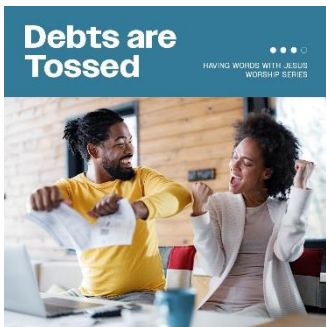


*As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.*

*May we together experience the presence of God*

+++++

***We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord***



**Prelude**

**Welcome**

**Announcements/Joys & Concerns**

Today is the reminder that one must be faithful in small things as a prelude to faithfulness in all things.

We begin worship with a call to walk in the light of the Lord, to pay attention to the choices we make each day.

Furthermore, today we are called to develop and nurture friendships with the neighbors all around us, not simply to fill our pews and sustain our church, but to engage in building the kingdom through radical hospitality. We, like the Christ we follow, are to love all God’s children, especially those who have no idea that they are indeed children of God.

So let us begin with a vision that looks first to God and then to community within and then to the world beyond the walls and let us be driven by the question, “How do we share this gift of faith?”

Jesus says that it won’t be easy, so take small steps. Learn to be faithful in the small things, the daily things, the quickly forgotten and passed-by things; and then the big things, the true riches—relationship and family and hope and joy and justice and peace—will be yours as well.

Be faithful in the things that don’t really belong to you—remember “give Caesar what is Caesar’s”—then you will be faithful with what is your own. And what is your own? Your soul, your salvation, your connections, your passion for justice, and your ability to see the face of God in the other, that’s what is yours. That’s the currency of the kin-dom.

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Come, let us worship the one who calls us here.

**We gather to worship with joy and in hope.**

Come, let us worship the one who desires our hearts.

**We bring our whole selves in worship to our God.**

Come, let us set aside all that distracts us from true worship.

**We come as we are and ask the Spirit to gather us in and direct our vision.**

Come, let us worship the one who calls us here.

**We are here to worship with all that we are.**

### **UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

(inspired by Luke 16:1-13; Matthew 6:33)

**O God, we want to have our cake and eat it, too:  
we want to be a friend of the world and still be your friend.**

**Yet, Jesus taught us: “No one can serve two masters.”**

**Give us strength and courage to get our priorities straight:  
help us to seek your kingdom first.  
Help us to live faithfully and joyfully in the world,  
and to be friends with the people you call us to serve.  
Help us also to remember that our best relationship  
is the one we have with you,  
We pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### **\*HYMN OF PRAISE UMH#526 “What A Friend We Have In Jesus”**

*Author: Joseph M. Scriven (ca. 1855)*

*Publication Date: 1989*

*Tune Information*

*Composer: Charles C. Converse (1868)*

*<http://www.gbod3.org/sorter/audio/526.mp3>*

**1. What a friend we have in Jesus,  
all our sins and griefs to bear!**

**What a privilege to carry  
everything to God in prayer!**

**O what peace we often forfeit,  
O what needless pain we bear,  
all because we do not carry  
everything to God in prayer.**

**2. Have we trials and temptations?  
Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged;  
take it to the Lord in prayer.**

**Can we find a friend so faithful  
who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our every weakness;  
take it to the Lord in prayer.**

**3. Are we weak and heavy laden,  
cumbered with a load of care?  
Precious Savior, still our refuge;  
take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?  
Take it to the Lord in prayer!  
In his arms he'll take and shield thee;  
thou wilt find a solace there.**

## ***We Hear God's Word***

**Gospel Reading..... Luke 16:1-13**

### **New Revised Standard Version**

*16 Then Jesus[a] said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. 2 So he summoned him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer.’ 3 Then the manager said to himself, ‘What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. 4 I*

have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.' 5 So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' 6 He answered, 'A hundred jugs of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.' 7 Then he asked another, 'And how much do you owe?' He replied, 'A hundred containers of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill and make it eighty.' 8 And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly, for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. 9 And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth[b] so that when it is gone they may welcome you into the eternal homes.[c]

10 "Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. 11 If, then, you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth,[d] who will entrust to you the true riches? 12 And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? 13 No slave can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth." [e]  
The Word of God for the People of God, **Thanks be to God!**

### **"Presentation of Bibles to our 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class"**

#### **FAITH HYMN UMH #399 "Take My Life, and Let It Be"**

Author: Frances R. Havergal (1873)

Publication Date: 1989

Composer: Louis J. F. Hérold (1839)

Arranger: George Kingsley (1839)

<http://www.gbod3.org/sorter/audio/399.mp3>

**1. Take my life, and let it be  
consecrated, Lord, to thee.  
Take my moments and my days;  
let them flow in ceaseless praise.  
Take my hands, and let them move  
at the impulse of thy love.  
Take my feet, and let them be  
swift and beautiful for thee.**

**2. Take my voice, and let me sing  
always, only, for my King.  
Take my lips, and let them be  
filled with messages from thee.  
Take my silver and my gold;**

**not a mite would I withhold.  
Take my intellect, and use  
every power as thou shalt choose.**

**3. Take my will, and make it thine;  
it shall be no longer mine.  
Take my heart, it is thine own;  
it shall be thy royal throne.  
Take my love, my Lord, I pour  
at thy feet its treasure-store.  
Take myself, and I will be  
ever, only, all for thee.**

#### **"Message"**

#### **PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE**

Father, we are your people, chosen by you. As we meet together in this place, help us to listen, to understand and to remember. Make us aware that we are meeting not simply with one another, but with you. Let your presence be real to each of us. As we pray, may it be just like speaking with you. As we listen, help us to concentrate, so that we really hear your word, and help us to take in and retain all that we hear here, see and experience this morning. Hear our confessions of those things we have done (A silence is kept.). Hear our

confessions of those things which we ought not to have done. (A silence is kept.) Now hear our confessions of what we could or should have done in a different way to better reflect who you are in us. (A silence is kept.) Hear now our praise and thanksgivings for your blessings and unearned grace give to us. (A silence is kept.) It is in the name of Jesus, your beloved son, that we pray as we join our voices together, God, using the words that Jesus taught us...Our Father...

**Offertory (UM Hymnal 95) Doxology**

**(Wykoff only)**

### **Offertory Prayer**

Holy giver of all good blessings, we find ourselves under a debt we can never overcome. Every blessing we have received or hope to receive comes from your generosity. The gifts we bring to you this morning pale in comparison to the bottom line of our ledger. Yet you manage your kingdom on a different economic model – one where the equity is grace, forgiveness, compassion, mercy, and justice. You encourage us to be shrewd in the world's money, knowing it is not the currency that matters in the end. And so, we pray in the name of Jesus, whose life and death paid our debt. Amen. (Luke 16:1-13)

### **Departing Hymn FWS #2129 "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus"**

*author: Anon.*

*Copyright: Public Domain*

<http://www.gbod3.org/sorter/audio/2129.mp3>

**1 I have decided to follow Jesus,  
I have decided to follow Jesus,  
I have decided to follow Jesus -  
no turning back, no turning back.**

**2 The world behind me, the cross before me,  
the world behind me, the cross before me,  
the world behind me, the cross before me -  
no turning back, no turning back.**

**3 Though none go with me, still I will follow,  
though none go with me, still I will follow,  
though none go with me, still I will follow—  
no turning back, no turning back.**

**4 I have decided to follow Jesus,  
I have decided to follow Jesus,  
I have decided to follow Jesus -  
no turning back, no turning back.**

### **Benediction**

Friends, our worship continues even as we leave this moment. We have gathered in joy to sing and pray and hear God's word. We have come as friends, called friends by the Christ we follow. And now we are sent out into the world, to make friends. Let us be about the business we have been given. Let us go with God. Amen.

**\*POSTLUDE**