

**“SACRED GROUND”
OPEN DOOR MCC
REV. MILLER HOFFMAN, PASTOR**

Gleanings from the Liturgy

September 10, 2017

Opening Words: (*from* Robert Eller-Isaacs)

For remaining silent when a single voice would have made a difference, we forgive ourselves and each other; we begin again in love.

For each time that our fears have made us rigid and inaccessible, we forgive ourselves and each other; we begin again in love.

For each time that we have struck out in anger without just cause, we forgive ourselves and each other; we begin again in love.

For each time that our greed has *made us callous* us to the needs of others, we forgive ourselves and each other; we begin again in love.

For the selfishness which sets us apart and alone, we forgive ourselves and each other; we begin again in love.

For those and for so many acts both evident and subtle which have fueled the illusion of separateness, we forgive ourselves and each other; we begin again in love.

Welcome

Bless each one who is here safely, and blessings on all who are away this week. Thank you for coming to Open Door MCC on the tenth Sunday after Pride.

MCC and Open Door have a special outreach to vulnerable communities and those in solidarity: Love is our greatest moral value and resisting exclusion is a primary focus of our ministry. We are and want to be community where everyone is the family of God, and where all parts of our being are welcomed at God's table. This morning I'm grateful for each one of you.

Opening Prayer (Steve Garnaas-Holmes)

You've been wronged:
hurt, betrayed, accused,
robbed of something, someone.
The wound still bleeds,
smoke still rises in twin columns.
You can pretend,
and your ruse will imprison you.
You can rage,
and your rage will enslave you.
You can believe your deserving,
and your shame will bury you.

Or you can walk to the sea,
the sea at the end of the world,
the dark, chaotic waters of Creation,

the Red Sea bounding your Egypt,
the ocean of forgiveness.
A bitter Pharaoh will follow you,
but don't turn back.
You will walk into the pain, up to your ankles,
the grief, up to your waist,
the powerlessness, up to your chest
before the waters part

and you walk free.
Amen.

Passing the Peace

*Weave, weave, weave us together.
Weave us together in unity and love.
Weave, weave, weave us together.
Weave us together, together in love.*

First Reading: Genesis 50:15-21 (NRSV, NCCC trans., inclusified)

Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as God is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

This is the word of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsive Reading: (Psalm 103:8-12)

(Norman Fischer, trans.)

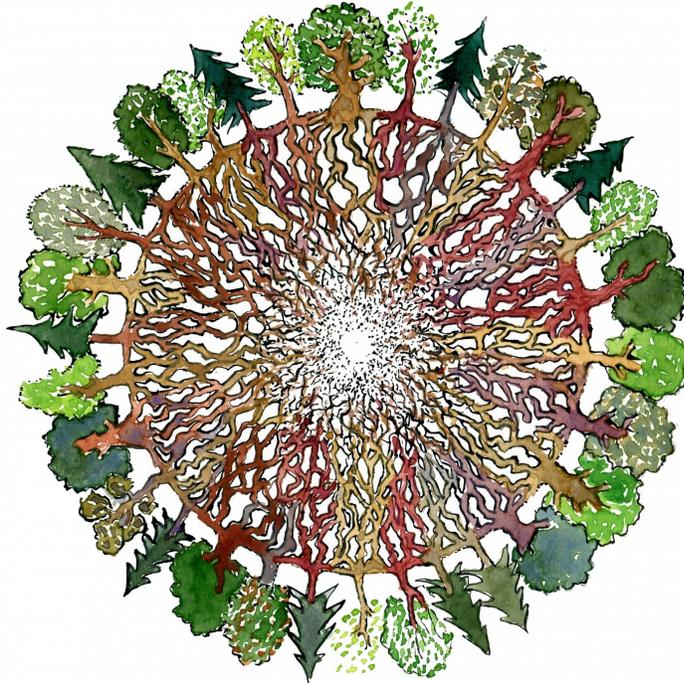
God is kind, God is gracious
Steadfast and faithful
Who doesn't contend forever
But lets anger slip away
Whose gifts are gracious and fortuitous
Whose generosity does not attend to our shortcomings
As high as the heaven is above the earth
So far, so wide is your kindness to us who seek to know you
As far as the east is from the west
So far, so distant have you removed us from our limitations

Second Reading: Matthew 18:15-20 (NRSV, NCCC trans., inclusified)

"If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of

you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Parent in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

This is the word of God. **Thanks be to God.**



The Great Thanksgiving

Meister Eckart wrote, If the only prayer we ever say in our life is Thank You, it is enough. Thank you.

God is with you!

And also with you!

Let us open our hearts!

We open them to God.

Let us give God thanks and praise!

It is a good and joyful thing to do!

(Mary Oliver)

You do not have to be good.

You do not have to walk on your knees

For a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.

You only have to let the soft animal of your body

love what it loves.

Tell me about your despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.

Meanwhile the world goes on.

Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
are moving across the landscapes,
over the prairies and the deep trees,
the mountains and the rivers.

Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
are heading home again.

Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting --
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.

Bless this meal, and make it become truly in us, with us, and through us your life-giving, life-changing, life-sustaining presence and your abiding love. Amen. PLEASE BE SEATED.

Closing Blessing (*from* Bishop Woodie White)

And now, may *God* torment you. May *God* keep before you the faces of the hungry, the lonely, the rejected and the despised. May *God* afflict you with pain for the hurt, the wounded, the oppressed, the abused, the victims of violence. May *God* grace you with agony, a burning thirst for justice and righteousness. May *God* give you courage and strength and compassion to make ours a better world, to make your community a better community, to make your church a better church. May you do your best to make it so; and after you have done your best, may *God* grant you peace.

Go in peace

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Prayer Chain: ODMCCprayerchain@yahoo.com (subject: JOIN PRAYER)

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