

THE  
**United Church**  
OF THE **San Juans**



**9TH SUNDAY  
OF PENTECOST  
IN ORDINARY  
TIME  
JULY 14, 2024**

**MEDITATION BEFORE WORSHIP**

Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose.

- Proverbs 18:21 (*The Message*)

We are masters of the unsaid words, but slaves of those we let slip out.

- Winston Churchill

Words are the most powerful things in the universe... Words are containers. They contain faith, or fear, and they produce after their kind.

- Charles Capps

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Pastor Melinda Veatch

**PRELUDE**

*Instrumental Music*

Katy Kristoffersen

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Tim Spangler

Leader: In the beginning, God spoke, and the heavens and the earth came into being.

**People: God called light to illuminate the darkness, creating the first day and night. God spoke and sun, moon, and stars came blazing into the heavens.**

Leader: With a word, God separated the water into sky and seas, and God called dry land up from the sea.

**People: God's word called vegetation to come sprouting up from the ground.**

Leader: With a word, God filled the sea with living creatures and sent birds flying into the sky and animals roving over the land.

**People: God spoke and created us from God's own image and character.**

Leader: God made us stewards to care for all of creation and for each other.

**People: We praise the God who by his word has blessed us with breath and life, with joy and care, with abundance and generosity.**

Leader: Let us worship God together!

**WELCOMING SONG\***

**Wonderful Words of Life**

(Philip P. Bliss)

Hymn No. 668

Verses 1 and 3

Congregation

\*Indicates we stand - if it is comfortable

**Holy God, you are the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. By your word, you formed the heavens and the earth. You called light, order, and life out of darkness and chaos. We celebrate the vision you have for our lives and the promise of your word. Forgive the whisper-roar of fear that causes us to doubt you. Keep us focused on your light that darkness cannot overcome, and grow our trust in your life that defeats death. May we celebrate and proclaim that life as we walk each day with Jesus Christ your Son. Amen.**

## SCRIPTURE READING

James 3:1-12 (*The Message*)

Shirley Didier

Don't be in any rush to become a teacher, my friends. Teaching is highly responsible work. Teachers are held to the strictest standards. And none of us is perfectly qualified. We get it wrong nearly every time we open our mouths. If you could find someone whose speech was perfectly true, you'd have a perfect person, in perfect control of life.

A bit in the mouth of a horse controls the whole horse. A small rudder on a huge ship in the hands of a skilled captain sets a course in the face of the strongest winds. A word out of your mouth may seem of no account, but it can accomplish nearly anything—or destroy it!

It only takes a spark, remember, to set off a forest fire. A careless or wrongly placed word out of your mouth can do that. By our speech we can ruin the world, turn harmony to chaos, throw mud on a reputation, send the whole world up in smoke and go up in smoke with it, smoke right from the pit of hell.

This is scary: You can tame a tiger, but you can't tame a tongue—it's never been done. The tongue runs wild, a wanton killer. With our tongues we bless God our Father; with the same tongues we curse the very men and women he made in his image. Curses and blessings out of the same mouth! My friends, this can't go on. A spring doesn't gush fresh water one day and brackish the next, does it? Apple trees don't bear strawberries, do they? Raspberry bushes don't bear apples, do they? You're not going to dip into a polluted mud hole and get a cup of clear, cool water, are you?

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

## ANTHEM:

O Word Of God (Ricky Manalo)

UCSJ Choir

**Refrain**

*Oh Word of God, come into this space.*

*Oh Word of God, come send us your grace.*

*Open our minds; show us your truth.*

*Transform our lives anew.*

**Verses**

**(Psalm 40)** *Here I am, O Lord, my God; I come to do your will*

**(Psalm 146)** *Blessed are the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs!*

**(Psalm 50)** *To the upright I will show the saving power of God.*

**(Psalm 67)** *Let all the nations praise you, O God!*

**(Psalm 23)** *The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.*

**SCRIPTURE READING****Matthew 12:33-37** (*The Message*)

Pastor Melinda Veatch

“If you grow a healthy tree, you’ll pick healthy fruit. If you grow a diseased tree, you’ll pick worm-eaten fruit. The fruit tells you about the tree. “You have minds like a snake pit! How do you suppose what you say is worth anything when you are so foul-minded? It’s your heart, not the dictionary, that gives meaning to your words. A good person produces good deeds and words season after season. An evil person is a blight on the orchard. Let me tell you something: Every one of these careless words is going to come back to haunt you. There will be a time of Reckoning. Words are powerful; take them seriously. Words can be your salvation. Words can also be your damnation.”

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.****SERMON****The Power of Words**

Pastor Melinda Veatch

**RESPONSIVE SONG\*****Thy Word**

(Amy Grant and Michael W. Smith)

**HYMN NO. 664****Both Verses**

Congregation

**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**

Pastor Melinda Veatch

**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.*

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Tim Spangler and Pastor 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\*****Lord, Speak to Me**

(Frances R. Havergal, words; Robert A. Schumann, music)

**HYMN NO. 593****Verse 1 - All  
Verse 3- Men****Verse 2 - Women  
Verse 4 - All**

Congregation

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Tim Spangler

**Holy God, you call us to lives that extend beyond ourselves. Inspire our minds as we engage with others. Open our eyes to see you at work in the world. Open our mouths to proclaim your grace and goodness. Keep us focused on serving you in word and deed, and help us to carry and share your love as we keep walking through this hurting world. Amen.**

**POSTLUDE***Instrumental Music*

Katy Kristoffersen

**CHARGE AND BLESSING**

Pastor Melinda Veatch

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## 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.

## 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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