

Banning United Methodist Church

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

July 23, 2023

MEDITATIVE THOUGHT

In this house of God, angels traverse ladders of holy love. Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.

PRELUDE

WELCOMING FRIENDS AND NEWCOMERS

WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

MINISTRY MOMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

†CALL TO WORSHIP

L: We look at this world, focusing on the pain and confusion, the fears and hatred which seem to abound.

P: For what can we hope?

L: We wait breathlessly for the goodness of creation to be made manifest in all the world, for this is the promise of God.

P: God is always with us, guiding, rescuing, healing, restoring us.

L: Get ready, dear friends, the promises of God are true.

P: Lord, quiet our spirits and open our hearts. Bring us hope and peace. AMEN.

†OPENING HYMN "My Hope is Built" vs. 1, 3, & 4 UMH #368

1. My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Refrain:

On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand; all other ground is sinking sand.

2. When darkness veils his lovely face, I rest on his unchanging grace. In every high and stormy gale, my anchor holds within the veil.

(Refrain)

3. His oath, his covenant, his blood supports me in the whelming flood. When all around my soul gives way, he then is all my hope and stay.

(Refrain)

4. When he shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in him be found! Dressed in his righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne!

(Refrain)

OPENING PRAYER

We are such a varied group of people. Yet You draw us here where we will find friendship, peace, and hope for our lives right now and all the times to come. Stand us up again, O God. Dust us off and put us back on the pathways of service and reconciliation. Warm our hearts with Your love; lift our spirits with Your power, for we ask these things in the Name of Jesus our Savior. AMEN.

PSALM READING

Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24 NRSV

¹O Lord, you have searched me and known me. ²You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. ³You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. ⁴Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely. ⁵You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. ⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it. ⁷Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?

⁸If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. ⁹If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, ¹⁰even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast. ¹¹If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night," ¹²even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you. ²³Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. ²⁴See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Genesis 28:10-19 NRSV

¹⁰Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. ¹¹He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. ¹²And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³And the Lord stood beside him and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; ¹⁴and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. ¹⁵Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

¹⁶Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!" ¹⁷And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." ¹⁸So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. ¹⁹He called that place Bethel; but the name of the city was Luz at the first.

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

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMONIC HYMN

"Sweet, Sweet, Spirit"

Banning UMC Ensemble
acc. Kristin Chemistruck

SERMON

"A Wonderful Vision"

PRAYERS OF THE PASTOR and PEOPLE

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)

†**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**

Lord, we present these tokens of the many blessings You have poured into our lives. Make us people who are unafraid to proclaim Your healing mercies. Help these gifts to bring hope and comfort to all those in need. In Jesus' Name, we pray. AMEN.

†CLOSING HYMN "We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder" vs. 1, 3, & 5 UMH #418

1. We are climbing Jacob's ladder; we are climbing Jacob's ladder, we are climbing Jacob's ladder; soldiers of the cross.
2. Every round goes higher, higher; every round goes higher, higher, every round goes higher, higher; soldiers of the cross.
3. Sinner, do you love my Jesus? Sinner, do you love my Jesus? Sinner, do you love my Jesus? Soldiers of the cross.
4. If you love him, why not serve him? If you love him, why not serve him? If you love him, why not serve him? Soldiers of the cross.
5. We are climbing higher, higher; we are climbing higher, higher, we are climbing higher, higher; soldiers of the cross.

†BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE