
hallowed be your name,
followed be your royal way,
done be your will and rule,
throughout the whole creation.**

**With the bread we need for today,
feed us.**

**In the hurts we absorb from one another,
forgive us.**

**In times of temptation and test,
Strengthen us.**

**From trials too great to endure,
spare us.**

**From the grip of all that is evil,
free us.**

**For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
Now and forever. Amen.**

From 'Human Rites' by Ward and Wild

✧ **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** Zo Trembley



