

**“THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT IS LOVE”
OPEN DOOR MCC
VERNESSA WILSON, GUEST PREACHER**

Gleanings from the Liturgy

October 29, 2017

Opening Words: (Mary Oliver)

One day you finally knew
what you had to do, and began,
though the voices around you
kept shouting
their bad advice--
**though the whole house
began to tremble
and you felt the old tug
at your ankles.**

"Mend my life!"

each voice cried.

But you didn't stop.

You knew what you had to do,
though the wind pried
with its stiff fingers
l'at the very foundations,
though their melancholy
was terrible.

**It was already late
enough, and a wild night,
and the road full of fallen
branches and stones.**

But little by little,
as you left their voices behind,
the stars began to burn
through the sheets of clouds,
and there was a new voice
which you slowly
recognized as your own,
that kept you company
**as you strode deeper and deeper
into the world,
determined to do
the only thing you could do--
determined to save
the only life you could save.**

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 third Sunday after Fellowship Sunday!

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.

Each year we provide a basket of groceries and gift cards to families in need of support, both in our congregation and in our wider community. Please sign up to bring one of the nonperishable foods on the list, or a gift card for the perishables so that we can help these families have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Opening Prayer (Steve Garnaas-Holmes)

Love your neighbor as deeply,
as instinctively, as surely
as you watch out for yourself.
Love your neighbor knowing
God sees you both alike,
with the same loving delight.
Love your neighbor to be true to yourself,
to discover yourself.
Love your neighbor as *you* love them,
with your gifts and presence,
not as someone else.
Honor your neighbor's reality
as real and valid as yours.
Love your neighbor,
who *is* your self.
Let loving your neighbor
be your self, your life, who you are.
Love your neighbor as yourself.

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: Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18 (NRSV, NCCC trans., inclusified)

God spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for I your God am holy... You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor. You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbor: I am your God. You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. You shall not take vengeance or bear a

grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am your God. This is the word of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsive Reading: Psalm 1 (NRSV, NCCC trans., inclusified)

Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers;

but their delight is in the law of God, and on God's law they meditate day and night.

They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper.

The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;

for God watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Second Reading: Matthew 22:34-40 (NRSV, NCCC trans., inclusified)

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, "'You shall love your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

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

The Great Thanksgiving

(from Rev. Alan Claassen)

May the gift *we* give

change *us* and our world.

Take our gifts, God, and use them to make more hope and more justice and more life for more people. Amen.

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!

(Jan Richardson)

Chances are there will come a day when you will forget every last word of this blessing.

It does not matter.

Let this blessing slip through your fingers. Let it roll from the smooth plane of your palm. Let each line disappear and every syllable fall away. Let this blessing return to where all blessings begin.

Let it leave you until all that remains is the place where it pierced you— whether like fire or like breath you could not say, only that you heard your name as it entered, then heard its own as it blew away.

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.

Closing Blessing (John Robbins)

May all be fed.
May all be healed.
May all be loved.
Go in peace

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS ([click here](#))

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Prayer Chain: ODMCCprayerchain@yahoo.com (subject: JOIN PRAYER)
Newsletter Listserve: <mailto:rev-3-8@opendoormcc.org?subject=JOIN NEWS>

Sermons' text and audio, prayers, and readings are available [here](#) on our Website each week.

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Open Door is now able to accept company matching funds. Please look into whether you work for a company that offers matching funds and let us know how to help you double your offering to the church! You can also donate to Open Door through the United Way. Ask us how!

Montgomery County SURJ is learning, teaching, and witnessing against racial injustice. Join them on FaceBook at <https://www.facebook.com/surjmocomd/>.