

Banning United Methodist Church

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

July 30, 2023

MEDITATIVE THOUGHT

Good things come to those who wait. Like seeds buried in the ground, God's love bursts forth in the fullness of time to bring new life and new possibilities.

PRELUDE

WELCOMING FRIENDS and NEWCOMERS

WELCOME and PASSING OF THE PEACE

MINISTRY MOMENTS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

†CALL TO WORSHIP

L: We come to worship the Triune God who creates, redeems, and sustains us all.

P: We come to worship God who never leaves us and yet whose purposes often seem hidden.

L: As the bulb hides the flower, as the seed hides the tree, as the cocoon hides the butterfly, so too does God bring forth life even when we cannot see it.

P: We gather today to learn how to watch, wait, and anticipate the season when God's unrevealed work will come into the open.

L: As silence gives way to song, as night gives way to dawn, as the past flows through the present into the future, so too does God tirelessly persist in bringing about the abundant life of the kingdom of heaven.

P: We gather today to learn how to join in God's dance as partners who prepare for the season when God's unrevealed work comes into the open.

L: As our end meets our beginning, as our time meets infinity, as our doubt meets our believing, so too does God meet our brokenness with persevering love, unfolding a new reality of flourishing for all creation.

P: We gather today to learn how to love as God loves so that we may be part of bringing God's unrevealed work into the open. Amen.

†OPENING HYMN

"Happy the Home When God Is There" vs. 1,2 & 4

UMH #445

OPENING PRAYER

O God, teach us not to despise small things. Remind us that the kingdom of heaven is like a tiny mustard seed. Turn our attention to the small things that bless others. You have planted seeds of great potential in our souls. Help us develop our potential so that you and others can depend on it. Turn our attention to what is small but potent. O God, You have entrusted us with gifts and graces that can bless many people. Help us not to overlook the smallest ability. O God, You have placed the destiny of the kingdom of heaven inside of us. Turn our attention to the small things that this congregation can do to make a tremendous difference in human lives. Amen.

PSALM READING

Genesis 29:15-28 NRSV

¹⁵Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?" ¹⁶Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷Leah's eyes were lovely, and Rachel was graceful and beautiful. ¹⁸Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." ¹⁹Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me." ²⁰So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her. ²¹Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed." ²²So Laban gathered together all the people of the place, and made a feast. ²³But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. ²⁴(Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.) ²⁵When morning came, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban,

“What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?” ²⁶Laban said, “This is not done in our country—giving the younger before the firstborn. ²⁷Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years.” ²⁸Jacob did so, and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52 NRSV

³¹He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” ³³He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

⁴⁴“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. ⁴⁵“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. ⁴⁷“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁵¹“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” ⁵²And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

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

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMONIC HYMN

“I Want to Be Like Jesus”

Summer Ensemble

SERMON

“Heaven is Like?”

Pastor Doug

PRAYERS OF THE PASTOR and PEOPLE

Prayer Quilt Dedication

Children in Prayer

(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

God of all blessings, Jesus inspired us through his teaching to see your kingdom as a place where small things can have a mighty impact: a tiny mustard seed planted, or a bit of yeast mixed into the flour. We ask you this day to bless the gifts we offer, so that they may have a powerful impact when used according to your purposes. Bless us that we might see glimpses of your kingdom through our giving and grow in generosity in the process. In the Name of Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer, we pray. Amen.

†CLOSING HYMN

“Christ For the World We Sing” vs. 1, 2 & 4

UMH #568

†BENEDICTION