

Traditional Worship • June 3

Peacemaker

BIBLE

Prayer Concerns: Jane Hetherington; Sandy Brenneman in the passing of her sister.

Today's Sanctuary flowers provided by Evelyn Fields to the glory of God in honor of James Fields.

Today's choral selections are provided by the Temple Choir under the direction of Joan Nevill. Organist: Barbara Waite. Additional music provided by Virginia Adye

Ushers (3): Kathy Zelle, captain; Chuck Taylor, Warren Heinsohn, Jack Buttrum, Ed Ancona, Thornton Patberg (balcony), Margo Borre (balcony)

Ushers (10): Greg & Linda Stilwell, captains; Chuck Taylor, Jacque Hardin, Nelson & Joyce Rivers

Greeters (3): Patricia Helm, Nancy Hughes, Mary Lockett, Sue Anderson

Greeters (10): Marty Van Stone, Tom Harvey, Carla Bolin, Margo Borre

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

Virginia Ayde, piano

WELCOME

PRELUDE

"Christ Is Made The Sure Foundation" arr. by A. L. Page

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: When we are confused,
People: Lord, give us peace.
Leader: When we are afraid,
People: Lord, give us peace.
Leader: When we are lost in grief,
People: Lord, give us peace.
Leader: O God, meet us in this room,
People: And grant us peace.

CHORAL INTROIT

"All That Hath Life and Breath, Praise Ye the Lord"

*CHIMES & SERVICES OF LIGHT

*FIRST HYMN

"The Church's One Foundation"

*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.

CALL TO PRAYER

Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Leader: Let us pray as one.

PASTORAL PRAYER/ LORD'S PRAYER

All: Prince of Peace, give us the grace to stand in the middle of situations; let us be channels for the compassion that leads to healing and forgiveness. O God, hear us now as we pray, each in our own hearts and in our own ways...

GIVING OFFERING

"Let Us Break Bread" arr. by C. Callahan

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

#95 in Hymnal

ANTHEM

"Look at the World" by John Rutter

KIDZ MOMENT

SCRIPTURE READING

2 Corinthians 5:16-19

16 From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. 17 So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE UMH #162

"Alleluia, Alleluia"

MESSAGE by Pastor Andy Payton

"Peacemaker"

Well good morning Methodist Temple. Are you with me this morning? Are you still with me? Last week I was gone. So I was not with you. So I ask you this morning are you with me? Now I had a good reason for being gone last week. Last week Leslie and I celebrated our 10th anniversary, so whoohoo! I couldn't believe it's been 10 years already. I feel so young still and it's already been ten years. I don't know. I don't know.

Today we're going to be continuing our sermon series on the Enneagram and for the last nine weeks as Jillian prayed we've been talking about who we've been created to be and we've been using the Enneagram to help us to discern that, to understand that, to see that, and I have to say this has been one of my favorite sermon series I've ever been a part of- I've ever done. It's just been extraordinarily fun. I just have had a great time learning about what makes us tick, and that's really what the Enneagram does. It helps us not to understand necessarily what we are but more to the point it helps us to understand why we are, and the Enneagram helps us to understand why we are by identifying nine different types if you will. And of those nine types, basically what we're talking about is there is nine sort of motivations that can kind of motivate us to do the sort of things that we do. Well today is the last one. Type 9 the peacemaker, and one of the things you might have noticed in this series on the Enneagram is I have never told you which type I am. I've never talked about what type I am, and the reason is because I'm type 9. And so today in some ways I'm telling you a little bit about myself which is weird. It's kind of odd. I feel exposed in some ways. Well I will feel exposed in some ways as I kind of get into what it means to be a peacemaker. My wife told me not to say this but I have to say this because I've already started to say this, but the peacemaker it is last. And you know why? We save the best for last. God knew what God was doing when the Enneagram was put together and us nines. If you're a 9, welcome to our world. It's very nice. Very peaceful.

So as we get started, as we dive in, let's begin with a moment of prayer. Help us to be present to you today, oh God, even as you are here present with us and within us. I pray that you would take the words of my mouth and the meditations of all of our hearts and that you would work in such a way that they would be made acceptable in your sight. We pray this through Christ who is our rock and redeemer. Amen.

Just a few moments ago we heard a scripture reading from 2 Corinthians- Paul's letter 2 Corinthians. And one of my favorite verses that we just read is this kind of my paraphrase of it Paul says God reconciled us to Himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. I love that passage of scripture because it really kind of gets to the heart of what our purpose is as a gospel people, as a Christian people. This verse in my opinion points us in two directions. First, God has sent Christ to reconcile us to God's self. God has sent Christ to heal our relationship with God. That's what reconciliation is kind of about. It's about returning the relationship to its intended purpose. When God sent Christ that was I think God's mission, God's point. God sent Jesus to heal our relationship with God. As I always like to explain it, I really believe that the reason why God sent Jesus was not to change God's mind about us but to change our mind about God. That's the reason why I think God sent Jesus. Let me say that again.

God sent Jesus not to change God's mind about us but to change our mind about God. And I think that's an important difference. That's an important subtlety. That's an important thing for us to understand because I believe-- in Jesus what God is saying to us. It's like God is saying you've got me all wrong. You thought I was vengeful, wrathful, angry, mean. I'm not. I'm like Jesus. I'm loving compassionate forgiving. That's who I am. And I think once we understand that once we see that we begin to experience a sort of reconciliation with God. We are able to trust again and find our center again in God's loving presence. And so the first direction this verse sends us is to God. We're reconciled to God. But it also challenges us as a people who believe in this reconciliation that we believe in the healing of relationship, it sends us to one another. And we're called to reconcile with one another. So we are reconciled with God and we're called to reconcile with one another.

And what I'd really like to suggest to you this morning is the two are really not altogether different. They're kind of the same. Because when we reconcile with one another, we're also reconciling with the God that's in that other person that we're reconciling with. In many ways the Enneagram helps us to do this reconciliation that we're called to do. The Enneagram as I was just talking about kind of lays out for us what makes us tick. And so as we understand the Enneagram, the first thing that begins to happen is we begin to understand ourselves and we begin to understand why we do the things we do. But the other thing the Enneagram helps us to do is to understand one another, and we can understand why they do the things that they do. And one of the things that the Enneagram has helped me with is to come to the realization that, you know, not everyone sees the world the same way I do. I know it's huge, right? Not everyone sees the world the same way I do. It would be a lot better, I think, if everyone just saw it my way. But that's not the way it is. That's not the way it is. And if we're going to be a reconciling people- here it is- we're going to have to understand that we don't all do the things we do for the same reasons; and as we understand that, as we embrace that, as we accept that then we can probably find a grounding, a foundation if you will to reconcile with one another. If I could just get right down to it.

What I think the Enneagram has really helped us to do this: it has helped us to learn to listen for the voice of God which is speaking through us. That's what the Enneagram series is really all about. It was about learning to listen to our lives in such a way that we could also hear the voice of God that is speaking through each of us. I mean that's one of the great questions. Right? How does God speak? That's one of the questions I've been asked again and again and again as a pastor. How do I know if it's God or not, pastor? People wonder about that. They wrestle with that. They struggle with that. I know I've wrestled with that. I've struggled with that. And what I would like to suggest to you this morning is that one of the ways God speaks is this: God comes to us disguised at times as our voices. The voice of God comes to us sometimes disguised as our voices. One of the things I've said again and again this year is that I believe God comes to us also disguised as our lives. It is more than our lives at the same time; God comes to us disguised as our lives. Hear me when I say that. It is more than our lives at the same time now we might not like to believe that we would probably much prefer some times that God would be somewhere else because that would be more convenient because of the way we like to treat ourselves and the way we like to treat one another at times. It would be much more convenient if God was somewhere else. But I'm sorry, that's just not the way it is. God comes to us disguised as our lives and how we treat ourselves, how we treat one another is a reflection of our faith in God. But not only is that true.

If God comes disguised their lives, they're also times in which God comes to us disguised as our voices. But what other way would God speak to us, right? We're human beings. Wouldn't you figure that maybe God would speak to us in a human way? I think of the story of Samuel. The calling of the prophet Samuel. There's a great story way tucked way back into the Hebrew Scriptures. There's a story of a young boy named Samuel and he's been entrusted into the care of an older priest Levi or Eli. Sorry Eli. He's been entrusted into the hands of an older priest Eli, and the story goes one night young Samuel hears a voice and he gets up. He thinks Eli's calling to him he gets up and he goes to Eli he says Eli what do you want. Eli says I didn't say anything, Samuel go back to bed. And he goes back to bed. And again he hears the voice Samuel. So he gets up and he says Eli what do you want. He says I didn't say anything about Samuel, this is getting annoying. Third time Samuel hears his voice. Samuel!! He goes to Eli, and it was then Eli realized what was going on. God was calling to Samuel.

Now I've heard that story a hundred times. But it never occurred to me that the voice of God in that story, it sounded like Eli's voice because why else would Samuel get up and go Eli, what did you want? Now what's interesting about that story is that after Eli realizes that the voice of God is calling to Samuel, he tells young Samuel next time you hear the voice hears what you say "Speak Lord your servant is listening". And then the story continues. And then it says after Samuel hears the voice- and he says "Speak Lord your servant is listening"- after that moment happens, it says that the Lord was with Samuel, and his words never fell to the ground void. And so here's the powerful moment of this story. Once Samuel says speak Lord your servant is listening- it is then that God's voice and Samuel's voice become one. They become one. And his voice becomes a transforming agent within the world.

We must understand the power of our voices. Because there are times, there are times when we speak when it's not just a speaking. It's God speaking through us as well. The stories told of Joan of Arc. You know that story? Never heard that story? Joan of Arc. 14th century medieval stories told of her. As a young girl she began to have mystical encounters with God and she began to hear from God. And ultimately she becomes a leader. But then as the story unfolds eventually she gets captured. Joan of Arc is of course from France but she gets captured by the English and she is deemed a heretic, and it says- the account says- that just before they burned her at the stake one of the things her accusers said to her was this. They said, "Joan of Arc, you're you're not hearing God's voice. Instead what you're hearing is your own voice within your head". And Joan of Arc- it is said- responds to that and she says, "Well one other voice would God use to speak to me?" And then they burned her at stake, but then later on, the church said, "Well, we were wrong. Let's make her a saint."

Here's the question then right? So how do we distinguish between the voice within our head and the voice of God. How do we know the difference? That's the fundamental question. As we listen for the voice of God and as we -if we adopt this idea- as we believe that sometimes God comes to us disguised as her own voice, as we believe that, how do we distinguish between our voice and the voice of God? And I think more than anything else the type 9 Enneagram can help us. The type 9 peacemakers can help us see that and understand that. And the reason is because of all the types on the Enneagram, the type nines have the hardest, hardest time finding their own voice. They have a really hard time finding their own voice. You see how like the nines on top. It's not because we're the best. As I said earlier. It's not because we're the best. It's because, at the top we see everyone else's perspective but our own. We can see everyone else's perspective but our own. We can hear everyone else's voice but our own. We can see it from everyone's point of view, but we lose our own. And one of the reasons for that basically is because as children many nines were led to believe that their voice didn't matter. They lived in the family system, they lived in a family unit where their voice was kind of many times discounted. Didn't matter they spoke up. No one listened. It wasn't like the parents did it on purpose. It wasn't like the family unit did it on purpose. It just kind of happened. They may have had a sibling demanded more attention. Not saying that was true for my family or not, but anyway I'm going to move on. But... I was the perfect one. My brother was the troubled one. Just saying. I hope he doesn't listen to my sermon today. But their childhood wound because of all this basically because of that abandonment, and abandonment in the sense that not that they were kind of left on the curb somewhere but just because no one listened to that voice, no one listen to their voice. But more to the point the reason why the nines lost their voice was because their original experience with God is also lost. That's why we have to listen. We were born into this world with the sense of harmony union with God -as we all are, I think we're born in this world with a sense of union with God. I just have to believe that. I know that there's some Christian theology that don't believe that but I have to believe that we were born into this world with a sense of union with God. And Nines were born into this world with a sense of union with God. The world before the nines, as well I think the world for all of us, was a sort of place where there was harmony and there was interconnectedness. There's a sense of love. But as we grew older, that was beat out of us because of the world in which we live.

One might call it original righteousness versus original sin. There are some folks who only want to talk about its original sin, and they want to say that were horrible, awful people, and that's what we are. And they want to use that original sin. Talk about original sin, but what they fail to realize is there is this thing before that called original righteousness- that we were born in this world is right. That God didn't create junk. That was made in the image of a good God. And that is original righteousness. We were born into this world. It was good, but the world is bad, and it beats us out of it and we lose that. And the process of salvation is really about trying to get back to that. The nines lost their voice because that was beat out of them. And their root sin because sloth- not because we're lazy, although we're a little less energetic than the others. Some people describe nines as we start slow then fade away. I don't know. We have a lot of unfinished projects, but the reason why we don't like to speak up is this: because the world already feels like an unharmonious place to us, and we are afraid to speak up with our own voice because we don't want to add to the disharmony. We might be feeling something within ourselves, and someone on the outside might be speaking to us and we'll just smile and nod the whole time; and that person will think we agree with them but we don't. We're just afraid that if we said anything we might lose that relationship. If you're nine, you know. It's amazing. Everyone thinks we agree with them. It's one of our great games we can play. But the problem is sometimes God speaking within us and we don't share that. And people just march on thinking that it's all OK.

So the thing that Nines more than anything else need to do is regain our center in God's love. And here's the thing that happens. Once we regain our center in God's love, then we can hear all the other voices against that love. And then at that point, we can really live into what God has called us to do, and that is bring people together. We can hear everyone else's perspective including our own, and we can weigh that against God's love and use that to bring folks together. And that's that's really what the Nine is really called to do, which leads me to discernment. How do you know the voice within our head is our own voice versus the voice of God? Here it is. What's the voice telling you to do? If it's the voice of our ego, if it's the voice of our flesh, it will tell us to be judgmental. It will tell us to call people bad names. It will tell us to loathe in our self-pity. It will tell us that we're no good, if it's the voice of our flesh, if it's the voice of our ego. But if it's the voice of God, it will tell us to include. It will tell us to love. It will tell us to cherish. It will tell us to embrace. Said simply, we can know if it's our voice- the voice of our ego and flesh- versus the voice of God by this that if it's the voice of our ego, it will always make the world a smaller place. But if it's the voice of God, it will always end in making the world a bigger place. Because it's the God of Love. And oh how we have lost this as a religious people.

We have failed so many times to listen to that voice to make the world a bigger place, and we've created smaller places instead, which leads me to a practice that might help us to discern. It comes from Dr. E. Stanley Jones. He is one of the great evangelists in Methodism in the 20th century. I've talked about him a lot because he was very influential to my grandmother and my grandfather. They went to his they called them ashram's- they were kind of like Revival's and retreat's- they went to a lot of these and so he became influential them. My grandparents became influential to me, and so is E Stanley Jones is kind of a big name in our family. But one of the things E. Stanley Jones wrote many years ago was a little pamphlet called How to Pray. And what's interesting about this particular pamphlet is I was looking through my office and I found it the other day. How cool is that? This thing was copyright in the 1940s. And I have the official E. Stanley Jones How to Pray pamphlet. How that is awesome. But in this pamphlet. Here's what he says about prayer. This is not my words, this is his words. He says if you know how to pray, we know how to be religious. If not, then our religion is a closed book. Let me say it again. If we know how to pray, we know how to be religious; but if not, then our religion is a closed book.

Did you know that when they were canonizing the scripture that some of the early Church Fathers were worried that we were chasing God into a book. And if we weren't careful it would become an idol to us. But more to the point, we would try to listen to it more than sometimes listening to the voice of God. Did you know that that? That's been one of the real tragedies of Christianity today. We say it's a relationship; it's not a religion. That's not true. It's a religion because it's all set in stone. And if it's all set in stone, that's an idol because idols are built out of stone, but if it's a relationship then it has a voice. It speaks to us. We relate to it. We listen to it. We pray and it responds. And this is where we are today as a people. As Christians we are called to begin to listen to the spirit of God just as every other generation before us has to do. And we must listen to the voice of love. We must listen to that voice that comes disguised as our own even at times and allow it to call us into making this world a bigger place.

I suppose I'll end with the words from St. Francis. He said that -on his deathbed when he looked at his followers -he said now I've done one is mine to do, may Christ teach you what is yours to do. It's pretty open ended. Or to use the word of the prophet Samuel, may our prayer be, "Speak Lord your servant is listening. Take me whatever you want. Teach me to love whoever is there. Allow me to let myself be transformed. Oh, may we not just have a form of religion, but may we have the life changing power which comes from a people who listen for the voice of God. Amen."

*LAST HYMN UMH #544

"Blessed Assurance"

*CHIMES & SERVICE OF LIGHT

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

"Voluntary in B-Flat" by J. Battishill