

Remembering

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 30 August 2020

Preacher: Pastor Cathy Hall Stengel

- [0 : 00] Bury Abhin seguro Bury Buryush Italy Thank you.
Thank you.
Thank you.
Thank you. Thank you. Good morning, everyone.
Welcome back to Pendleton Center United Methodist Church. Now, yay! Can we just say, woo? Thank you.
- [2 : 49] So let's just see if this works. Are you ready? This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice.
Let us rejoice. Let us rejoice. And be glad in it. And be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day. This is the day. That the Lord has made. That the Lord has made.
Let us pray. Holy God, we are so grateful to you for your incredible blessings upon us and for the opportunity to gather together in worship. We pray that your Holy Spirit will come and descend upon us.
Fill us to overflowing with your power and your grace. That you will speak to our hearts. Speak to our minds. And bring us your word. That you may lead us to become more like Christ.
- [3 : 47] In Jesus' name. Amen. And so I'd like to invite you to stand if you're able. As we, as you, either meditate upon, speak, or hum the words.
But we are made to worship in whatever way it is. Think about these words. Before the day. Before the light.
Before the world revolves around the sun. God on high. Step down into time.
And wrote the story of his love for everyone. He has filled our hearts with wonder.
So that we always remember. You and I are made to worship. You and I are called to love.
- [4 : 54] You and I are forgiven and free. When you and I embrace a record. When you and I choose to believe.
Then you and I will see. Who we were meant to be. All we are.
All we are. And all we have. Is all a gift from God that we receive. Brought to life.
We open up our eyes. To see the majesty and glory of the King. He has filled our hearts with wonder.
So that we always remember. You and I are made to worship.
- [6 : 04] You and I are called to love. You and I are forgiven and free. When you and I embrace surrender.

When you and I choose to believe. And you and I will see. Who we were meant to be.
Even the rocks growled. And even the heavens shout. And the sound of His holy name.
So let every voice sing out. And let every knee bow down. He is worthy of all our praise.
You and I are made to worship. You and I are called to love. You and I are forgiven and free.

[7 : 04] When you and I embrace surrender. When you and I choose to believe. Then you and I will see.

You and I are made to worship. You and I are called to love. You and I are forgiven and free.

You and I are forgiven and free. When you and I embrace surrender. When you and I choose to believe. Then you and I will see.

Who we were meant to be. When you and I'm alone. Christian speaker. In the turn. What thoughts are you and things in this Happy Father who the, older about who I truly are to believe.

For your children and city. But your ones. Amen. Since we are not kidding, How do you even, need your family speak. For others. If your children and you? If your children and you dishonor are well, hit our children in the ■■■ world together you.

[8 : 06] It's for my children and church house. It's forrit addicts. Mint■■■ family. John was grateful To explain their life in this way. Many help the people and them know player■ Clifus. In the tıçcing names and children fot Patch. Are they just troubled us. Luc. It's■ children and ■■■■.

You and they'rezinhoijno. to say the Lord be with you yay oh how wonderful it is for us to be together in this place every week I have looked at that camera and imagined you here and all the people you represent and today is the day so thank you for being in this pioneer crowd as we gather together for this worship it is a glorious day and if you haven't met me yet and I know there are those here that we haven't met I am Kathy Hall Stengel and Scott Johnson and we are two of your well we're the only two new pastors but we are two of your pastors along with Sherry and it is a beautiful thing to be here and so we come with gratitude I haven't encountered a single one of you this morning that isn't filled with a little bit of a sense of excitement and joy in being together on this day and so we welcome those of you who are watching us online and those of us who are gathered here in person and those who will be watching this service throughout the week as it is made available to everyone in our gratitude we come before God with our gifts and our offerings and the first and foremost gift is your heart and your life and your gifts of service and testimony and yes indeed the gifts that you give financially and I know that you probably encountered our offering boxes that are so beautiful that Rich Henderson made for us there's one on the way in and one on the way out and you can still give online and continue to send checks or however it is that you give the church is willing to receive them I'm sure you're shocked at that revelation but we do count on those gifts to carry on our ministry because after all this is the day that the Lord has made and we are called to rejoice and be glad in it so I invite you to be in an attitude of prayer as we in our hearts and spirits offer ourselves up to God so so so so so so so so so so so so so so so so so

so so

Good morning, friends. It is indeed a joy to be with you, as you heard Pastor Kathy say. My name is Scott, and I am also part of your pastoral team.

I, too, have been excited about this day, and it is a joy to see your faces in person. And now we get to do one of those great things that the body comes together to do, which we can pray together.

[14 : 27] And as we come together in prayer today, we do remain mindful of little Charlie as he continues to heal. The news is good. He is home in continuing his way back.

And with that, we do lift up our thanks to God as he continues on his way. But while there are other concerns on our hearts, and while there are other blessings we would also bring, let's also be open to the movement of the Spirit, however the Spirit chooses to bless us.

Would you unite your hearts with me now in prayer? Lord, for the gift of each morning, for the gift of sunshine that brightens the way, for the gift of blue sky that lifts our spirits, for the gift it is to be able to come together and worship you, your people gather and give you thanks, for the gift we see in each new smile, for the gift we see in bright and shining eyes over our masks, we give you thanks.

For the gift it is to be able to gather in this place in safety, to be able to lift our hearts in song, if not our voices, we give you thanks.

For the gift of what it is to hear the word, to share our spirits with each other, we give you thanks.

[15 : 59] And we are mindful of so many who are facing significant challenges, who have overcome, who have new stories to tell because your hand has been at work in their lives.

And for the ways in which you have blessed them, we give you thanks. As we come this morning, Lord, we know that there are so many who are facing significant challenge, and we are praying for movement in their circumstances.

We have named Charlie, but we on our hearts and minds know so many others who need the gift of your healing today. For our sisters and brothers who have faced the aftermath of storms and fires.

For those who are facing the challenge that is COVID-19. For those who have given so much to provide care in the face of this pandemic.

Workers, first responders, and others. Lord, we are praying that you will make a special space that brings them into your strength, into your wisdom, and into your sacred care, so that we will continue to overcome.

[17 : 39] And in the midst of all that we have seen, and in the midst of all that we carry, we know that you are with us, continuing to lead, continuing to bless, continuing to shine in so many new ways.

And for this, Lord, your gathered people give you thanks for who you are and all you have done. Amen. Amen. Good morning.

Today's reading is from the book of Luke, chapter 23, verses 39 through 43. One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him.

Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us. But the other criminal rebuked him. Don't you fear God, he said, since you are under the same sentence?

We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong. Then he said, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

[19 : 16] Jesus answered him, truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. I want to offer to you a second scripture reading that comes from the gospel of Luke, not too far after what Linda read.

Luke 24, verses 28 to 35. When they came to Emmaus, he acted as if he was going on ahead. But they urged him, saying, stay with us.

It's nearly evening, and the day is almost over. So he went in to stay with them. After he took his seat at the table, he took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.

Their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, but he disappeared from their sight. They said to each other, weren't our hearts on fire when he spoke to us along the road, and when he explained the scriptures for us.

They got up right then and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven, and their companions gathered together, and they were saying to each other, the Lord has really risen.

[20 : 43] He appeared to Simon. Then the two disciples described what had happened along the road, and how Jesus was made known to them as he broke the bread.

When you look back at your life, some of you have longer to look back on than others. Who made you who you are? What events formed you into the person who comes here and is now sitting among us or watching?

It is one of those questions that we ask, who are the heroes? Who are the landmarks? Who are the people that held hands, prayed for, mentored, instructed, guided you along the way?

One of the questions that I was asked after I was ordained was the question, who ordained you? And I was like, wait, what? Because this person knew that I had been ordained by a United Methodist bishop on my knees, with his hands on my head, standing up with a stole put around my neck.

I couldn't understand. Why are you asking me who ordained me? Well, the question didn't end there because the question was, who was it in your past?

[22 : 08] Known or unknown? Who had some influence to get you to where you are? It wasn't until a little bit later that I realized that my great-grandfather, who I not only never met but didn't know anything about, was a Methodist preacher out in Missouri.

He was what they called a license-to-preach pastor, and he came into towns where there was no church and he had revivals and he built churches.

And then he would go on to another town. And I was like, oh, I pick him. He was the one who prepared the way for me to be ordained.

Who is it for you? We are people of the story. We are people of stories at gatherings and all kinds of things, at dinner tables.

My niece came to live with us for a while and she said, I don't know how you do what you do. And I looked at her and said, what do you mean? We're like eating dinner. She said, you talk about everything.

[23 : 20] Not me, but we. We talk about our day. We talk about stories. We tell funny stories. We tell serious stories. We learned about each other every time we gathered around the meal.

Sometimes more than we might have wanted to know. If you have sat vigil with a family member as they are nearing the end of their life, and if you have sat vigil with other people gathered around that person or gathered in a hospital lounge or at home when the family has gathered, what do you do?

You tell stories. You remember. You pull out pictures. You make storyboards. You do all the things that remind you who was that person.

Who is that person? And let me say, who will that person be? Because just because we have gone on to glory, our story does not end.

The challenge is, what do we remember and how do we hold what we remember? One of the criminals beside Jesus said to him, fix it.

[24 : 43] Get yourself down. We deserve what we're getting, but you don't deserve it. And then in a plaintive cry, he says to Jesus, remember me.

Remember me when you come into your kingdom. And what is Jesus' response on this day? Not tomorrow, not in a week, not in a million years.

Today, you will be with me in glory. Paul tells the people at Philippi, as he begins the book of Philippi, the letter to the Philippians, he says, I give thanks to God every time I remember you.

Or whenever I remember you, I give thanks to God. Remembering. whose shoulders do you stand on?

Who are the people who are behind us, beneath us, the ones who have inspired us to be who we are, remembering?

[25 : 59] And we remember why. Why is that person upon whose shoulders we stand so important? What did they do for us?

When I was training pastors to be and seminary students and people at local pastors licensing school, we would always ask the story, ask for the story, who was it?

When I do confirmation, I ask the youth who are with me to tell me, tell me your story. I'm reminded how young and how short some of these stories are, but so important.

Who taught you about God? Who taught you how to pray? Who taught you that you are an important person in this story of life and ministry?

Often, these pastors would say, a Sunday school teacher. So, we say to all of our Sunday school and youth director people, you just keep it on because these pastors often talked about Sunday school teachers, youth group leaders, choir directors, who gave them a place and a song to sing or an instrument to play to help them to learn how to give glory to God.

[27 : 22] some of them gave thanks for pastors, but often it was the people that spent more time with them, more time in classrooms and in yards at the side of a pool, whatever it might be.

The man dying beside Jesus, he believed. He believed. And Jesus then believed in him.

Jesus appeared to the disciples on the road to Emmaus and then what did they do? They realized who he was at the table and then he was gone.

But was that the end of the story? That was not the end of the story because we sit here and we speak words of faith because of what those disciples did.

They went back and they told the disciples what they had seen and what they had heard. They proclaimed, they remembered and they kept telling the story.

[28 : 30] There was no Bible. There was no why don't you sit down and read God's word because there wasn't and even if there had been they wouldn't have been able to read it because most people couldn't.

So the stories that were told was how the good news of Jesus Christ was passed on and passed on and here we are living testimonies to that reality.

We are that living testimony. You and I. All of us who are seated here and you may think I already know that Pastor Kathy.

I already know that. I already know about the influences in my life and who has made me who I am. I already know that.

I've already thought about it and if you haven't I invite you to do that. One of the things I often describe when I stand remembering someone's life at a memorial service is like it's a rock that we throw into a pond or a lake some kind of still waters what happens when the rock disappears?

[29 : 47] What do you see? Ripples. Ripples. The rock disappears but the rock does not disappear because its influence keeps going and going and going and the bigger the rock the bigger the ripples.

The rock may disappear from our sight but the influence and the impact that it has never disappears. You and I we are witnesses.

We often think of witnesses as the people who saw something happen. A car accident. You know when our grandson Charlie had a crisis it was the next door neighbor who witnessed all that happened as she watched our son save our grandson's life.

we think about those kinds of witnesses but we are witnesses you and I to the story that's gone before us.

Some of you are stories that have been created and told by your grandparents and your parents your pastors of your childhood and your parents pastors however it goes my great grandfather we are influenced by those people.

[31 : 07] We are we talk about the cloud of witnesses the cloud of witnesses in your personal life the cloud of witnesses for this church. We are witnesses to the hope and faith and confidence and the power of those who have gone before us.

the story didn't end at any point in the story of this church or the story of God's creation that story never ends.

It is as though there was a baton that was passed from person to person from pastor to pastor does it look the same it will never be the same and yet the worst thing that we can do as we get ready to finish this summer series of God's plan for us being a God a plan for hope and for good news is to believe that God is finished with us.

In the church that I served several years ago I actually left there just a year a little over a year ago they were the church was a little bit maybe 25 years old the building and they were preparing they celebrated an anniversary we honored all of those who stood with shovels when they dug the hole and built the building a magnificent place just as you have built and one of our very elderly members someone I think of as the matriarch of that church when we started to dream what the next chapter would be she looked around at those people who were saying we've already done it it's good enough God did this God helped us to build this it's good why would we mess with it and this woman in her 90s stepped forward and said do you think for a minute that God stopped dreaming the day that we put the seal of inspection on this building do you think that with the first worship service and the first class of daycare students that that was the end of the story and there was a hush because this woman in her 90s she had gone to preaching when she said

God will never stop dreaming God will never stop building God will never stop having a plan for us and a plan that is good I don't stand here in isolation I stand on the shoulders of all who have come before me in the pulpit of this church and other churches and so it is we honor we celebrate we remember how many of you learned when you were young that if you cut a tree what do you see inside rings and what do the rings tell you how old the tree is you know and it might be like dogs you know they say every year for a human is seven for a dog I don't know I don't know we don't know how long it takes for a new ring to be added in a tree but what is it it doesn't stop once the central part of the tree has been established a layer of life a layer of life a layer of life a layer of life and it keeps going that is us that is the space that is the people here and the people watching and the people in this community because you know what pandemic or no pandemic physical distancing or no physical distancing we will rise we will rise we will continue to rise because I can promise you this

[35 : 16] God is not finished with us God has a plan for us for ministry that we can continue to call people to serve that God continue to call people for ministry of all kinds no matter whether it's the ministry of a hair stylist the ministry of medicine the ministry of folding bulletins which we pray we will have at some point this is not our this this does not define us this chapter of ministry and yet this chapter of ministry opens up to us to you and to me to us as your pastoral team to begin to look what new thing does God have in mind maybe we can't do the things that we used to do not yet but what can we do because God does not ask us to sit in the place of being separated to sit in the place of if we can't do it the way we used to do it then we can't do it at all think about the story of Paul

Paul had a terrible life a terrible life of hate and a life of thinking that he was being faithful by trying to eliminate Christians and to put down the belief that Jesus Christ was a savior until he was blinded and then he saw and when his eyes were open he was changed and he invited as you read through the epistles he invited community after community after community to rise up and follow because God has a plan and a purpose for each and every one of you and it is good we do not forget the past I do not forget my great grandfather I'm mindful of a woman who lived with the disease of polio and was limited to a wheelchair all of her adult life and we might be thinking oh that's sad that must be so hard oh but you needed to meet her because she was as feisty as they come she raised four sons and while her husband was working she wrangled those four sons in every way possible and they knew the only place they could go to get away from her physical presence in her wheelchair was the back corner of their beds but you know what happened there she had her wheelchair parked on the edge of that bed and they talked and they prayed and she prayed for every person in the church and the community because that's what she could do and as we get used to each other

I'm just going to tell you today that it is not uncommon for me to scan the sanctuary and say I don't see anybody here who is dead nobody's dead and if we're not dead then we're not done so let's look at the influences behind us and honor them and celebrate them and let's go let's continue to serve a living God let's continue to believe that God has a plan and a purpose for each and every one and we say thanks be to God Amen communion communion is called the great thanksgiving and I am so thankful to be able to celebrate it with all of you because it is a celebration a sacrament that honors the gift that God has given to us through Jesus

Christ the Lord be with you we lift up your hearts let us give thanks to the Lord our God it is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you Father Almighty creator of heaven and earth you formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life when we turned away and our love failed your love remained steadfast you delivered us from captivity made covenant to be our sovereign God and spoke to us through your prophets and so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn holy holy holy Lord God of power and might heaven and earth are full of your glory Hosanna in the highest blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord Hosanna in the highest holy are you and blessed is your son

Jesus Christ your spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind to set at liberty those who are oppressed and to announce that the time had come when you would save your people he healed the sick fed the hungry and ate with sinners by the baptism of his suffering death and resurrection you gave birth to your church delivered us from slavery to sin and death and made with us a new covenant by water and the spirit on the night in which he gave himself up for us he took bread and he broke bread and he gave it to his disciples and he said take and eat this is my body given for you do this in remembrance of me and when the supper was over he took the cup and he gave it to his disciples and he said drink from this all of you this is the blood of the new covenant my blood poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins drink of this often remembering me and so in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice in union with Christ's offering for us as we proclaim the mystery of faith

- [42 : 18] Christ has died Christ is risen Christ will come again pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here and on these gifts of bread and wine make them be for us the body and blood of Christ that we may be for the world the body of Christ redeemed by his blood by your spirit make us one with Christ one with each other and one in ministry to all the world until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet through your son Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit in your holy church all honor and glory is yours almighty father now and forever amen and now let us pray the prayer that Jesus taught us saying 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 and ever amen

I'd like to invite you to stand if you're able as we celebrate by singing great is thy faithfulness as we say you and you and amen anything you feel to the high and and and hmm you I I feel I I I I Praise thy faithfulness, O God my Father.

There is no shadow of turning with thee. Now changest not thy compassions, they fill not.
As thou hast been, thou forever wilt be. Great is thy faithfulness, great is thy faithfulness.
Morning by morning new mercies I see. All I have needed, thy hand hath provided.

- [45 : 14] Great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me. Hard in foreseen and all peace that endureth.

Thine O dear presence to cheer and to guide. Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow.

Blessings of mine with ten thousand beside. Great is thy faithfulness, great is thy faithfulness.

Morning by morning new mercies I see. All I have needed, thy hand hath provided.

Great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me. As we prepare to leave this place, on your way out you will receive one of these.

- [46 : 42] On the small side is a little gluten-free cracker. And on the other side is grape juice. So we invite you, we will serve these to you, Sherry and I, on your way out of the church.

And then you may enjoy receiving this consecrated sacrament outside or take it with you, whatever it is. But we do share in one body and in one spirit the sacrament of the most holy communion that Jesus Christ gave us.

And now as you go, as we go from this place, let us give thanks always for what is behind us. For what is with us and within us.

And let us be thankful for what is ahead of us. Because God will guide us. God will guide us. Because God has promised us from the beginning of creation.

That we will be cared for, guided, blessed, and saved, and fed. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, let us go forth.

[47 : 59] Amen. Your Holy Spirit, Your Spirit, Your Father, Your Firm ■ Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. ■■■■