

# Banning United Methodist Church

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

July 16, 2023

## MEDITATIVE THOUGHT

*Dream a little this week. But let your dreams grow from the seeds that you are planting right now. See beyond the dirt to the fruit God will bring.*

## PRELUDE

## WELCOMING FRIENDS and NEWCOMERS

## WELCOME and PASSING OF THE PEACE

## MINISTRY MOMENTS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

### †CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Come, let us worship God!

**P: Come, let us worship our Creator!**

L: God is the great Sower, scattering seeds of life and abundance across the earth.

**P: We are the soil the Sower plants, created to nurture and sustain the seeds of God's life-giving love.**

L: God is the great Gardener, tilling and cultivating our soil with love and grace.

**P: We notice the rocks and thorns in our soil and call on the Gardener's love and grace to transform us into good soil.**

L: God is the great Life-giver, sowing seeds and tending the soil to produce the fruit of abundant life.

**P: May we nurture and grow God's new reality, bearing the fruit of flourishing and abundance for all God's creation. Amen.**

### †OPENING HYMN

"Come, Ye Thankful People Come"

UMH #694

### OPENING PRAYER

**Most loving God, please open the furrows of our lives to receive again the seeds of Your Gospel. Rain Your mercy upon us, shine Your warmth and light into every dark place, and bring forth in us not the harvest we deserve but the harvest that in Your glorious love You have destined for us. Through Christ Jesus our Savior. Amen!**

### NEW TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 55:10-13 NRSV

<sup>10</sup>For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, <sup>11</sup>so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it. <sup>12</sup>For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. <sup>13</sup>Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

### GOSPEL READING

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 NRSV

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. <sup>2</sup>Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. <sup>3</sup>And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup>And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. <sup>5</sup>Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. <sup>6</sup>But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. <sup>7</sup>Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. <sup>8</sup>Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. <sup>9</sup>Let anyone with ears listen!" <sup>18</sup>"Hear then the parable of the sower. <sup>19</sup>When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. <sup>20</sup>As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the

word and immediately receives it with joy; <sup>21</sup>yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. <sup>22</sup>As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. <sup>23</sup>But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

One: The Word of God for the people of God.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**SERMONIC HYMN**                      “Open My Eyes, That I May See”                      UMH #454

**SERMON**                                “The Most Influential People”                                Pastor Doug

**PRAYERS OF THE PASTOR and PEOPLE**

(After all slides: In Your mercy, **Lord, hear our prayer**)

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

**THE LORD’S PRAYER**

**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.**

**GIVING BACK TO GOD (TITHES AND GIFTS)**

**OFFERTORY**

†**DOXOLOGY**                                “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”  
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heav’nly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

†**PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**Creator God from Whom all blessings grow: as we dedicate our tithes and offerings, we acknowledge that You have blessed us to be the fertile soil from which the good news of Your Kingdom will spring forth. Move us, we pray, beyond seeing our role as passive or powerless, depending totally on the quality of the seed and the expertise of the planter. Remind us that You are counting on us for fruitfulness, demonstrating for the world your love, grace, and power as we bear fruit that eases the suffering of the sick, feeds the hungry, brings justice to the oppressed and love and compassion to those who feel disconnected or forgotten. In Christ, we pray. Amen.**

†**CLOSING HYMN**                      “Holy Spirit, Truth Divine”                      UMH #465

†**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**