

November 12, 2023

Personal Prayer Before  
Worship: Come, Holy Spirit.  
Fill this place. Fill our lives.  
Unite us as the  
Church of Jesus Christ.  
Set our hearts on fire.  
Amen.

## Getting Ready for the Big Date



### WELCOME

PRELUDE *Amazing Grace* (organ bagpipes)

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Are you awake? Are you alert?

**Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.**

Are you watching the signs?

Are you interpreting what is happening today?

**Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.**

Do you see opportunities for ministry?

Do you see the poor, the homeless, the hungry,  
the needy, those who need healing?

**Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.**

Come, let us worship and work for the coming of  
the Kingdom of God.

HYMN *We Are God's People* TFWS no. 2220

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of mercy, your judgments are true,  
your wisdom unsearchable, your compassion  
unfailing. You are worthy of our complete trust and  
confidence, but, the truth is, we prefer to put faith  
in ourselves and in our own plans and agenda.  
We are blind to our foolishness. We are deluded in our  
desire to be in control. We are impatient, unprepared  
for what truly matters, and focused instead on petty  
concerns. Forgive us, Lord, for our schemes and  
manipulations. Grant us grace to look for you each  
day with anticipation and joy. Restore us to yourself  
and to one another, in Jesus' power we pray. Amen.**

### SILENT CONFESSION

### WORDS OF ASSURANCE

The Bride is the beloved of the Bridegroom.  
In love and forgiveness, Christ welcomes us to the  
banquet feast that has been prepared for us since  
the foundation of the world. Friends, hear and believe  
the Good News:

**We are reconciled to Christ! Thanks be to God.**

### SIGNS OF PEACE AND UNITY IN CHRIST

*Had any God sightings this week, times when you  
felt God at work in your life? Share them as you  
pass the peace or online in the chat.*

### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Jesus taught us to speak of hope as the coming of  
God's kingdom.

**We believe that God is at work in our world turning  
hopeless and evil situations into good. We believe  
that goodness and justice will triumph in the end**

**and that tyranny and oppression cannot last  
forever. One day all tears will be wiped away;  
the lamb will lie down with the lion, and justice will  
roll down like a mighty stream.**

True peace and true reconciliation are not only  
desired, they are assured and guaranteed in Christ.

**This is our faith. This is our hope.**

*- 20<sup>th</sup> century South African creed*

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy Spirit, we take this moment to be still, to listen,  
and to wait. Whisper truth into our hearts.

**Give us ears to hear the words of the Lord --  
words that are life-changing, words that transform.**

Bring light to these Scriptures, that we may know and  
understand more fully the God who loves us. **Amen.**

### SCRIPTURE I Thessalonians 4:13-18 CEB

Brothers and sisters, we want you to know about  
people who have died so that you won't mourn like  
others who don't have any hope. Since we believe  
that Jesus died and rose, so we also believe that God  
will bring with him those who have died in Jesus.  
What we are saying is a message from the Lord:  
we who are alive and still around at the Lord's  
coming definitely won't go ahead of those who have  
died. This is because the Lord himself will come down  
from heaven with the signal of a shout by the head  
angel and a blast on God's trumpet. First, those who  
are dead in Christ will rise. Then, we who are living and  
still around will be taken up together with them in the  
clouds to meet with the Lord in the air. That way we  
will always be with the Lord. So encourage each other  
with these words.

### PASSING OF THE FRIENDSHIP FOLDERS

### MESSAGE FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS

MUSIC *God Is Here With Me* Christopher D. Hogan  
Hope Choir and Sunday School Voices

### SCRIPTURE Matthew 25:1-13 CEB

"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten  
young bridesmaids who took their lamps and went out  
to meet the groom. Now five of them were wise, and  
the other five were foolish. The foolish ones took their  
lamps but didn't bring oil for them. But the wise ones  
took their lamps and also brought containers of oil.  
"When the groom was late in coming, they all  
became drowsy and went to sleep. But at midnight  
there was a cry, 'Look, the groom! Come out to  
meet him.' "Then all those bridesmaids got up and

prepared their lamps. But the foolish bridesmaids said to the wise ones, 'Give us some of your oil, because our lamps have gone out.' "But the wise bridesmaids replied, 'No, because if we share with you, there won't be enough for our lamps and yours. We have a better idea. You go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.' But while they were gone to buy oil, the groom came. Those who were ready went with him into the wedding. Then the door was shut. "Later the other bridesmaids came and said, 'Lord, lord, open the door for us.' "But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you.' "Therefore, keep alert, because you don't know the day or the hour.

HYMN *My Hope is Built* no. 368

MESSAGE *Getting Ready for the Big Date*

#### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Gracious God, we come to you today as intercessors, standing side by side with a world full of people who need your help and support. We lift our voices in prayer, asking that you hear our petitions and bring your love and healing into the lives of those we pray for.

**Lord, we pray for those struggling with illness or pain, asking that you bring them comfort and healing.**

*(silent prayer)*

We pray for those facing difficult circumstances, requesting that you give them strength and guidance.

*(silent prayer)*

**We pray for those dealing with mental health challenges, asking that you bring them peace and clarity of mind.**

*(silent prayer)*

Sovereign God, we also pray for our leaders and those in positions of authority, asking that you grant them wisdom, discernment, and courage as they make decisions that affect the lives of others.

*(silent prayer)*

**Finally, we pray for our communities and world, asking that you bring peace, justice, and reconciliation to those who are hurting and oppressed.**

*(silent prayer)*

Lord, we know that you are a God of love and compassion, and we trust in your power and goodness to bring about healing and restoration in the lives of those we are praying for. Help us to be faithful intercessors, standing close to one another in your presence and lifting our voices in prayer. We pray all these things in the name of your son, Jesus Christ, who taught us to love one another and pray for those in need. Amen.

#### 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.**

#### OFFERING

You may give your offering by text- Text UMCWC \$50 to 73256, by using the QR code on your screen, at [umcwc.org](http://umcwc.org), through the mail, by automated giving through Realm, or by dropping it off at our office. Your gift changes lives and helps invite everyone to the Lord's Table. Your giving honors God and transforms the world through creative ministries. One such ministry is the Christmas Card for Prisoners project which our church participated in the past few weeks. Interested in being involved in prison ministry? Let Pastor Brooks know. Thank you for the financial and personal gifts you offer to our amazing God.

#### OFFERING VIDEO

*Church Christmas Cards Show Care to Prisoners*

#### OFFERING RESPONSE

TFWS no. 2161, vs. 1,2

**To know you in all of your glory,**

**to love you with all that I am.**

**With all of my heart, Lord this is my prayer:**

**To know you more.**

**To know you in all of your power,**

**to trust you with all that I am.**

**With all of my heart, Lord, this is my prayer:**

**To know you more.**

#### OFFERING PRAYER

Gracious God, you have blessed us with so much.

With grateful hearts, we offer not only the fruits of our financial resources, but all that we are.

**Use both the money and the talents you have blessed us with to bring your light and word to those who need it most. Amen.**

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN *Rejoice, the Lord is King* no. 715

#### BENEDICTION

In the presence of the Lord we have reflected on His words about the wisdom of vigilance. Are we foolish or wise? Probably a bit of the two: foolish when we sin, wise when we are vigilant and try to live like Jesus. May almighty God keep you vigilant and wise and bless you: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.** Go in the peace of the Lord, and may God keep you always faithful. **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE *Open My Eyes* Scott/Taylor

**Bold text indicates congregational response.**

#### WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Message: Rev. Dr. Truman Brooks

Liturgists: Rev. Mercedes Case; Rev. Allen Keller

Reader: Cheryl Brown

Organist: Steve Campitelli

Hope Choir Director: Karen Rotz

Hope Choir Accompanist: Judy Schlabach

Children's Message: Jacqui Rothera

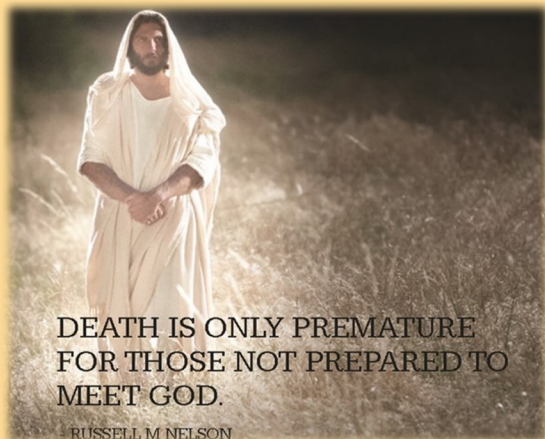
Acolyte: Madelyn Crawford

Live Stream Team: Tim Case, Holly Grimm,

Todd Grimm, Jake Joslin, Heidi Krug, Brad Rush,

Zeke Shappell Smith, Cory Smith (leader)

**Let us be alert to the season in which we are living. It is the season of the Blessed Hope, calling for us to cut our ties with the world and build ourselves on this One who will soon appear. He is our hope—a Blessed Hope enabling us to rise above our times and fix our gaze upon Him. — A.W. Tozer**



**DEATH IS ONLY PREMATURE  
FOR THOSE NOT PREPARED TO  
MEET GOD.**

- RUSSELL M NELSON

### Thoughts on the Second Coming

*When he came the first time, he came so unobtrusively that except for Mary and Joseph and a handful of shepherds, nobody much knew or cared. But he says he will come a second time.... No one can say just what will happen when that day comes, but that it will be a day to remember there is no doubt. -Frederick Buechner*

*The second coming of Christ will be so revolutionary that it will change every aspect of life on this planet. Christ will reign in righteousness. Disease will be arrested. Death will be modified. War will be abolished. Nature will be changed. Man will live as it was originally intended he should live. -Billy Graham*

*Just as the love of a mother for her son can grow while she is waiting for his return, and just as lovers can rediscover each other during long periods of absence, so also our intimate relationship with God can become deeper and more mature while we wait patiently in expectation for his return. -Henri J.M. Nouwen*

*The soul is imbued with a yearning that is carried, like a torch, from incarnation to incarnation. It burns with a curiosity about life and it's true identity. Souls live, strive, and evolve, driven to seeking the truth about the world and themselves. -Stefan Emunds*

*For this time it will be God without disguise; something so overwhelming that it will strike either irresistible love or irresistible horror into every creature. It will be too late then to choose your side. -C.S. Lewis (The Case For Christianity)*

*Such are the conditions prior to Judgment Day. We need to learn from this and not fret when we see these things happening, but say: Christ predicted beforehand that the world would become so savage, coarse, greedy, and so on. Well then! That's the way it is, and it is even going to get worse. - Martin Luther*

### Reflection Questions for the Parable of the Ten Virgins

- How seriously do we take the need to be ready for Jesus? Is this a frequent thought or rarely considered?
- Do you feel we should be prepared for the world?
- Is spiritual readiness also about being equipped for life's challenges?
- Do you think we should be ready for our own deaths? How can faith make us more at ease with this reality?
- Should we be prepared to see Jesus coming in our daily lives, through people and events? Why or why not? Is this practical or too idealistic?
- What are some specific things we can do this week to improve our readiness? Any concrete actions or habits to develop?

