

MCCC Sanctuary Worship Order 2021
October 24, 2021

Gathering Music “If You But Trust in God to Guide You” Jan Green
Gerald Peterson

Welcome

Welcome to the Mantua Center Christian Church

- **We are a community seeking** to have open minds, open hearts, and open arms, building community in a fragmented world.
- We want to **welcome** everyone who is in the house today and everyone online. We are grateful for all the many ways you can join us for worship on this Lord’s Day.
- **Announcements** will be on one sheet at the back of the sanctuary.
 - Today, after **Children’s** Moment the kids can go outside with Ally and Avery.
 - The **Stewardship** & Finance Committee have been meeting and planning our Stewardship Campaign and a letter will be going out in the coming weeks.
 - Stay after for our wonderful study with Nancy Humes...
- In worship today...we will listen for God’s call in our lives and remember that it's not what’s on the outside, but what’s on the inside that matters to God!
- Let’s prepare our hearts and minds for worship with our Opening Scripture Reading...

Opening Scripture

Isaiah 6:3-8

³And one called to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.’ ⁴The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. ⁵And I said: ‘Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!’
⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. ⁷The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: ‘Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.’ ⁸Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I; send me!’

Let's sing together Weave

***Response - Weave**

Weave, weave, weave us together,
Weave us together, in unity and love.
Weave, weave, weave us together,
weave us together, together in love.

***Call to Worship**

Nora Brant

ONE: Something made the hairs stand up on our necks. Was it you, O God?

ALL: Was it you that we saw blowing over the water?

ONE: Was it you that we heard moving through those feet?

ALL: Was it you that we felt in the beating of our own hearts?

ONE: Was it you that called our names?

ALL: Come, O God. Come to search us. Come to know us again.

ONE: We were knit in your womb. We have tried to count your works.

ALL: Come, O God, so that we can hear you calling our names.

Here and now.

— written by Rev. Elsa A. Peters

***Opening Hymn**

To God Be the Glory

#72

To God be the glory, great things he hath done!
So loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
who yielded his life an atonement for sin,
and opened the life gate that all may go in.

Refrain:

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear his voice!

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice!

*Oh, come to the Father, thru Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory, great things he hath done.*

Offering of Praise

Nora Brant

Children's Moment

Ally Bozeka

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Chad Delaney

Mighty God,

to you belong all the mysteries of the universe. You transform shepherds into great leaders, the smallest seeds into magnificent trees, and hardened hearts into loving ones. We ask that you come and transform our hearts today in your life-giving Spirit.

As we might work on the quality of our outside, work on our insides. Make us reflective of your goodness and shape us to your purposes. Help us to hear your voice and respond, HERE I AM! May we follow you and love as you love.

Gracious God, may the fruits of our lives and work and time...be food for the hungry, bread clothing, shelter, fire, water, Word. May we love as you love and give as you give.

God of justice, remove the barriers of our lives that keep us from one another. We make barriers based on skin color, religion, or gender. May we discard these arbitrary distinctions and remember that we are all yours. Loving God, take this day our fears, our worries, distractions, and all. Turn them into grace and mercy, and hear our silent prayers for those on our hearts and minds this morning.....

Give us hearts for you and for one another now and always...In Jesus Name, we pray. Amen.

Communion

Meditation

Katie Baird

Communion Hymn Let us Talents and Tongues Employ #422

Let us talents and tongues employ.

Reaching out with a shout of joy:

bread is broken, the wine is poured,

Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,

pass the Word around: loaves abound!

Prayer & Lord's Prayer

Words of Institution

Distribution

Scripture Reading 1 Samuel 16:1-13

The Lord said to Samuel, 'How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.' ²Samuel said, 'How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me.' And the Lord said, 'Take a heifer with you, and say, "I have come to sacrifice to the Lord."' ³Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you.' ⁴Samuel did what the Lord commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, 'Do you come peaceably?' ⁵He said, 'Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.' And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed is now before the Lord.' ⁷But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.' ⁸Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, 'Neither has the Lord chosen this one.' ⁹Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, 'Neither has the Lord chosen this one.' ¹⁰Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen any of these.' ¹¹Samuel said to Jesse, 'Are all your sons here?' And he said, 'There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.' And Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.' ¹²He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The Lord said, 'Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.' ¹³Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

Sermon
Height and Heart

Height and Heart

Rev. Chad Delaney

With the NBA basketball season beginning this week I always marvel at the height of the guys on the team. This year the Cavs may have 4 guys who are at least 6'11 and one who is 7'5" tall. Size is a big deal in the NBA...but does height play a role in God's qualifications for leadership?

That may seem a ridiculous question, but strangely enough King David's predecessor--King Saul--was quite tall...and long ago when God looked to anoint a King for the very first time, Saul's height was cited as a part of the reason people would love and follow him.

1 Samuel 9:1-2 says, "There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish son of Abiel son of Zeror son of Becorath son of Aphiah, a Benjaminite, a man of wealth. He had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he; he stood head and shoulders above everyone else."

Saul was wealthy, tall, dark, and handsome. He was king-material.

Well...it didn't really work out that well. Saul ends up making a lot of mistakes. He doesn't set a godly example--he's rash and disobedient. He's jealous and suspicious. He wasn't a good leader.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks wrote of King Saul, "He was tall. He had presence. He had the bearing of a king....but he followed the people rather than leading them. Appearance and reality were opposites. Saul had physical but not moral stature."

After God decides that King Saul had just lost his ability to lead, he tells Samuel to go find the next king among Jesse's sons. So he goes and assumes it's another tall, dark, and handsome guy...but it wasn't. It was the smallest of the lot who was out watching the sheep -- the soon to be King David. God tells Samuel, "the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." The leader criterion moved from Height to Heart. It was a way better approach.

Now, keep in mind, this didn't mean David would be the perfect leader. His heart may have been in the right place, but he, too, made major miscues and mistakes. He was reckless and did starkly immoral things....AND he turned, learned, and sought God with every fiber of his being. He was repentant. He was earnest in his pursuing God-- the Psalms of seeking, praying, singing are attributed to David for a reason. God would make an unconditional covenant with David that would go even to a little one in a manger. It was David's heart for God that would be passed forward to the generations after. His height, weight, wing-span, and vertical didn't matter...it was his heart that mattered.

Now I'm sure that most of us care very little about our heights...but how is your heart doing? What is your heart condition? Does it feel like it's shrinking, growing, or just getting by? Do you feel more like the Grinch or Cindy-Lou?

In talking with people over the last year, people have mentioned how they've been finding it harder to love. They have expressed confusion and exasperation about how to be the loving person God has called them to be. This struggle isn't new. Something we've always been familiar with, but heightened in these times. Issues with family, friends, and neighbors. Deep struggles with people of different ideas and beliefs about all the things we're divided about in our world

today. Sometimes we're smiling on the outside and cursing on the inside. As Rabbi Sacks said, "appearance and reality are opposites."

We can't change our height, but we can change our hearts. Maybe we have some work to do through prayer and meditation. May need more reminders of what it means to be Christian--to read again and take in the words of Jesus. To find ways to allow God space to fashion our hearts: to make more room in our heart for forgiveness. To humanize and love our enemies? For those who are different from us? That we might truly understand and act (on the outside and inside) that all are children of God. Afterall, we follow one whose heart took in the whole world, including us.

God has never called us to be perfectly perfect. Like Saul and David, we too are going to make mistakes and miscues. We may even be rash and disobedient. So today let's work on our hearts. Can we intention our hearts to live and love more in the likeness of the one who loves us, leads us, and holds us? That our hearts may hear the call to seek first the Kindom of God and to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, souls, and minds. And... to truly live with justice and peace and compassion with all. More than ever THAT is what is needed in the world today. May it be so.

Closing Hymn

Here I am, Lord

#452

I the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.
 All who dwell in darkest sin my hand will save.
 I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
 Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord?
 I have heard you calling in the night.
 I will go Lord, If you lead me,
 I will hold your people in my heart.

Benediction*Rev. Chad Delaney**

Benediction by Nathan Nettleton

Go now. Listen for the voice of the Lord
and follow wherever it leads.

Do not be dominated by anything.
Allow no room within yourselves for deceit,
but offer yourselves as a temple for the Holy Spirit.

Take with you a heart of Love for God and Neighbor.
May God be with you and speak through you;
May Christ Jesus fill your hearts and raise you to life;
And may the Holy Spirit dwell within you and make you holy.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord,
.....In the name of Christ. Amen.

Departing Music**The Call to Serve****Jan Green***Todd Kendall*