

AC 2022 - Wednesday Evening Worship w/Janet Wolf

Call to Worship

Melba McCallum/Leader: Holy God, come and dwell among us as we seek to enter into your Word from your servant Mark.

ALL (Melba): Engage our imaginations and stir our hearts. Open our eyes to your call upon our lives. Open our ears so that we may hear the cry of the world. Open our minds so that we ponder the Way of your Kin-dom. Open our lives so that we may walk your path in love, justice, and service.

Voice #1/Sharon Brignon: The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'" (Mar 1:1-3)

ALL (Melba): Open our eyes, Creator God, that we may discover the path on which you desire for us to journey.

Voice #2/Sharon Brignon: "Listen. What do you make of this? A farmer planted seed. As he scattered the seed, some of it fell on the road and birds ate it. Some fell in the gravel; it sprouted quickly but didn't put down roots, so when the sun came up it withered just as quickly. Some fell in the weeds; as it came up, it was strangled among the weeds and nothing came of it. Some fell on good earth and came up with a flourish, producing a harvest exceeding his wildest dreams. "Are you listening to this? Really listening?" (Mar 4:3-9)

ALL (Melba): Open our ears, Sustainer God, that we might really listen.

Voice #3/Effie McGill: One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mar 12:28-31)

ALL (Melba): Open our minds, Liberator God, that we might demonstrate our love for you in the love that we offer our neighbor.

Voice #4/Brenda Brown: They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" Jesus stood still and said, "Call him here." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart; get up, he is calling you." So throwing off his

cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. Then Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said to him, "My teacher, let me see again." Jesus said to him, "Go; your faith has made you well." Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way. (Mar 10:46-52)

ALL (Melba): Open our lives, Transforming God, that we might work in your world, as seekers and doers of Holy justice.

Voice#5/Josey Snyder: Then they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling and those who were buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold doves, and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. He was teaching and saying, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers." And when the chief priests and the scribes heard it, they kept looking for a way to kill him; for they were afraid of him because the whole crowd was spellbound by his teaching. And when evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city. (Mar 11:15-19)

ALL (Melba): Open our lives, Forgiving God, that we be the receptacles of your grace. Help us move gently and generously into your Kin-dom. Dwell deeply in our hearts so that we might open ourselves to one another. Give us the faith to know that as we follow you into fresh spaces of understanding, new places of community, and re-imagined ways of living justly, you will re-member us in Beloved Community. And for this, we give you thanks. Amen.

Opening Hymn - "Thy Word" - Jay Locklear

(refrain)

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet

And a light unto my path

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet

And a light unto my path

When I feel afraid, think I've lost my way

Still you're there right beside me

And nothing will I fear as long as you are near

Please be near me to the end.

(refrain)

Now I will not forget your love for me and yet

My heart forever is wandering

Jesus, be my guide and hold me to your side,

And I will love you to the end.

(refrain)

Introduction of Janet Wolf - Steve Taylor

Sermon - "Thy Kin-dom Come!" - Janet Wolf

Revelation 22:1-2, 16-17

Dr. Laura Early - All God's Children UMC Introduce Children

Greetings members and friends of the North Carolina Annual Conference. As the Game Changers make their way to the stage, I would also invite the Multi-Site Ministry of All God's Children UMC; Vernon UMC; First UMC Williamston; and Holly Springs UMC whose love and support Keeps the Children encouraged...to join us to the left of the stage.

Game Changers meet weekly to learn leadership skills and ways to make their voices heard.

This year our primary focus was the document EACH DAY IN AMERICA, provided by The Children's Defense Fund. Game Changers discuss the issues that Children all across our nation face.

Call the Children by name

Each Day in America

_____ - 1,909 Children are arrested
_____ - Each Day 9 children are Killed by a Gun
_____ - Each Day 827 babies are born into extreme
poverty
_____ - And Each day 1,785 Children are confirmed
abused or neglected.

It is one thing to have Children in our thoughts and even more when they are in our prayers. So each week we voice our hope with our motto from All Are Welcome Here by Alexander Penfold. YET – OUR Call is to make a Change with our Actions.

**We are part of a Community.
Our strength is our Diversity.
A shelter from Adversity.
All Are Welcome Here.**

**Gather now, let's all take part.
We'll play music, we'll make art.
We'll share stories, from the heart.**

All Are Welcome Here.

In our classroom safe and sound.

Fears are lost and hope is found.

Raise your hand, we'll all go around.

All Are Welcome Here.

One of our responses to help Children who suffer in turbulent and stressful times is with the creation of Bedtime Blessing Bags. Game Changers will become a leader in offering hope and comfort to children who have lived through difficult and turbulent experiences. Bedtime Blessing bags will be assembled at Place of Possibilities four times a year...to be distributed thru Social Services, Foster Care; Elementary Schools; Law Enforcement agencies; and Natural Disaster agencies. Each Bedtime Blessing Bag will include Blankets, Sheet Set, Bedtime book, Teddy Bear, Toiletry Set, Towel and Wash Cloth. Our hope is to bring a child a night of restful sleep and a day filled with the understanding of how much they are loved. **(Each item will be held up by a child)**

Our first Bedtime Blessing Bag is presented to our Bishop Leonard Fairley. We have provided information for you if you would like to join us in this Effort.

In the midst of troubling and dark times we will strive to be a light in the darkness. In closing we would like to share our version of This Little Light of Mine. As we sing...If you will be a light in the darkness for children everywhere...please stand as you feel the Fire in your heart.

Special Music - Children Sing - "This Little Light of Mine"

*Ask Congregation to Stand

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine
Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine
Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

All through the night, I'm gonna let it shine
All through the night, I'm gonna let it shine

All through the night, I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

Prayer - Franciscan Prayer - Lisa Bachman

Leader/Lisa Bachman: May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that you may live deep within your heart.

All: May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, freedom, and peace.

Leader/Lisa Bachman: May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, and war, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and to turn their pain into joy.

All: May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world so that you can do what others claim cannot be done.

Leader/Lisa Bachman: And the Blessing of God, who Creates, Redeems, and Sanctifies, be upon you and all you love and pray for this day, and forevermore.

All: Amen.

*Closing Hymn - "Canticle of the Turning"

Verse 1

My soul cries out with a joyful shout
That the God of my heart is great
And my spirit sings of the Wondrous things
That you bring to the ones who wait

You fixed your sight on your servant's plight
And my weakness you did not spurn
So from east to west shall my name be blest
Could the world be about to turn?

(refrain)

My heart shall sing of the day you bring
Let the fires of your justice burn
Wipe away all tears for the dawn draws near
And the world is about to turn!

Verse 2

Though I am small, my God, my all,
You work great things in me
And your mercy will last from the depths of the past

To the end of the age to be

Your very name puts the proud to shame
And to those who would for you yearn
You will show your might put the strong to flight
For the world is about to turn
(refrain)

Verse 3

From the halls of power to the fortress tower
Not a stone will be left on stone
Let the king beware for your justice tears
Ev'ry tyrant from his throne

The hungry poor shall weep no more
For the food they can never earn
There are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed
For the world is about to turn
(refrain)

Verse 4

Though the nations rage from age to age
We remember who holds us fast
God's mercy must deliver us
From the conqueror's crushing grasp

This saving word that our forebears heard
Is the promise which holds us bound
'Til the spear and rod can be crushed by God
Who is turning the world around
(refrain)

(refrain)

***Benediction** (from "A Statement of Faith of the United Church of Canada,"
The United Methodist Hymnal, no. 883)

Leader/Brenda Brown: We are called to be the church:
to celebrate God's presence, to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.
We are not alone. Thanks be to God.
Go in Peace. Go in Grace. Go in Christ. **All: Amen**