

Order Of Service – May 23, 2021

Stories as a Way In: the Parables of Jesus

Rev. Bruce Taylor

Music for Contemplation: “Amazing Grace,” “Prayers From the Forest” and “Wind Spirit” by Bill Miller. Photos by Steve Schmidt and Susan Jhirad, and © Soul Matters.

Sound of the Bell

Prelude: “Heather on the Hill” by Frederick Loewe. Molly Ruggles, piano.

Opening Words: “The Wisdom to Survive” by Wendell Berry, *Singing the Living Tradition* #465

Welcome

Chalice Lighting: words by Rachel Naomi Remen, *Lifting Our Voices* #239

Covenant

Love is the heart of this church.

We commit to:

Being a diverse, welcoming community of mutual care and respect;

Supporting each other's spiritual journey and search for truth and meaning;

Promoting justice and serving the wider community.

We hold ourselves to this promise with compassion and understanding.

Hymn: “Let All the Beauty We Have Known,” words by Dana McLean Greeley, music: English melody, adapt. and harmony by Ralph Vaughan Williams. (*Singing the Living Tradition*, #326). Molly Ruggles, piano; Brendan O’Brine, vocals.

Let all the beauty we have known illuminate our hearts and minds.

Rejoice in wonders daily shown, in faith and joy, and love that binds.

We celebrate with singing hearts the loveliness of sky and earth,
the inspiration of the arts, the miracle of every birth.

Life's music and its poetry surround and bless us through our days.
For these we sing in harmony, together giving thanks and praise.

Candles of Joy, Sorrow and Milestones

Meditation: words from a homily by Howard Thurman

Offering: "Mourning Dove" by Molly Ruggles

Reading: "The Garden" from *Frog and Toad Together* by Arnold Lobel

Hymn: "Wake, Now, My Senses", words: Thomas J. S. Mikelson, music: traditional Irish melody, harmony by Carlton R. Young. (*Singing the Living Tradition* #298). Alex Cumming, vocals and accordian.

Wake, now, my senses, and hear the earth call;
feel the deep power of being in all;
keep, with the web of creation your vow,
giving, receiving as love shows us how.

Wake, now, my reason, reach out to the new;
join with each pilgrim who quests for the true;
honor the beauty and wisdom of time;
suffer thy limit, and praise the sublime.

Wake, now, compassion, give heed to the cry;
voices of suffering fill the wide sky;
take as your neighbor both stranger and friend,
praying and striving their hardship to end.

Wake, now, my conscience, with justice thy guide;
join with all people whose rights are denied;
take not for granted a privileged place;
God's love embraces the whole human race.

Wake, now, my vision of ministry clear;
brighten my pathway with radiance here;
mingle my calling with all who will share;
work toward a planet transformed by our care.

Sermon: *Stories as a Way In: the Parables of Jesus*

Hymn: “When Shall We Learn,” words by W. H. Auden, music by Carl Flentge Schalk. (*Singing the Living Tradition*, #334). Molly Ruggles, piano; Alex Daum, vocals.

When shall we learn, what should be clear as day,
we cannot choose what we are free to love?
We are created with and from the world
to suffer with and by it day by day.

For through our lively traffic of the day,
in my own person I am forced to know
how much must be forgotten out of love,
how much must be forgiven, even love.

Or else we make a scarecrow of the day,
loose ends and jumble of our common world,
or else our changing flesh can never know
there must be sorrow if there can be love.

Closing Words: words by V. Emil Gudmundson from *Singing the Living Tradition* #693

Postlude: “The Pen is Greater” (*Singing the Living Tradition*, #320), Molly Ruggles, piano improvisation.

Question for coffee-hour discussion: Can you recall a wisdom story, or life experience, that has changed your perspective?