



**MEDITATION**

**Use the talents you possess:  
For the woods would be silent  
if no birds sang  
except the best.  
– Anonymous**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

PASTOR MELINDA VEATCH

**PRELUDE** *Instrumental Music*

KATY KRISTOFFERSEN, PIANO

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

DONNA WHISKEMAN

Leader: Friends, let us worship and give thanks to God today, for God is great –

**People: In Jesus Christ, God has blessed us with gifts of talent, ability, and skill.**

Leader: Let us worship and give thanks to God today, for God is good –

**People: In Jesus Christ, God gives us the gift of community in the Holy Spirit, blessing us with love, forgiveness and encouragement, and equipping us with the gift of loving one another and the talent to grow in that love.**

Leader: Let us worship and give thanks to God today –

**People: because as we live together in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, we have opportunities to use our unique talents and skills to participate in God's work of love wherever we are.**

Leader: Let us worship and give thanks to God today --

**People: because we are God's people, gifted with love, empowered to live from love, and shaped to share that love with a hurting world.**

Leader: Sisters and brothers in Christ, let us worship and give God our thanks and praise!

**WELCOMING SONG\*** *God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending* (Robert L. Edwards, words; C. Hubert H. Parry, music)

**HYMN NO. 572**

**Verses 1 and 3**

**PRAYER OF PRAISE**

DONNA WHISKEMAN

**Holy God, you greet us with the gift of your love and grace this day, and you invite us to enter into grace-filled communion with you and one another. You have given each of us unique talents with which to share your love and your life with one another and those in the world around us. In this time of worship, open our hearts to your Spirit. Grow our ability to be your servants in the world. Take the talents you have given us and shape them for your service, that we may be part of all the ways you are at work in our lives and in this hurting world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

<sup>3</sup> For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

<sup>4</sup> For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function,

<sup>5</sup> so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. <sup>6</sup> We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophecy in accordance with your faith; <sup>7</sup> if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; <sup>8</sup> if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

ANTHEM *I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me* (African-American spiritual)

UCSJ CHOIR AND CONGREGATION

HYMN NO. 574

The choir will sing through all four verses, slowly

Then, please join us in singing all four verses, as we gradually speed up!

SCRIPTURE READING 2 MATTHEW 25:14-30

REV. MELINDA VEATCH

<sup>14</sup> “For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; <sup>15</sup> to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. <sup>16</sup> The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. <sup>17</sup> In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. <sup>18</sup> But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

<sup>19</sup> After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup> Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ <sup>21</sup> His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’

<sup>22</sup> And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ <sup>23</sup> His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’

<sup>24</sup> Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; <sup>25</sup> so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ <sup>26</sup> But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? <sup>27</sup> Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return, I would have received what was my own with interest.

<sup>28</sup> So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. <sup>29</sup> For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. <sup>30</sup> As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE WITH OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

*Thank you for your continued support of the church and our mission.*

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

## DOXOLOGY\*

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ, all people here below;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;  
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen

## JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE

DONNA WHISKEMAN AND REV. MELINDA VEATCH

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

CLOSING SONG\* *God of Grace and God of Glory* (Harry E. Fosdick, words; John Hughes, music) CONGREGATION

HYMN NO. 569      Verses 1, 3 and 4

## CLOSING PRAYER

DONNA WHISKEMAN

Gracious and Loving God, we thank you for the talents you have given us to live out your Way in the world. We thank you for the opportunity to bless the lives of others as we share the talents you have given. Keep us mindful that you have a purpose for every talent you have given us. Open our eyes to see where our talents are needed. Give us ears to listen as you counsel how we can best use them. Give us understanding to employ them wisely. Give us hearts to share out of gratitude for your generosity and not fear of what we might lose. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

POSTLUDE *Instrumental Music*

KATY KRISTOFFERSEN, PIANO

## CHARGE AND BLESSING

REV. MELINDA VEATCH

SENDING SONG\* *From "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" – verse 3* CONGREGATION

*Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest,  
well-spring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!  
Thou our Father, Christ our Brother — all who live in love are thine;  
Teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.*

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\*Indicates we stand - if it is comfortable

## OUR MISSION

- We are a loving and compassionate church family that *respects the dignity and integrity* of each individual.
- We find our joy and meaning through faith in God and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- We seek to promote Christian unity and to encourage understanding and cooperation with those from different traditions.
- We seek to foster deeper relationships with God and each other through worship, fellowship, growth and service.

So we, being many, are  
one body in Christ, and  
every one members one of  
another.

—Romans 12:5

### WE ARE AFFILIATED WITH

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH USA ~ THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ~ THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA



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