

Learning to TRUST

November 18 • Traditional Worship

Our Pastors:

- Lead Pastor Andy Payton leadpastor@methodisttemple.church
- Associate Pastor JillAnn Knonenborg associatepastor@methodisttemple.church

Sunday Morning Volunteers:

- Ushers (18): Eric Eades, captain; Seby Durgy, Chuck Taylor, Ronnie Pursley, Thornton Patberg (balcony), Margo Borre (balcony)
- Ushers (25): Eric Eades, captain; Chuck Taylor, Ronnie Pursley, John Oberhelman, Thornton Patberg (balcony), Margo Borre (balcony)
- Greeters (18): Warren & Rosemary Heinsohn, Pat Haynie
- Greeters (25): Tom Harvey, Janet Kissel, Carla Bolin

**Ushers & Greeters remain in the Narthex during worship. Please reach out to them with any questions or special needs you may have. They are happy to assist!*

Additional Information:

- Today's Sanctuary flowers given by Janet Martin to the glory of God in memory of Ron & Dick Martin.
- Today's choral selections are provided by the Temple Choir under the direction of Don Travis. Organist: Barbara Waite. Trumpet: Don Ellington. Additional Music provided by the Temple Brass.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

WELCOME

PRELUDE

"Prelude on 'Old Hundredth'" by H. Willan

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We gather as God's people to sing and pray,
People: To become this day a tapestry stitched together with love.
 Leader: Gather us in, Gentle Creator, that we would let go of fear,
People: That each of us would ignite with the boldness of the Spirit.

CHORAL INTROIT

"Make Joyful Music to the Lord" by Hal H. Hopson

*CHIMES & SERVICES OF LIGHT

*FIRST HYMN UMH #694

"Come, Ye Thankful People, Come"

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: I see Christ in you.
All: And also in you.
 Leader: Please turn to those around you and celebrate the presence of Christ.

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Fugue in g minor" by J.S.Bach/Charles Decker

CALL TO PRAYER

Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
 Leader: Let us listen for God in the silence.

PASTORAL PRAYER

All: Gracious Master, first we say thank You. In a world of pain, thank You for life and for hope. In a world of walls, thank You for bringing us together. Your gifts are new each day, so give us the eyes to see them. And now, O God, hear us as we pray, each in our own hearts and our own ways...

GIVING OFFERING

"If Thou Be Near" by J.S.Bach/Walter Beeler

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

#94 in Hymnal

ANTHEM

"Thanks We Sing" by Douglas E. Wagner

KIDZ MOMENT

SCRIPTURE READING

John 6.28-34

²⁸Then they said to him, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" ²⁹Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." ³⁰So they said to him, "What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing?" ³¹Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" ³²Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³For the bread of life is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." ³⁴They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE TFWS #2176

"Make Me a Servant"

MESSAGE *by Pastor Andy Payton*

Looking Forward

Well good morning friends. It is a big day in the life of Methodist Temple, and I can think of three reasons why it's a big day in the life at Methodist Temple. First, most importantly tradition. Here you go, my birthday is coming up this Saturday. This is a tradition right. Don't forget it. If you're if you're interested and want to give me a gift I have some ideas; you can catch me after service. There's a whole list. I've been doing my research. Black Friday is coming up. Well my birthday's on the Saturday after, so it's a convenient tradition. It's a convenient tradition. I heard someone say something in the background. I'm going to behave myself though. How old am I? Oh, well that was not a part of my tradition. I am going to be 39 years old. Old school. Old school. Yeah. Yeah. But I feel twenty nine and I act 19, so it's a good thing. It's a good thing. So of course our big tradition coming up for this week is Thanksgiving. And I did a little research on Thanksgiving, and I was reminded of course that Thanksgiving began with the pilgrims in the 1600s. But what I learned was their menu and their activities. I had forgotten about this. So the menu of the first Thanksgiving according to the notes of the pilgrim who used to be was eels, venison, - not bad, not bad- beer. They were Puritans. I'm sure that it was just to keep the water pure. What else is on that menu? Fish. Fish was on the menu. But here's what I thought was really funny, for their activities during the first Thanksgiving, here's what they did. They shot guns and ran races. I thought these people must have been bored to tears if they're shooting guns and running races for fun. They were either bored to tears or they're actually from southern Indiana because that's what we do for fun if you anyway. Finally it is a big day in the life of our church because it's Stewardship Sunday and Stewardship Sunday- of course when we heard the word stewardship we think money- but here's what I wanna talk to you a little bit about today all the reasons, I'm grateful for this congregation. That's what we'll talk to you about today. All the reasons were a lot of the reasons I can't talk about them all, but a lot of the reasons why I'm grateful for the life of this congregation. Before I jump in, let's pray. O God today help us to be present to you even as you are here present with us. Help us to see that many gifts that you have given. It is through Christ we pray, Amen.

So the disciples question: 'Jesus', they said. 'How do we perform the works of God?' How do we do the works of God? The story behind the story in our Gospel lesson today is that Jesus had just multiplied the loaves and fed 5000 people. He had just magically or miraculously walked across the water. And now the disciples are asking him, 'Jesus how do we perform the works of God?' And I think about that that question and I think about the story behind the story and I think what we can discover is a powerful metaphor for us today. In lieu of the great things that Christ has done for us, the question is how do we also perform the works of God? How do we perform what God is calling us? I think that way we can figure that out is to stop and to think about all the gifts that God has given us. For a person once said if you want to know your future just look what you have in your hands. If you want to know what's going to come next, just look for a person you already have in your hand. So much of the time we're worried about the things we don't have and we miss the things that we do have. And so as we think about performing the works of God, I think it starts with seeing the gifts that are already in our midst.

The first thing I'm grateful for when it comes to the life of our church, the first gift I love about our church is our story. I am grateful for the story of Methodist Temple. Did you know that our story began in the 1840s. Did you know that? It started in the notes that I read from the church directories of the 1960s and it started in a public inn in the 1840s. Ok. Truth be told it was a bar. Our church started in a bar. A group of German Christians got together and the guy that owned the bar ends up getting converted and sold the bar and eventually as the community grew they built a church building. It originally was right across the street from what is now the Evansville Courier Press building. That's where it first started. And then they relocated it over by where the county annex building is now downtown. And that was what became the 4th Street Methodist Church. But I always thought it was kind of interesting that 'Hey we're from Methodist Temple and our church started in a bar.' It's kind of an interesting side note. Not a lot of churches probably can't say that. So that's where we first started, but Methodist Temple is actually the culmination or the result of two congregations that banded together. And so first there was a congregation that began in 1840 as it became known as the Fourth Street Methodist Church. But then in the nineteen hundreds there was another church, Bayard Park Methodist Church, and it was planted by Trinity Methodist Church. And so we have Trinity planting Bayard Park; Bayard Park merging with 4th Street Methodist Church. They decided to merge in the 1930s, but there was this big war that happened, and it delayed their building the building. And so the two became one in the 1950s, and that's when we built the sanctuary in the 1950s. The name Methodist Temple came from a sermon a pastor was preached in those early days, and the pastor preached on the tradition of the disciples and of Jesus going up to the temple to pray. They were meeting about what to call this new church and someone said why don't we just call it Methodist Temple, a place where all people can come and pray. That's a cool part of our story. It's an exciting part of our story.

Another thing I would say is we're not just any Methodist congregation, but we're a Methodist congregation. There's these guys named John and Charles Wesley who decided that they were going to do something new. I think honestly their motivation was the church of their day had become become kind of stuffy, and they decided to take the love of God to all people outside the church. Some of my favorite John Wesley quotes that should be always a part of our story are this John Wesley said, 'The world is our parish. We should treat all people like they're members of our church. The world is our parish.' Another favorite John Wesley quote, 'Grace is free in all and Grace is free for all.' He chose to see the divine spark in every person. Ok, one more and I'll have to stop myself because if I get geeking out and John Wesley will be here till tomorrow. Here's one more, 'if we may not think alike, we can still love alike'. We are a part of this story. This is who we are as Methodists. We believe that God's grace lives in every person. We believe that the world is our parish. We believe that even though we might not think alike, we can still love alike. This is our story and we should be grateful for it. It should define who we are. So I'm grateful, grateful for the story not the simple but grateful that we are part of a movement we call Methodism that started way back in the 1700s.

I'm also grateful for a group of leaders that a year ago I guess it was a year ago now decided to get together and ask this question, how do we honor our past but think about the future? How do we honor the story that is ours as Methodist Temple but think about where God is calling us to go and do and be next? The group of people that we met with asked this question mostly came from our church council which is like our governing board; and we asked a couple other people who were kind of in charge of ministries to come together and discuss this question. And basically the way we asked the question how do we honor the past but think about the future really started in three places. The first week, we looked at our congregation. Second we looked at our community. And third is I really think about our conversation that we had. It came back to the hearts of the pastors. First we went to our congregation and we asked What do you love about Methodist Temple? What do you appreciate about our church? And we got a lot of good answers. We got a lot of good answers, but we had a lot of great answers as we interviewed people in our church.

One of the things that people said they appreciated about our congregation is they love the people. That was like the first thing. What I love about our church? I love the people. Okay. Another thing people said was they love the preaching. Whoa! Humbling. I have to say it's humbling that you all come and listen to us. It is so humbling to me that you put up with me. I know JillAnn would echo the same that it's humbling to her that you put up with her, I know. You said you like the preaching so let's go. All right. You love the music. You loved that we actually tried to do something in our community that made a difference; and they specifically talked about the homelessness initiative that we've kind of participated in in the last couple of years. But it's not just the homelessness initiative. It's a spirit that we're willing to try- though imperfect we are- we're willing to try to make a difference in our community; and we're willing to give generously to trying to make a difference in our community. These are the kinds of things that people said to us when we asked them what they loved about our church. These are the things that people mentioned.

Next we went to our community. We thought we had to start with what we love about our church and then we have to think about how we share those gifts with our community. And so we took a look at our community. Here's what we learned about our community. The two demographics of people that are projected to grow in our neighborhood are this: single parent families and people 65 years and older. As I heard that, I'm like wow! we're really poised to make a difference. We've got a daycare. We've got a vibrant children's ministry. We got the SAMs ministry too. We are poised to make a difference in both of these areas. As we continue to learn things about our community, we learned that Evansville, Indiana has more churches per capita than Charlotte, North Carolina. I've mentioned this before. Charlotte, North Carolina is the belt buckle of the Bible Belt. That's where I think Billy Graham is from. We have more churches per capita than they do which means this: Evansville has a lot of people that go to church. Evansville also has a lot of people who used to go to church but because they've been hurt by the church, they've walked away for whatever reason. As we thought about our community we also thought about the reality that we're not just Evansville, Indiana but we're in connection with the United States and the culture the United States and all these other things that are going on. And as we looked at the culture, quite frankly and honestly, we had to admit we live in a divided time. I hate to say it but it's the truth. People are divided. Culturally speaking in our country today, in our society today where we're divided. I wouldn't say we're the most divided we've ever been as a society. I mean do a little history and you can see that there is this thing called the Civil War. That was a pretty divisive time. But we're pretty divided nowadays, and we don't listen to each other very well.

And so it started with thinking about the gifts of our church and thinking about the needs of our community. And then finally the pastor's heart. Hearts got involved, and what we began to do is try to put words to all this- words to the gifts we have, words to the community we live in, words to it. And here's what we came up with. We believe that God is calling us to strive to become a safe and nonjudgmental community in Jesus name. As we look at the division, as we look at the the people that have been hurt by the church in our own community, as we think about the needs of our neighborhood, we said that we believe that God is calling us to strive to be safe and nonjudgmental community in Jesus name. And by becoming a safe and nonjudgmental community we become a beacon of hope for the world, for our community. And the way that we do this is we strive to be a place of healing for the unchurched and the de-churched. The way that we do that is we try to Connect, Share, and Explore. Now you may have heard the words unchurched, to de-churched and you're thinking Andy but I am churched. So where do I fit in that? Well we need you to do it. We need you to seek to connect, to share, and to explore if this whole thing is going to become a reality. If you don't do it, it's just words on a page, just stuff we came up with. If we don't do it it's just a meeting we had. But if we do choose to do it, if we do choose to connect, to share, and to explore, I believe we can make a difference in our neighborhood and our community.

Connect. It's not rocket science. You learn the names of the people. The number one thing that keeps people coming back to church, like when the first things that people say 'Why did you go back to that church?' is because they knew my name. They knew my name, so when we think about connect maybe the first step to doing that is learn the names of the people, especially visitors and strangers that you don't necessarily know. Learn their names. We put out a safe nonjudgmental vibe when we're learning each other's names. Share. Share your gifts with them- these people that you've learned their names. Share your gifts with them and think about ways that we could share our gifts with our community and neighborhood. In many ways you're the eyes of the world. You see things that us pastors can't see and even leaders in the church can't see. You have to be mindful of the needs of our community and ways that you can share your gifts with the community. Finally Explore. Don't be afraid to ask questions. One of my favorite C.S. Lewis quotes is this 'Friends are not necessarily friends because they come up with the same answers, but their friends because they ask the same questions.' So much of the time the church has been all about the answers and not the questions. I hope we're a church about questions. Anyway Connect, Share, Explore.

I am so grateful for the leadership of this church that made this vision statement possible because here's my confession. I want to be a pastor of a safe and nonjudgmental community. I am tired of Christians saying stupid stuff. I'm tired of it. I'm tired of us saying things that do not exhibit and do not reflect the love of Jesus. It's a tragedy that the number one thing that people think of when they hear the word Christian is that we're judgmental- that's tragic because that's everything against Jesus stood for. It's everything against who he was. That's everything against what he taught the disciples to do. So there's your pastor's heart. You want to know what kind of church I want to be a part of? Safe and nonjudgmental. You know ultimately how you do it is so simple. You just see the presence of Christ in the person in front of you. That's it. When you see the presence of Christ in the person in front of you, you're safe and non-judgmental and you want to know their names. You want to share your gifts with them. You want to explore questions together. That's just how it's done. So I'm grateful for the leadership of this church, and finally I'm grateful for the love of God that makes it all possible.

Back to the question the disciples asked Jesus, 'how do we do the works of God?' When they asked Jesus that question the disciples were probably looking for a laundry list of dos and don'ts. Here's what Jesus told them. 'You want to do the works of God, then you believe in the one that God sent. If you want to do the works of God you believe in Jesus the one God sent.' And what he basically meant by that is you believe in the message of Jesus. You believe in the message of Jesus which is so simple. The message of Jesus is this 'God is with us and God loves us'. We don't have to measure up. We don't have to get it right. God already loves us. And in the end that's why we connect, share, explore, and seek to be safe and nonjudgmental because that's the way God loves us. It's not a gimmick to grow the church. It's not a gimmick to keep the doors open. It's not a gimmick to keep the United Methodist Church humming along. That's not why you do it. The reason why we do it is because that's the way God loves us. That's the way Jesus loves us, and we're called to be faithful to Christ's love. And so if that's something you want to be a part of, well today's a good day to jump on board- Stewardship Sunday. Today's the day we fill out our pledges and today we're going to land in the baptismal font because a baptismal font represents faithfulness- the life of faithfulness. If you're into becoming a safe and nonjudgmental community in Jesus name and you're into the idea that we're going to connect to share and explore and share the love of Christ in doing so, today's the day you you pledge your support through the giving of your resources to make it happen and to keep this story alive. And friends I'm telling you, this is a story to get excited about.

And so as we sing our closing hymn today, if you would like to make a pledge for 2019, I'm going to invite you just to lay it in the baptismal font. If you're on the main level or if you don't want to walk all the way down from the balcony into the basin baptismal font, just as a way to express your faith just lay it at the rail of the balcony. Thank you. Thank you for saying yes to this.

*LAST HYMN "Praise and Thanksgiving" HYMN TUNE: BUNESSAN - (Morning Has Broken)

*CHIMES & SERVICE OF LIGHT

BENEDICTION