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

May we together experience the presence of God.

** - You are invited to stand at these times.... if you are able*

We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord



Prelude – Welcome - Announcements

Opening Meditation

Today Jesus is in Jerusalem and the pressure against him continues to rise. The religious authorities bring a series of controversial questions to Jesus in an effort to discredit him in the eyes of the people. But today we look at a question brought by a scribe. Unlike the other questions posed to Jesus so far, this one appears to be sincere and yet given the context it too was likely meant as a trap for Jesus.

You see Jesus has just finished telling the Sadducees that they are wrong in their teaching on the resurrection when a scribe steps out of the crowd. He is impressed by what he heard from Jesus acknowledging that he answered them well. And so he asks Jesus: Which commandment is the most important of all? Now, it's not surprising that a scribe would ask a question like this. The scribes and Pharisees were intently concerned with the law.

So, we will hear Jesus respond by quoting two passages of Scripture from the Torah. The first is from Deuteronomy 6:4-5 "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" But Jesus doesn't stop there. He says that there is another foundational commandment. He then quotes Leviticus 19:18 saying, You shall love your neighbor as yourself (v.31).

It all boils down to love. The summary of the law is love.

-Love for God and love for others are not separate items.

With love in our hearts this day let us join in our Call to Worship

Call to Worship (Based on Psalm 34)

Bless the Lord at all times; let God's praises be continually in your mouths. Come and bless the Lord . . .

From fields and from farmhouses. From boats and from lakeshores!

Come and bless the Lord . . .

From subway stations and city parks. From crowded streets and from bus platforms!

Bless the Lord at all times . . .

From classrooms and college halls. From playgrounds and playing fields!

are right, Teacher; you have truly said that 'he is one, and besides him there is no other'; 33 and 'to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength' and 'to love one's neighbor as oneself'—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." 34 When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that no one dared to ask him any question.

Word of God for the People of God! **Thanks be to God!**

Children's Moments

***Faith Hymn UMH #432**

"Jesu, Jesu"

Author: Tom Colvin (1969)

Copyright: © 1969, 1989 Hope Publishing Co.

[Refrain:]

**Jesu, Jesu,
fill us with your love, show us how to serve
the neighbors we have from you.**

**1 Kneels at the feet of his friends,
silently washes their feet,
Master who acts as a slave to them.
(Refrain)**

**2 Neighbors are rich and poor,
neighbors are black and white,
neighbors are near and far away.
(Refrain)**

**3 These are the ones we should serve,
these are the ones we should love;
all these are neighbors to us and you.
(Refrain)**

**4 Loving puts us on our knees,
serving as though we are slaves,
this is the way we should live with you.
(Refrain)**

**5 Kneel at the feet of our friends,
silently washing their feet,
this is the way we should live with you.
(Refrain)**

****Meditation****

Joys/Concerns

**Pastoral Prayer / Lord's Prayer
(inspired by Deuteronomy 6:1-9, Mark 12:28-34)**

Our prayer today is for all who are victims of cruel laws and petty laws, those who're subjected to prejudice denied opportunities, excluded, pushed to margins.

Our prayer today is for all those who're betrayed, who don't know loyalty, who fear to trust, or to love, and who don't realize that they're already loved by you.

Our prayer today is for the landless and homeless, the refugee and evicted, those who find themselves in foreign places and strange places.

Our prayer today is for the overworked and the underpaid, for those in dangerous work and those in compassionate work, for those who long to work but are denied the opportunity

Our prayer today is for the Church, for all the branches of the vine including this one we gather as part of, today:

Our prayer today is for the creation gifts, this earth in all its mighty wonder, yet tender fragility, the gifts of life and resources to treasure.

Our prayer today is for those who lie close to our hearts those whom we worry about, those whom we miss, those who carry disproportionate burdens at this time ...Those we have named before you this day.

Lord, we come to you in prayer as we unite our voices in the one true prayer your Son taught us, Our Father...

We Respond to God's Word with Thanksgiving

Offertory/Doxology/Prayer

Holy God, architect of the universe, you have wonderfully made every delicate intricacy of this world! Then you placed human beings in the center of it, as we stumble our way through living our lives in union with your will and in harmony with creation. As we offer our tithes and gifts this morning, we thank you for sending your Jesus to show us the way in simple language: loving you with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength; and loving our neighbor as we love ourselves. May our gifts be dedicated toward making both a reality. In Christ we pray. Amen. (Mark 12:28-34)

We Go Forth To Serve God and Our Neighbors

***Departing Hymn UMH #273 "Jesus' Hands Were Kind Hands"**

Author: Margaret Cropper (1975)

Publication Date: 1989

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Harmonizer: Carlton R. Young (1988)

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1 Jesus' hands were kind hands, doing good to all,

healing pain and sickness, blessing children small,
washing tired feet, and saving those who fall;
Jesus' hands were kind hands, doing good to all.

2 Take my hands, Lord Jesus, let them work for you;
make them strong and gentle, kind in all I do.
Let me watch you, Jesus, till I'm gentle too,
till my hands are kind hands, quick to work for you.

***Blessing:** Go in peace and in the strength the Spirit has given and renewed in you to love and serve our God.

*** Postlude***