

February 25

INTERVENTION

REHAB WORSHIP SERIES

Prayer Concerns: David Sensenbrenner

Today's Sanctuary flowers provided by the Flower Committee to the glory of God.

Today's choral selections are provided by the Temple Choir under the direction of Joan Nevill. Organist: Barbara Waite. Special music provided Linda Sieben, Leigh Ann Chevalier, Ann Moore, Beth Pieper, Peter Chevalier, and Jerry Moore.

Ushers February 25: Eric Eades, captain; Chuck Taylor, Ronnie Pursley, John Oberhelman, Thornton Patberg (balcony

Greeters February 25: Sue & Cle Watson, Tom Harvey, Mary Lockett

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

Congregational Hymns

WELCOME

PRELUDE

"The Lone Wild Bird" by W. Held

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: God gave us our voices, no two the same.

People: In Your church You have gathered us, a community of common folk and complainers,

Leader: Prophets and puzzled people,

People: You have called us and made a place for us.

Leader: So let what we say and do here, what we ponder and decide here, be honest to You,

People: As You prepare us for life in Your world.

CHORAL INTROIT

"Christians We Have Come to Worship" by Wagner

*CHIMES & SERVICES OF LIGHT

*HYMN #415

"Take Up Thy Cross"

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: May the peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Please turn to those around you and pass the peace of Christ.

SPECIAL MUSIC

"God So Loved the World" by John Carter

CALL TO PRAYER

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray as one.

PASTORAL PRAYER

All: Loving God, there is so much darkness. Lead us out from the shadows of fear. Give us hearts of peace and love; hearts open to the truth. And now, O God, hear us as we pray, each in our own hearts and our own ways...

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13 "Pray then like this: '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 our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass 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.'"

GIVING TITHES & OFFERING

"Adagio" by W. A. Mozart

*DOXOLOGY *The congregation stands as the Ushers return the offering to the Altar.*

#95 in Hymnal

ANTHEM

"A Place of Love & Grace" by Tom Eggleston

KIDZ MOMENT

Noisy Offering

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Mark 8:31-28

Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

31 Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32 He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33 But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

34 He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 35 For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. 36 For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? 37 Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? 38 Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

FAITH WE SING #2152

"Change My Heart, O God"

MESSAGE by Pastor Andy Payton

"Intervention"

Our scripture today comes from the Book of Mark Chapter 8 verses 31 through 38. And I have been informed that this is also known as Marx little apocalypse. So you know kind of over getting into bed as is tradition in the United Methodist Church if you're able. Would you please rise for the standard for the reading of the Gospel. Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering and be rejected by the elders. The chief priests and the scribes and be killed. And after three days rise again he said all this quite openly and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples he rebuked Peter and said Get Behind Me Satan for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things. He called the crowd with his disciples and said to them if any want to become my followers let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me for those who want to save their life will lose it and those who lose their life for my sake and for the sake of the gospel will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life. Indeed what can they give in return for their life. Those who are ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his father with the Holy Angels.

This is the word of God to the people of God.

Well friends in the words of Dr. Leonard Sweet, I greet you in the name of the one who was, who is, and is to come. Good Morning saints. Good morning sinners. You always say the second one louder. You must you must identify with that other one more so. Well if you were here last this past Wednesday you were in for a blessing this past Wednesday. We started our Open Community series on World Religions, and our first subject matter was Catholic Christianity. Father Alex was here, and he did an exceptional job of presenting really not just Catholic Christianity but the Christian faith in general. At one point I thought he was doing so well that we were going to have like a mass conversion to Catholicism. I found myself thinking this is not the plan -to get this guy off the microphone. This is out of control. But after his presentation was over there was like this little Q and A part, and I asked him the question that I ask just about anyone that is a person of faith. My question to him was what practices nourish you? What practices help you in your own journey? And he responded with three. The first one he said was when he's feeling down, what nourishes him is he goes down to the school- he's a Catholic priest and they have a school- and he goes down and sees the children, and their vitality, their joy for living, their joy for life uplifts him. The second thing he said was that he has a small group of young adults that meet once a week and they gather together and asked the question where have you seen Christ. And you said that that group of people helps him define Christ in ways that he might have not seen Christ before. And finally he said that in the mornings, he wakes up and he spends some time with God in silence and his own personal chapel.

And I at that point thought to myself, Oh the life of a Catholic Priest is much different than the life of a United Methodist Minister. First you have your own personal chapel. Come on man. Second there is no silence in my home right now. There is no chapel like that. Well that second thing is what I want to kind of ask you about this morning as we get started. Where have you seen Christ? By the end of the service if you can answer that question then we have done our job. Where have you seen Christ? Let's begin with the moment of prayer.

Help us to be present to you today, oh God, even as you are here present with us. I pray that you will take the words of my mouth and the meditations of all of our hearts, and that you would help them to be acceptable in your sight. I pray this in the name of Christ who is our rock and redeemer. Amen.

Since wed are on World Religions with our Open Community this year, I thought I would begin by making an observation. Within all the enduring religions of the world, all the enduring religions of the world, there's this real sense of self-denial. We must say no to ourselves in order to open ourselves up to a greater reality. For example in Judaism, they call it the way. Within Buddhism, there is this real emphasis on letting go. Within the Eastern philosophy, Taoism- we're not covering that in Open Community, but within Taoism there's this phrase where it is said that in order to be filled, a person must first become empty. Even the name Islam is sometimes translated as surrender, and the Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said that we must die before we die if we're going to open ourselves to the Almighty. And so it is self-denial that is at the heart of all the great world religions. And it certainly is true for us.

As Christians we find it echoed in our scripture lesson this morning from the Gospel of Mark. Although, it was known as the little apocalypse as Chris informed you. It's kind of heavy, I know, but there's that line in there that definitely points us in the direction of the importance of self-denial. When Jesus says to Peter you must deny yourself and take up your cross and follow me. We find ourselves in a season of Lent which is really a season of death. It's a season of denial. It's a time in which we learn to say no to ourselves in order that we can do this- we can open ourselves up to this greater reality. In fact Lent begins with this obscure service called Ash Wednesday. During Ash Wednesday, what we do at the end of the service is we take the ashes from the palms from the previous Palm Sunday, we burnt them down and we marked each forehead with ashes. And that Pastor usually says something to the effect from dust you came to dust you shall return, and it's from there that we began this season in which we seek to say no to ourselves.

The big question I really want to talk about today is this: So what are we called to say no as Christians then? Right? What do we call to deny if we're going to raise ourselves to this new life in Christ? And I think more than anything else we go back to the three temptations of Jesus when we think about what it is we're supposed to be saying no to in order that we could find a way to say yes to something else. Father Thomas Keating I think points it out really well when he makes note that within these three temptations of Jesus, we find our own tendencies- these own traps that we we all find ourselves in. And at the same time, we find a means to say yes to something larger than ourselves. He points out that within the temptations of Jesus what we have here is the three instinctive needs of human beings that we all have. He says that within every human life, there is a need for security and survival. He says there's a need for affection and esteem and love. He says within every human being there's a need for power and control and we need to have a sense that we have the freedom and ability to make choices.

Now the values of our world tell us that we fulfill these needs by first accumulating more and more stuff- that we have fulfilled this desire to find security and survival by having more and more stuff. In the words of Jesus, we store up for ourselves treasures on earth, and we think the more we have the more secure we become. And that just continues on and on and on. Second, he says, the world teaches us for our need for affection and esteem. The way we get that is we seek to be attractive for other people and we also live for the approval of other people. In other words we have to look the right way and tell people what they want to hear and give them what they want and then they will kind of earn their love. And finally, he says, for the need for power and control the way we typically fulfill this need- at least as it's been defined for us in our world- is we seek to control other people.

What He suggests is as Christians were called to die to all of this stuff. And typically we don't get there on our own. Typically it takes a sort of intervention in which we learn that this way of living is not working for us. It usually comes in the form of some sort of loss. A loved one dies. We lose a job. We fail at something, and it is then that we begin to realize that this way that the world has taught us to live, it's no longer working for us. Our box that we've created for ourselves is no longer functioning in the way that it once functioned. And it's then that we're able to open ourselves from this to this larger reality that we call God. Father Keating says we open ourselves up to God's presence and we find a new sense of security from the infinite. And no longer do we need to collect all the bread of the world, but we trust that God has the capacity to give us our daily bread- what we need.

A hopeful, I think, example of this within our world today is that there is this new movement called minimalism within a lot of the younger people- where they are seeking to say no to this idea that the more we consume, the more satisfied we are, and so they become minimalists now. Their mantra could easily be Jesus's words and our text this morning. What does it help a person to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? The minimalist of the world look at the way things are going in terms of how we've consumed and how empty we've become as a result of it, and they say this is not working. We don't need all the bread we just need daily bread. And we need to live within the means that we've been given. And they have found a sense of peace and happiness and doing that.

Now I don't call myself a minimalist by any means. I mean some of these people are hard core. They get rid of everything and sit on the floor, and that's not my thing. But I have tried a couple experiments with that kind of bare help for me. One of them is and sit on the floor, and the 33 and 3 challenge is this: you seek to live on 33 items of clothing for three months. And it does not count-et me throw this out- it does not count exercise clothing or sleep wear. Those do not count in this equation. So you take you take your wardrobe and you limit yourself to 33 items of clothes for three months, and you don't have to give away everything else but you just kind of put it up. I've tried that. It's interesting. It makes my decision about what to wear quite easy. I only have like 5 shirts and a couple of pairs of pants, and I just wear them. At first it was really hard to do psychologically, but after a while the simplicity of it, it was good. And I began to realize that consuming things don't make you really happy. Being content with what you have does. As we put our trust in God's capacity to give us daily bread, we're able to begin to trust that God gives us enough, and we as Christians are called to live into that reality. It may be the minimalists have something to teach us about.

In terms of affection and esteem, as we turn our lives over to God, Father Keating says we begin to center ourselves on the infinite love of God rather than seeking the approval of others or seeking to be attractive. We begin to start with this idea that we are already embraced by God, loved by God just the way we are. And as we begin to do this friends, what can begin to happen is we truly can become radical in the way that we live. The true radicals of this world are not the people who live on the ends of the spectrum so to speak. We call these people radical many times because they have the loudest and the meanest voices. But that's not what it means to be radical. The true radicals of this world are the people who are seeking their blessings from somewhere else than this world. They are trying to live for the glory of God. And what this rescues us from more than anything else I think is the tribalism of our time.

We live in a time in which we don't make moral choices anymore. We make tribal choices. What I mean by that is we start with the group that we belong to because we get our affection from that group. And we allow the group that we have aligned ourselves with to tell us who we should be., what we should become, and what we should do. This is not a life centered in God. This is a life centered in a group. As we find our affection and esteem fulfilled by the love of God, and as we seek to please God in the way that we live our lives, we become radical because we cannot be bought by the values of this world. For me it really comes down to doing that next right thing. Listening to the voice of my conscience and being willing to do that next strike thing even if it means that I might make a few people mad or even if it means that some groups will say that you no longer belong to me.

Finally, Keating says we surrender our lives to God our need for power and control is met as we give our control over to God. Our world tells us that the way we fulfill this need to have control is we control others. In Christianity we teach that we find our need for control by giving our control over to God. And what that basically means for me is that we begin to trust that we are just in the right place at just the right time. And we stop this mentality of the grass is greener on the other side of the fence. But we trust that we are just in the right place in just the right time, and we are not a mistake- that God has created us to be who we are, where we are, and live how we are in this moment, at this time. We are each infinitely unique and not mistakes. And we are right where we need to be when we begin to give our control over to someone else. Big S someone else- in this case God.

Now what I've noticed as I begin to do this in my life, each moment becomes an opportunity to see Christ. When I realize I'm right where I need to be, then Christ has something to teach me. Right here right now. Which leads me to my glory siding from the past week. It was on Monday- I had lunch with a friend. This is a guy I went to seminary with and we were in this pastoral program later on Wabash Pastoral Leadership Program. And every so often now we have lunch together, and so our lunch time came up this past Monday, and we were sitting there. And as we were talking, I went with the idea that this moment has something to teach me. How's your family? It was then that he began to describe to me how much so as we sat there and we talked I finally asked the question and I said how's your family? It was then that he began to describe to me how much he has struggled in trying to help his son. His son is in high school, and his son is struggling with his grades. His son is struggling with motivation, and they have tried literally everything to motivate his boy, to try at school. And nothing seems to work. As he began to talk more and more about it I just simply listened more and more to him. And as he began to share more and more I could see the color in his face and his skin begin to turn colors that you begin to kind of turn red. You could see the passion in him. As he shared more you can see the tears in his eyes begin to well up. And then it happened it dawned on me. This is a glory siting because it's just absolutely beautiful to watch the way that this father loves his son.

Many times when we use the language glories society we think about the good things don't we? Like the sun shining or I got a promotion at work or this person did this thing that we see for me. And these are all good things don't get me wrong. But for me, more and more, a glory side has to do with those moments in which we see this sacrificial love of God at work right before us. That's where the glory is at. And so this week my challenge to you is this: that I could die to the values of this world. We could rise to new life and find Christ in those moments of sacrificial love. We could celebrate these times in which we see God at work in unlikely places, unlikely ways, unlikely people. Amen

*HYMN TFWS #2130

"The Summons "

*CHIMES & SERVICE OF LIGHT

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

"Prelude in F" by J. S. Bach