Doing the Hard Thing | February 23, 2025

MEDITATION

"Love your enemy, it will scare the hell out of them." – Mark Twain "Love your enemies, for they determine who you are." – Joseph Campbell

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING WORDS

L: And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you. **P: And also with you.**

PRELUDE

"The Mercy Tree"

Music: Krissy Nordhoff & William Michael Neale

Arranged: Mary McDonald

CALL TO WORSHIP (*Dr. Lisa Hancock*)

Melessa Fox, Deacon

L: Jesus teaches us, "Do to others as you would have them do to you." But who are the others?

All: Our enemies and friends, family and strangers.

L: Jesus teaches us, "Be merciful as your Father is merciful." But what is mercy?

All: To act with compassion, to help without expecting anything in return.

L: Jesus teaches us, "Forgive, and you will be forgiven." But how do we forgive?

All: By recognizing enemies, friends, family, strangers, and ourselves as people in need of compassion.

L: Let us worship God, who loves us and empowers us to love one another with mercy and compassion.

All: Come, let us worship! Thanks be to God! Amen.

***SONG OF PRAISE**

"Shine Jesus Shine" Refrain only 2x

In Pew

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Melessa Fox, Deacon

(Rev. Mindi, as posted on Rev-o-lution)

Holy Jesus, you call us into a life that others have told us is easy, but it is not. You challenge us to forgive, to love our enemies, to bless those who curse us. We want the easy way, but you have given us the hard path. Grant us the patience and endurance to journey with you, to allow ourselves to stumble at times, to live into the hard way

so that we might fully experience your love, grace, and peace in this world, by becoming a people full of love and grace and forgiving others. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN

"Enter, Rejoice, and Come In"

Black 73

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

See Insert

WORD FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

Lisa Allen

ANTHEM "Can I Ride?"

Choir

African American Spiritual, Arranged.: by Kirby Shaw

EPISTLE READING | Romans 12:14, 17-21, pg. 197

David Kayajan

GOSPEL READING | Luke 6:27-38, pg. 78

Melessa Fox, Deacon

L: The Word of God for the people of God. All: Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION

"Doing the Hard Thing"

Rev. Christina Williams

*RESPONSIVE HYMN

"I Would Be True"

Black 492

PASTORAL PRAYER & PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

During the prayers of the people, you are invited to voice your joys and concerns out loud. When names are spoken, all invited to respond, "O Lord, hear our prayers."

THE LORD'S PRAYER (trespasses)

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. All are invited to sing "Amen". (Black 812)

INVITATION TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY MUSIC

"Love One Another"

Choir

Words & music: Natalie Sleeth

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessing flow; Praise God all creatures here below; Praise God for all that love had done: Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One Amen.

*UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Merciful God, who calls us to love beyond measure, we offer these gifts as a sign of our commitment to your teachings. Help us love our enemies, do good to those who hate us, and bless those who curse us. May our offerings bring healing and hope, and reflect your boundless grace in our community. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN "Pass It On" Insert

*BENEDICTION

SUNG BENEDICTION "Go Now In Peace" Choir, Accompanied by Bell Choir

Words & music: Natalie Sleeth

POSTLUDE "The Heart of God" Music: Aodhan King & Jonas Myrin

Arranged: Matt Schinske

Many thanks to the volunteers who enriched our morning together!

Deacon, Melessa Fox; Tech, Amelia Allen; Members of the Chancel Choir; Reader, David Kayajan; Hospitality, Marylaine Hobson; Food donation, Betsy Woodley

^{*} Please stand in body or spirit.

NEW HERE TODAY?

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here! To help you navigate Sunday mornings with us, please see the guide below.

- 1. **Explanation of the Order of Worship:** *An asterisk means you may rise in body or spirit (in spirit means, if you need to stay seated). **Bold text** is spoken in unison.
- 2. **Kid's Connection:** After the "Word for all God's children," the children leave worship for a time learning and fun with Bible stories, crafts, and games with Lisa Allen.
- 3. **TAKE TWO:** Is an after-worship, adult faith formation group to help deepen and grow our faith. Lisa Allen is leading a book group on The Year of Living Biblically—a funny, poignant book about literally living every biblical law for one year.
- 4. **Coffee and Conversation:** You are welcome to gather with us after worship to meet some new friends in the Covenant Room, down the hall on the right.
- 5. **Have Questions?** Please reach out to Rev. Christina or the Deacon of the day.

Music covered under One License # A-728849



The altar flowers today are given by Janet King and Family in celebration of Hal King's birthday.