

## Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost, 10:30am

**Word for the Week:** "A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in God's mighty power." Ephesians 6:10 (NLT)

### Worship Info:

- **Worship continues** to be offered **in-person and online**; please make choices that you are comfortable with regarding the COVID-19 virus.
- Here's this week's **in-home worship** package for those who are unable to join us.
  - Click on this link to join via **Zoom**, or copy and paste it in your browser:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86233774377?pwd=cmF5NkRBVmNqdEEveTBoRTRZbmppdz09>
  - Enter the following as prompted: **Meeting ID:** 862 3377 4377    **Password:** 029381
- Or join **by phone** at (312) 626-6799 (Chicago), using the same info (charges may apply).
- **Youtube Live** is another option - worship without using Zoom!
  - Go to the linked page, wait for a "Live Now" video - click on it and away you go! Here's the link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCleukD6raE5lms732gpdDUA>
- **Share these links** with your family and friends! **Visit us on the web & FaceBook.**
- Please **contact Pastor Kevin** at (217) 692-2543 if you need help connecting.

### Tech Note: Liturgist Spotlighted and Unmuted/Pastor Muted

#### Announcements:

Liturgist, Slide 1

- Hello! Thank you for joining us in worship today! Here are a few things to be aware of:
  - **Ad Council** meets at 7pm on Tuesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - **Charge Conference** has been rescheduled to 2pm on October 24<sup>th</sup>.
  - "**The Psalms for Justice-Seekers and Peacemakers**" continues this Wednesday evening, let the Pastor know if you'd like to participate.
- Please Chat, text, email, or call to send us your prayer requests, to let us know who is worshiping with you, and to **report problems** during the service.

#### Prelude

Pianist

### Tech Note: Spotlight and Unmute Pastor (Yeti), Mute Liturgist

#### Bell Ringer

Live or? Slide 2

#### Greeting

Pastor, Slide 3

Good Morning Blue Mound! Welcome to the 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost! Did we get enough rain for everyone last week? Let's begin with this morning's:

**\* Collect Prayer** (please rise as able) **Pastor, Slide 4**

O God, because without you we are not able to please you, mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**Tech Note: Spotlight Liturgist.**

**\* Opening Hymn** “Majesty, Worship His Majesty” x2, UMH 176 **Slides 5-9**

**L:** Please remain standing and open your hymnal to page 135 for this morning’s Call to Worship from Exodus 15.

**Tech Note: Unmute Liturgist, Mute Pastor**

**\* Call to Worship:** **Exodus 15, UMH 135** **Liturgist, Slide 10**

Liturgist: Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD, saying,

**All: “I will sing to the LORD, who has triumphed gloriously; the horse and its rider the Lord has thrown into the sea.**

Liturgist: <sup>2</sup> The Lord is my strength and my song, and has become my salvation;

**All: this is my God, whom I will praise.**

Liturgist: <sup>3</sup> I will exalt my father’s God who is a mighty warrior, whose name is the LORD.

**All: <sup>4</sup> “Pharaoh’s chariots and his host the Lord cast into the sea; and his chosen officers are sunk in the Red Sea.**

Liturgist: <sup>5</sup> The floods cover them; they went down into the depths like a stone.

**All: <sup>6</sup> Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power, your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.**

Liturgist: <sup>11</sup> “Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, terrible in glorious deeds, doing wonders?

**All: <sup>12</sup> You stretched out your right hand, the earth swallowed them.**

Liturgist: <sup>13</sup> “In your steadfast love, you have led the people whom you redeemed;

**All: you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode.**

Liturgist: <sup>17</sup> You will bring them in, and plant them on your own mountain, the place, O LORD, which you have made your abode, the sanctuary, O LORD, which your hands have established.

**All: <sup>18</sup> The LORD will reign forever and ever.”**

Liturgist: <sup>20</sup> Then Miriam, the prophet, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and dancing. <sup>21</sup> And Miriam sang to them:

**All: “Sing to the LORD, who has triumphed gloriously; the horse and its rider the Lord has thrown into the sea.”**

**\* Gloria Patri:**

**Pianist, Slide 11**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

**L: *Please be seated and turn to page 402 of your hymnal for our Hymn of Praise***

**Hymn of Praise “Lord, I Want to be a Christian”, UMH 402 Slides 12-13**

**Tech Note: Spotlight “Congregation”, Mute Liturgist, Unmute Pastor**

**Pastoral Reading**

**Exodus 14:19-31**

**Pastor/Liturgist, Slide 14**

Liturgist: This morning we’ll read Exodus 14:19-31, in which the Lord protects the Israelites as they pass through the sea. We’ll read from the NRSV.

**Pastor: <sup>19</sup> The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them.**

Liturgist: <sup>20</sup> It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

**Pastor: <sup>21</sup> Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided.**

Liturgist: <sup>22</sup> The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. <sup>23</sup> The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh’s horses, chariots, and chariot drivers.

**Pastor: <sup>24</sup> At the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. <sup>25</sup> He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty.**

Liturgist: The Egyptians said, “Let us flee from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt.”

**Pastor:** <sup>26</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers.”

Liturgist: <sup>27</sup> So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the LORD tossed the Egyptians into the sea.

**Pastor:** <sup>28</sup> The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. <sup>29</sup> But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

Liturgist: <sup>30</sup> Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. <sup>31</sup> Israel saw the great work that the LORD did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the LORD and believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

**Pastor: The story of God’s people.**

**All: Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**L:** *Please rise as able and join your voice in affirming our faith through the words of:*

**\*Affirmation of Faith:                      Apostles’ Creed                      Liturgist, Slide 15-16**

**Liturgist:** I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

**Tech Note: Spotlight Pastor’s Video.**

**Passing of the Peace**

**Pastor, Slide 17**

**Pastor:** *You may stand if you’d like, but please stay in your seats.* In this time of peace, in the words of Paul to the Thessalonians (1 Thess 5:23) “<sup>23</sup> May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Peace to you all.

**All: Peace to you as well.**

**Moment of Insight      “Forgiveness?” Matthew 18:21-35      Pastor, Slide 18**

As is often the case, today’s Gospel lesson begins with a question from Peter, the advocate (or satan). Peter, the one who voices the questions the rest of us are too chicken to ask. Today’s question is about forgiveness, or more to the point, how often are we to forgive. Peter asks, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? (Matt 18:21, NRSV). And then he ventures a guess – a guess based on the biblically perfect number seven. It’s a good guess, certainly a generous guess. Peter wouldn’t want to appear stingy in front of Jesus, would he?

But the answer doesn’t meet Jesus criteria, in fact it falls short by a factor that depends on the translation you read. Mathematically, Jesus seems to prescribe forgiving someone anywhere from 77 times to 490 times, but we know the number doesn’t matter. Jesus isn’t telling us to keep a tally of forgiveness, Jesus is telling us to forgive, and then just keep on forgiving, because forgiving is what we do – right?

And then, to further illustrate his answer, Jesus tells us a familiar story: A King decides to settle his accounts with those who serve him. My guess is that most of these folks serve the king to work off what they owe, and maybe the king needed the cash more than the servants? I don’t know, but there is this one guy who owes more than he could possibly repay, and when the king asks, he has no chance.

The king gets angry and decides to sell the man, his family, and all they own. He’ll take the proceeds as his payment. This scares the man - a life in servitude is better than a life in slavery - so he begs for mercy, and gets it! His loan is forgiven. Great!

But, when the roles are reversed and he runs into a fellow who owes him money, he demands to be repaid immediately, and when the other guy says he can’t, the man throws him in prison! To make a long story short, the king is not happy about this when he finds out and throws that man in prison! The king had forgiven, the servant should have forgiven as the king had. Right?

And so it is with us. We have been forgiven time and time again, we are obligated to forgive in return. Remember last week, when Paul told us that we have no other obligation than to love our neighbors as ourselves? Forgiveness is a sign of love, and loving one another is a never-ending obligation. We owe it to God and each other. Amen

**Tech Note: Spotlight Liturgist's Video, Unmute Liturgist, Mute Pastor.**

L: This morning I read from:

**Scripture Reading**

**Romans 14:1-12**

**Slide 19**

L: In which Paul continues his conversation on day to day life as a Christian. I'll read from the NRSV:

14 Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. <sup>2</sup> Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables.

<sup>3</sup> Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. <sup>4</sup> Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

<sup>5</sup> Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. <sup>6</sup> Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

<sup>7</sup> We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. <sup>8</sup> If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. <sup>9</sup> For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

<sup>10</sup> Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. <sup>11</sup> For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." <sup>12</sup> So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

**Tech Note: Spotlight Pastor's Video, Unmute Pastor, Mute Liturgist.**

**Pastor: Stop Screen Share, Switch to local mic.**

**Message:**

**"The Accounting"**

**Pastor, Slide 19**

Please join me in prayer: Lord God, Pour out your Spirit on the words I am about to share, make them your own, find them pleasing, I pray, that they may nourish Your people, O LORD, our rock and our redeemer. Amen

## **Page 1 - The Issue Today/Intro Story:**

Now, I'm not an accountant, but as you've heard over our years together, I've been called to account for my actions more than once in my life – with varying results. Those situations are never fun – whether being called into the boss's office for stepping over your bounds, or being kicked out of your own praise band, it takes a lot to swallow your pride and take what you have coming.

I learned a lot about that while in the military. I worked with some pretty tough commanders in some fairly key spots. Early on in my career I found myself filling in for my boss for an extended period of time. He was a seasoned WS-12 or 13, while I was a young, new to the career-field E-5. To translate that, he was making a lot of money because he had been around for a long time. I was new, and didn't carry much weight. Now, every week we had to brief the Commander on what was going on in our sections. Our unit was made up of teams who travelled to other bases to install and maintain communications equipment, and the commander needed to be kept informed of what was going on. Well, one morning, while I had teams scattered around the world, the boss asked me a specific question about one of the teams, and I didn't have the answer. I admitted I didn't have the answer and promised I would get it as soon as I could. That satisfied the Colonel. I survived.

Later in my career I worked in a Job Control Center – we were the folks who dispatched the maintenance guys in response to reported outages. Part of our job was, once again, to keep the maintenance officer and the commander informed. The major wasn't bad to work for, but the commander had a mind as sharp as a hawk – in fact, that was his last name – Hawk. It didn't matter what time you called him to report a major outage, he quickly assessed the information you gave him and then rattled off three questions more! You didn't try to BS him at 3am! I worked for him later in my career and faced another situation where things could have gone very badly for me, but did not. When I asked him about that later, during his retirement ceremony, he said, "You had already learned your lesson in the Azores!"

One more – I know how it goes with war stories; they never end! So shortly after being deployed to Saudi Arabia between the Desert Storm operations, a commander asked me a question, and I began my answer with the words, “I think....” I didn’t get to finish my answer. Instead the guy quickly reminded me of something I already knew – never answer a question by saying “I think” either answer it, or admit that you don’t know the answer, but will make every effort to find out. I was held to account. I learned, and I’ve lived by that lesson to the best of my ability ever since.

There are times and places for opinions, but mostly, we are better off with the facts. The truth – especially God’s truth, as Paul seems to be telling us in this week’s reading from his Letter to the Romans.

## **Page 2 - Exploring the Text/Context:**

Now, if I’ve said it once – well, I’m sure I’ve said it more than once; Paul has a way with words. Paul must have been a member of his High School debate team growing up. If there had been such a thing as a High School.

But I wonder if a debate team, or an education in the art of rhetoric, that is, “the art of speaking or writing effectively,”<sup>1</sup> might not have been a part of his upbringing. Paul spoke Greek, and the Greeks are the one’s who developed the art, so it is possible. In any case, we see evidence of Paul’s education in our reading today as he carefully develops his argument. Unlike Jesus, who told simple stories, or parables, to make his point, Paul builds a case.

Now, how do you begin an argument? I know for some of you the answer is simply to question your spouse’s opinion on something, but that isn’t quite the answer I’m looking for. No, the answer is more academic than the things we do to irritate a spouse. Those who taught English, and anyone who has written a paper, knows that typically, an argument begins with an opening statement or thesis. That is how this portion of Paul’s letter begins. “Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions.”

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<sup>1</sup> Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary. 1977

It's an instruction more than a thesis really, Paul is instructing the folks in the Roman churches on how they should operate, both internally and externally, in this letter – especially in chapters 12 through 15. A couple of weeks ago we talked about that internal/external thing – how Christians sometimes make trouble for themselves by trying to do inside work outside, and outside work inside. What do we think about this one? Inside or outside?

I found that one a bit difficult to answer, so I did a little extra research and found that the Roman's Paul wrote to were non-Jewish people living among Jewish people. So, you can imagine all the questions popping up in their minds! Not only about Jewish culture and beliefs, but about how and why some believe and follow the teachings of Jesus, and others don't. Remember, Jews and Gentiles didn't mix much until these new Christ-following communities began to spring up. We call it culture shock, and I'm guessing both groups experienced it often.

So, Paul is teaching these folks how to get along with their new neighbors – specifically, how to “respect the sensibilities of those Jews who do not share their convictions about the meaning of Christ.”<sup>2</sup> Paul considers these folks to be weak in faith, while those Jewish folks who believe, like he does, are strong. Nevertheless, Paul reminds them that they are all neighbors, and what are we to do with neighbors? Love them. It is our only obligation.

After all, Jesus died for all of us, not just those who believe. Your mind should already be tingling with ideas on where this message is going to go, but back to our question first – this would appear to be outside work – Paul is teaching us how to live in the larger community, outside of our community of faith. But the lesson could also be applied to us, and how we respond to folks exploring our faith community, as well as to those who are part of another community of faith. More tingling, anyone?

### **Page 3 - The Text Today/Exegesis:**

So let's get back to Paul's instruction: “Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions.”

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<sup>2</sup> The Jewish Annotated New Testament. Notes on Romans 14.

Now, we could pick apart each of the arguments Paul lays out, discussing the dietary practices of the times – the whole eat or don't eat thing, reminding us of a similar argument found in First Corinthians, regarding meat sacrificed to other gods. Paul's argument sounds like fodder for an argument between Vegan's, Vegetarians, and Omnivores, but Paul says "don't waste your time on such things." He says if we are all serving the same God, that's good enough. Do not judge one another over such things.

As with food, Paul addresses Holy Days, saying some consider one day holy, and not the next. Kind of like how we celebrate Christmas, but not Hanukkah or Ramadan, or how the Catholics observe feast days for certain Saints, but Protestants? Not so much. We are entitled to our own convictions. Paul says, as long as we do what we do in true service to God, then its cool. We're doing what we need to be doing. Get along with one another. Why? Because when we truly live in pursuit of the things God wants for us, when we want that for each other as well, the details of our beliefs just don't matter.

Paul's words really say it all, beginning at verse 7, "For we don't live for ourselves or die for ourselves. <sup>8</sup> If we live, it's to honor the Lord. And if we die, it's to honor the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. <sup>9</sup> Christ died and rose again for this very purpose—to be Lord both of the living and of the dead" - that's from the NLT – and Paul continues, "<sup>10</sup> So why do you condemn another believer? Why do you look down on another believer? Remember, we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. <sup>11</sup> For the Scriptures say, "As surely as I live,' says the LORD, 'every knee will bend to me, and every tongue will declare allegiance to God.'" He concludes this line of thought by saying, "<sup>12</sup> Yes, each of us will give a personal account to God." There will be an accounting.

Don't argue, don't judge, allow others to have their convictions, live for God. There will be a test. Unfortunately, our reading ends before we get to the answers, and the lectionary skips to Philippians next week! So I'll skip ahead briefly to get to those answers cuz it's just not fair to test on materials not covered in class.

Now, if anyone had taken me up on my offer to sit in on the Psalms class last Wednesday night (there's another chance coming up) these answers would be no big surprise (Anita knows – she's in the class). We'll begin at verse 17, and I'm going to paraphrase from the CEB just a bit – that whole food fight continues into this part of the chapter, and I don't want flying mashed potatoes to obscure your view.

<sup>17</sup> God's kingdom is...about righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

<sup>18</sup> Whoever serves Christ this way pleases God....<sup>19</sup> So let's strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up. <sup>20</sup> Don't destroy what God has done....”

As Dr. McCann said last Wednesday, God is all about Justice, Righteousness, and Shalom or Peace. And that Justice thing? It was defined as a situation where everyone has what they need. Not everything they want, and not what they deserve. What they need; and that can only come about if we all work together to honor the Lord.

That sounds like a tall order in a world that seems about to tear itself apart. It sounds as though we must singlehandedly work to save the world – an impossible task! But there is an old saying that I love: how do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. Not that we'd ever want to do that, but I hope you get what I mean.

#### **Page 4 - The Good News/Summary/Takeaways:**

So how do we survive in this modern day and age? How do we get along in a world divided between Republicans and Democrats, progressives/liberals and conservatives, those concerned about climate change, and those who deny it, those who are concerned about the virus and those who deny **it**? Those who fear Antifa, (Anti-Fascism) and those who fear the rise of fascism? How do we survive in a world where, if one side backs off two steps, the other side steps forward, rather than leaving some space for healing? How do we reach across the divide in peace, rather than to launch yet another attack? Those are questions I want answered, and I'll admit, I'm struggling to find those answers! And then I read this passage from Paul.

Paul reminds us that we are to welcome those who are weak in faith, and then he more/less reminds us that those on the other side of the argument think of us in the same way. In other words, we all think the other guy is an idiot. Right?

Isn't that what it's come down to? How can you possibly support the candidate you support? You must be an idiot! Doesn't matter if you support Trump or Biden, Davis or Londrigan, Pritzker or whoever he will run against next time; run right down the list: the other guy is an idiot. Wear a mask, you're an idiot, don't wear a mask, YOU are an idiot. On and on and on, and on! Paul says, "OK, we're all idiots, but if we are serving our Lord, then we are the Lord's idiots." "How sweet to be an idiot" goes a Monty Python song...

Now, I apologize for using that word, idiot. It can be offensive and hurtful for some, and I will point out that Paul certainly didn't use it when he reminded us that, "<sup>7</sup> We don't live for ourselves and we don't die for ourselves. <sup>8</sup> If we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we belong to God" (CEB). He certainly didn't use it when he asked, "why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you look down on your brother or sister?" and then reminds us that "We all will stand in front of the judgment seat of God," that "each of us will give an account of ourselves to God." There will be an accounting.

We are not idiots, we are God's, possessive "s," we belong to God. We don't have to let ourselves be divided by earthly, human constructs. We can serve the Lord as those who love the Lord. We don't have to fight over doctrine, we can serve the Lord. We don't have to fight over issues of human sexuality, we can serve the Lord. We don't have to (you name the issue), we can, say it with me now, SERVE THE LORD. We don't have to fight God's battles, God's got that stuff covered.

What God wants from us, what God EXPECTS from us, is that we love God above all other, and that we love our neighbors as ourselves. God expects us to work towards the establishment of God's justice here on earth. And let's define that once again, because justice goes far beyond human law and order. God's justice is established when everyone has what they need, whether we feel they deserve it or not, because "deserve" is a matter of judgement. We all need food, water, clothing, shelter, safety, health care, and until **all** have those things, then God's justice does not exist on this earth. God doesn't care about our political bickering!

I dare say God has little concern for much of what we hold important. If it doesn't work toward God's demand for Justice for All, then God probably doesn't give two hoots and a holler about it. Except to say that we ought to get down to God's business, and soon. There will be a test, we will be held to account.

So I wish I could say I've resolved this issue for the morning, but I don't think I have. I don't think I can. Jesus couldn't get us all working together, and I fall well short of his example. But I will challenge us to look again at the issues that separate us from others. I'm talking about the big things now, not just our dietary preferences. I'm thinking things like our stands on politics, abortion, human sexuality, gun control, the environment, name the issue – the big ticket issues – and examine how your stand contributes to, or detracts from, working together to establish God's Justice on earth. That is, ensuring that **all** have what they need (and it could be argued that this includes all of God's creatures and creation, not just human beings).

If your issue prevents you from working with others – on both sides of the issue, not just your side – then you should probably let it go and set your mind on more important things. Throw away the idolatry of your opinions and find a common point of belief. Belief in God, for the good of all. Amen.

**At the conclusion of the message:**

**Liturgist:** As you listen to this morning's offertory reflect on the worshipful act of giving back to our Lord. Think about what you have received as blessings, and how you can bless others in return. Amen

**Tech Note - Pastor: Start Screen Share, Switch to Yeti Mic.**

**Offertory**

**Slide 20**

**Stewardship Moment:** Please continue to support our mission by mailing your tithes and offerings to the church (PO Box 375, Blue Mound, IL 62513). Thank you.

**Doxology/Offertory Prayer:**

**Slide 21**

God of our salvation, we remember that day when the Israelites, escaping their captors, were rescued by you, as you parted the sea to let them cross. Over the years, scholars have struggled with how many died that day that another group might be led

to freedom. We offer our gifts to you in thankfulness for all your blessings, knowing others have so much less. Then we remember, that we have been blessed to be a blessing. May the lives we live this day and every day be an offering of blessing to those who are in need. In Jesus, we pray. Amen. (Exodus 14:19-31)

**Joys and Concerns:**

**Slide 22**

(Please forward joys and concerns to Pastor via Zoom Chat function, by phone at 692-2543, or at [kdkriesel@gmail.com](mailto:kdkriesel@gmail.com).)

**Prayer Hymn:**

“Give to the Winds Thy Fears”, UMH 129

**Slide 23-24**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Slide 25**

God of freedom, you brought your people out of slavery with a mighty hand. Deliver us from our captivity to pride and indifference to the needs and gifts of others, that we may be ready to love as you have loved us, and to give even as we have received.

Your voice burns within the depths of our being, O God of our ancestors, and draw us into your presence and service. Hear the cries of your people and speak a word of comfort, instill in our leaders a desire for your justice, and protect those who protect and serve us.

God of salvation, who sent your Son to seek out and save what is lost, hear our prayers on behalf of those who are lost in our day, receiving these petitions and thanksgivings with your unending compassion, as with joy we lift up: \_\_\_\_\_ and with concern: \_\_\_\_\_,

**New:** Jeffery Elvin (broken bones), Larry Stalter (treatment going well), Tami (doing better), Karen’s brother (possible surgery).

**Continuing:** Elaine’s Great Grand Daughter (doing well), Western State Fire Victims; Tropical Storm/Hurricane Victims, Dorothy Damery (Health), Rose Damery (New Knee), Iowa/Illinois storm victims; Nick Brown (Recovering), Ginny Stephenson (vision), Maurine Severns (Eyes), Betty (not Eckols, Stroke), Justice in our nation; All affected by COVID 19; Carol Acree, Diane Elder, Doris Bonn, Tom Vaughn, Vic Oxby, John Holmgren, Don Younker, Bob Perona, Our Government, Local, State, and National Leaders; First Responders, Members of the Military, Our Bishop (Frank Beard), Our District Superintendent (Brad Watkins), The United Methodist Church.

**Those Unable to Join us in Worship:** Dorothy Damery (Primrose), Doris Bonn (At Home), Martha Sheppard (Imboden Creek Gardens), Gene Grandfield (At Home), Eleanor Moma (At Home).

**Notes:** Please submit your prayer requests on the tear offs, by chat, text, or email to ensure accuracy.

And now that we have proclaimed our joys and concerns let us take to the Lord those things, which we wish to keep between God and ourselves in a time of silent prayer.

**(Silent Prayer)**

Redeeming Sustainer, visit your people and pour out your strength and courage upon us, that we may hurry to make you welcome not only in our concern for others, but by serving them generously and faithfully in your name, through your son, Jesus the Christ, who taught us to pray:

**LORD'S PRAYER:**

**Slide 25**

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 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.

**\*Hymn of Commitment "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy", UMH 121 Slide 26-28**

**Benediction - Closing Hymn - Postlude - Community Time**

**Slide 29**