

A Future With Hope

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Preachers: Pastor Scott Johnson, Pastor Cathy Hall Stengel

- [0 : 0 0] Good morning and welcome to worship. I am Reverend Kathy Hall Stengel. I am one of the new pastors who is joining you this morning and Reverend Scott Johnson is also new and we are so glad to be here.
- So whether you are from Niagara Falls or Pendleton Center, we are so glad that you're here to worship. Maybe you're not from either church and you are just enjoying being in worship with us on this beautiful day and we are so glad we welcome you and I invite us to be in a moment of prayer.
- Would you open your hearts and pray with me? Almighty and gracious God, your people are gathered before you with hearts wide open and as we come to this moment, we are looking for a powerful movement of your spirit.
- We are here to pour ourselves out for you to show you what you are worth to us as the worship implies. So Lord, please receive our gift as we come before you this morning. Amen.
- And because every day, this day, all days are given to us by God who created all, let's join together and sing, this is the day the Lord has made.
- [1 : 2 0] This is the day, this is the day, this is the day, that the Lord has made, 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, this is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made.
- And I'd like to invite all of you to stand, if you're able, as we sing our opening hymn, America the Beautiful. Oh beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves are gray, For purple mountains, majesty above the rooted plain.
- America, America, God shed his grace on thee, And crown thy good with brotherhood, from sea to shining sea.
- Oh beautiful for heroes' rooms in liberating strife, Who more than self and country love, and mercy more than life.
- [3 : 3 2] America, America, may God thy holy one, Till all success be nobleness, and every king divine.
- Oh beautiful for major dream, that sees beyond the years. Thine alabaster cities lead, undeared by human tears.
- America, America, God met thy heavenly love. The Lord be with you.
- And also with you. Please be seated. I'm Pastor Sherry Mehar, and I'm also one of the pastors here, And I just wanted to welcome everyone here, And we'd ask that you take a moment and fill out the friendship card.
- There's a digital link for that, so take a moment, fill that out. We just need your name if you're part of our church community already, But if you're not, welcome. We're so excited that you're here, And we ask that you give us your email address, So that we can get connected to you.

[5 : 04] We also have a place on the friendship card, For you to put your blessings, So we can proclaim the wonderful things that God is doing in our lives, And those are actually projected in worship, In the next worship service.

And then there's also a place for our prayer concerns. So if you have any prayers that you'd like to have lifted up, Please put them on that card, And that is given out to the prayer team, and to the pastors. And our church is a church of prayer, And we are making sure that all of those concerns, Are just covered in prayer.


We also have a children's bulletin available, So if you have children in the house, You can download that, and they can color, And fill that in throughout worship. And we also have opportunities for growth, And discipleship at this time.

So if you are on Facebook, We invite you to Peace UMC Fellowship Group. Just join in with that, And we have lots of opportunities there. We have music, and devotions, and prayer, And it's a great community of faith, That is gathering on Facebook, And I invite you to that.

Also, we are starting up some small groups, Because Facebook is a large group, And it's wonderful, But we want to be able to become intimate with one another, And share in our faith journey. So we invite you to join in with a small group, And if you're interested in that, Please contact the church, And let us know about that as well.

[6 : 17] Part of worship is to give back. We are here because God is just so good, And has blessed us in so many ways. And so we give back, With our praise, And with our offering.

And so as we take this time, To reflect on God's goodness, All the many blessings God has given to us, Let's take a moment to return our gifts, Tithes, and offerings. And this morning, The offertory piece will be given by Susan Wasayowitz.

Love, Tithes, Put  many sheets Of Love, from Two peace Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[8 : 19] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[10 : 49] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. And if you're going to be a little bit of a message. And if I can remember right from Pastor Lisa, who I just want to say misses you and loves you so much is, let's see, we make our hands into a heart and we say, with God's love in my heart, I can love you and I can do, I can't live in my heart and my heart, I can love everybody.

I think that's how it goes. I'll keep learning. Well, I wanted to talk to you today, and we're going to be talking over the next few weeks about how does Jesus want us to love everybody?

Jesus want us to carry that love around in our heart so that we can share it with other people? So here I am. I just moved into this house where Pastor Tom and Pastor Jackie lived, and I love it. It's a wonderful house. But I have a lot of stuff, and I just want to show you behind me. I've got, count with me, one suitcase, two suitcases, three suitcases, and of course a pillow because I love my pillow. Probably you love your pillow or your blanket or stuffed animals.

They're the things we just want to have near to us. The Bible tells us about Jesus. He's teaching.

[12 : 30] He's teaching his students, called the disciples, how to spread the love of Jesus. And he's giving them some instructions about how they're going to go. They're going to go in a buddy system. Nobody goes by themselves. It has to be two people. And he says, when you go, when you go to tell people about me, when you go to show my love to people, he says some hard things. He says, not to take all this stuff with us. He tells us not to take all of our belongings and all of our shoes.

I have lots of shoes. But he says, don't take them. And he says, don't take a lot of extra food or anything. But not because Jesus wants us to go without shoes or not to be hungry. Jesus tells you, tells me, tells all of us. When you're going to go tell someone how much Jesus loves you, don't have your arms and your backpack and everything so full of stuff that you can hardly do it.

Jesus wants it to be easier for us. So he says, put that stuff down. Put it down just for now. It's still going to be in your house, still going to be in your bed. My pillow is still going to be upstairs in my room. My clothes will be in my closet and in the dresser. But when he says, I want you to go to your neighbor, to your friends, to people at church and tell them, just like I want to tell you how much Jesus loves you. Jesus says, you don't need all that stuff.

You don't need so much when, what are you going to do? You're just going to tell people. Sometimes with words, sometimes we're going to say things like, did you know Jesus loves you?

And then what might they say? They might say, no, I didn't know that. And then we might say, but Jesus does love you. I know it in my heart. I know. And so I can tell you that Jesus loves you and I love you. Sometimes we don't use words because sometimes we're shy. I'll tell you a secret.

[15 : 04] Sometimes I feel shy, even though I'm a pastor and I talk to a whole lot of people. Sometimes I am shy. So sometimes I show people that Jesus loves them. I show them by being kind, by doing things for them, by inviting them to Sunday school, when we get to have Sunday school, by not even saying, did you know Jesus loves you? But sometimes we can say things like, and I want you to hear this. I know that Jesus loves me. Can you say that with me and, and put your heart with God's love on, on your chest and say, I know that Jesus loves me. Now let's say it together. I know that Jesus loves me.

I, Pastor Kathy, know that Jesus loves you. And that's the best thing. And sometimes when we're shy when we don't know what to say, or when we don't know what to say, we can just let people know, God loves me. God sent Jesus to show me that love. Or even just like the song, Jesus loves me. Jesus loves me. This I know, or the Bible tells me so. Do you know that? Maybe next week we'll sing that together and we'll do the hand motions. I might know different hand motions than you do, but we're going to do it together. But between now and then, there's a couple of things I hope you'll remember. One is we have things that are important to us. And Jesus wants us to have those things that are important to us. Things that make us feel safe. Things that help us sleep at night.

Things like books and favorite stories, Bible stories and animal stories and stories about the earth and the sky. Those are important to us. Our stuffed animals, our mom and dad or our grandma and grandpa or whoever it is that makes us feel so loved. Jesus wants us to have that. Jesus really wants us to have that.

So that's one of the things I want you to remember. I also want you to remember that when you go to somebody and you want to share with them, when God's love is in my heart, I can love everybody.

Just you can leave that stuff over there. Because you know who needs to show up? Not your toys, not all of your belongings, not all your clothes or your shoes. Just you. You are that special.

[18 : 20] Just you. Just you. That's who needs to show up and be able to tell people about how much Jesus loves them. And the third thing is that I just want you to practice saying that. I know that Jesus loves me.

And maybe you don't even really know what that means yet. Say it anyway. Say it anyway. Because sometimes when we keep telling ourselves over and over and over again, we start believing it. And that's for you and for your families, for everybody that you know, and maybe even some people you don't know. Let's do it together. I know, you know, that Jesus loves me. That Jesus loves me. And with that love, I can love everybody.

I invite you to practice that this week. And then next week, we'll practice something else. I'll get all my stuff put away. And we'll talk about something else that I think Jesus wants us to know, and take with us no matter where we go, even if it's just around our houses. We'll do that next week.

But for now, I invite you to pray with me. And I learned a thing a long time ago. And I've done it with children for a long time. This is me. This hand is me. This hand is God. And when I pray, there's nothing in between. Just me and God and you. Let's pray. Wonderful God, thank you for Jesus.

Thank you for helping us to know or to learn to know that we are loved. Remind us every day that nobody can take that away, that you'll never take it away. Thank you for loving us. Please love our friends and our families, our pets, our neighbors. God, we just ask you to love everybody. Everybody, no matter what.

[20 : 36] We pray in Jesus name. Amen. So just a reminder, I'm Pastor Kathy. I'm going to be doing Junior Church this summer. And I can't wait to see you again next week. Bye bye.

Bye bye. Bye bye.

I want to be I want to be, I want to be, I want to be I like to think about the goodness of the Lord He gives me everything I need and so much more So I just want to lift my hands and say that I love Him I just want to lift my heart in praise And I want to be faithful, I want to be grateful I want to remember everything that the Lord has done I want to be faithful, I want to be grateful I want to be, I want to be, I want to be thankful I want to be grateful, I want to remember everything that the Lord has done

I want to be faithful, I want to be grateful I want to be, I want to be, I want to be I want to be, I want to be, I want to be, I want to be.

As we continue with our ongoing prayer vigil, we have a prayer prompt that has been written by Marsha Buhlman as part of the prayer team. And the scripture she cites is from Acts 11, 23.

[23 : 14] And it's from Barnabas in Antioch to encourage the believers. And he said, remain true to the Lord with all your hearts. And Marsha wrote, in the world of today, full of uncertainty and with fear constantly in pursuit, the message is never give up.

Ask God to fill you with faith through the Holy Spirit. Keep praying, trust in the Lord and stay close to God when life is hard.

And that's a call for all of us. And something we can focus on as we enter into prayer. And we enter into each moment that God is with us. And we can give all of our concerns to the Lord.

And so knowing that, let's enter into a time of prayer. Will you pray along with me? Lord, we come to you today. Trusting in you, knowing that you are good.

You are holy. Knowing that you are the great healer. The sanctifier of our souls. And our redeemer. Lord, we pray that you will have your hand upon us in this time.

[24 : 26] And that you will guide us in your path. That we may walk in your will. Lord, we pray for all of the people who are struggling physically.

The people who are experiencing pain. Lord, we pray that you will bind up pain and cast it out in the name of Jesus. And Lord, we pray for people experiencing diseases. And all sorts of ailments.

All sorts of difficulties in their bodies. Lord, they will have healing from the top of their head to the bottom of their feet. Lord, complete healing in your name. We trust in you, Lord.

And we're putting our faith in you. And we pray that you'll continue in healing within your people, in their bodies. And Lord, we pray for healing in our minds as well.

That as people are going through this time, in this crisis, Lord. That you will have your hand upon our minds. That you will help us to focus on you. To take every thought captive.

[25 : 24] And to have your mind, the mind of Christ. Lord, we pray that you will minister to us. That we will have no more fear. For your perfect love casts out all fear.

And we pray against any form of anxiety or depression, Lord. We pray that you will fill us up with your Holy Spirit. So that any time that we are unsettled, we experience you powerfully.

And we can stand strong. Oh, Lord, we pray in this time for the healing of relationships. The healing for people who are struggling in their relationships.

And the brokenness, Lord. As people are lashing out at each other. And are not acting in love. Lord, we pray for healing. That there will be forgiveness.

Forgiveness amongst individuals. Forgiveness against communities. Forgiveness within our body of Christ. Forgiveness, Lord. A washing over our entire nation and our world.

[26 : 27] Lord, we pray that your forgiving spirit will come and fill us up. Help us to experience your forgiveness. And to show us how to forgive others.

Give us a repentant heart, Lord. And help us to reach out. To mend anything that we might have broken, Lord. And we pray that you will take any of the harm that has been done in relationships.

And bring healing. Bringing people back together again in your love. And Lord, we pray that you will fill us up with your spirit.

So that if there's anything dark within us, Lord. That you will shine your light. Ignite within us your power. That we would be a witness in this world.

That if there's anyone who doesn't know you. That they would come to know you through our witness. By what we say. By what we do. That you may be exalted. Lord, we pray, Lord.

[27 : 29] That you will continue to minister to us. As we minister to others. In your name. Have your hand upon this church, Lord.

That this church may be a beacon in the world. That it may grow in faith and trust and hope. Sharing your grace with the world.

And Lord, we thank you and we trust you. And if ever there's a moment, Lord. When we're feeling uncertain. We pray that you will hold us up. And help us to know that everything is indeed okay.

We praise you for who you are. And for what you are doing in our life. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Dear friends.

[28 : 37] Today we welcome Pastor Kathy and Pastor Scott. Who have been appointed to serve as pastors of Pendleton Center and Niagara Falls First United Methodist Churches. We believe that they are well qualified and have been prayerfully and wisely appointed.

Pastor Kathy and Pastor Scott. You have committed yourselves to live among us as a bearer of the word of God. Pastor of the sacraments. And sustainer of love, order, and discipleship of the people of God.

Today we affirm this commitment in the presence of these congregations. Brothers and sisters in Christ. As a people committed to participate in the ministries of the church by your prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service, and your witness.

Will you who celebrate this new beginning support and uphold Pastor Kathy and Pastor Scott in these ministries? We have committed ourselves and we reaffirm our commitment.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger. Who announces peace. Who brings good news. Who announces salvation. Let us pray.

[29 : 47] Eternal God, strengthen and sustain us in our ministries together with Pastor Kathy and Pastor Scott. Give them and us patience, courage, and wisdom so to care for one another and challenge one another that together we may follow Jesus Christ, living together in love and offering our gifts and talents in your service through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. Pastor Kathy and Pastor Scott accept this Bible and be among us as one who proclaims the word.

Amen. Pastor Kathy and Pastor Scott accept this water and baptize new Christians in this place. Amen. Amen. Pastor Kathy and Pastor Scott take this bread and cup and keep us in communion with Christ and his church.

Amen. Amen. Pastor Kathy and Pastor Scott receive this hymnal and guide us in our prayer and praise.

Amen. Pastor Kathy and Pastor Scott receive this book of discipline and strengthen our connections as United Methodists.

[31 : 04] Amen. Amen. Amen. Pastor Kathy and Pastor Scott receive this globe and lead us in our mission to the community and the world. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Pastor Kathy, as an elder in the United Methodist Church, receive this stole and shepherd us as our senior pastor. Let us pray.

Lord God, bless the ministries of your church. We thank you for the variety of gifts you have stowed upon us.

Draw us together in one spirit that each of us may use our different gifts as members of one body. May your word be proclaimed with faithfulness and may we be doers of your word and not hearers only.

As we who have died and risen with Christ in baptism gather at his table and then scatter into the world. May we be one in service to others.

[32 : 11] In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Amen. Amen. The peace of the Lord be always with you. And also with you.

Good morning. I hope you're all having a wonderful Fourth of July weekend. Our scripture reading this morning is from the book of Luke, chapter 10, verses 1 through 9.

After this, the Lord appointed 72 others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go. I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take a purse or bag or sandals and do not greet anyone on the road.

When you enter a house, first say, peace to this house. If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him. If not, it will return to you.

[33 : 17] Stay in that house eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house. When you enter a town and are welcome, eat what is set before you.

Heal the sick who are there and tell them, the kingdom of God is near you. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Brothers and sisters in Christ, I would invite you to pray with me.

Amen. Almighty God, your people are gathered and our hearts are wide open. And we come praying that you would plant a seed in us today. A seed that will grow and bear fruit for the honor and glory of your name.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray. Amen. So good morning, friends. You've already heard me introduced, but let me say again, my name is Scott, and it is a joy to be with you and to walk with you on this journey as we serve our Lord and Savior together.

Now, I've had the joy of sharing a little bit with you in the newsletter about who I am. You've also had the chance to read my bio, which was given to you when I was introduced at the appointment.

[34 : 33] But I want to share another piece today that's related to our scripture, which is that I'm not a big fan of surprises. Now, of course, if somebody comes to me with an unexpected word of kindness or an unexpected gesture, that's well appreciated.

But, you know, that sort of turn the lights on in a room full of people kind of jump at you sort of thing. Never been sort of where I land. Now, other types of surprises, you know, usually when we get them, they can be kind of disconcerting because other surprises come in the face of, say, you get some unexpected news or an email is telling you about a problem.

There's good surprises. There's bad surprises. And as I said, you know, my constitution doesn't tend to receive those as friendly as some others. Now, I offer that because one thing that has characterized my walk with Christ has been quite a few surprises.

That Jesus never seems to do what I think is going to happen, and often what Jesus brings to the table in my life tends to be a bit surprising. And part of that is my appointment here.

And I put that into context, and I lay that on the table for you as we go into the word today, because I feel a little bit probably like these 70 people may have felt.

[36 : 00] Because while we look at this passage, we see that Jesus had already sent out the 12 previously, and then we come to this moment in Luke where he sends out the 70 or 72.

And whether they were prepared for that or not, I'm guessing there must have been a little piece of surprise in there. And surprise, as I said, is not always a bad thing.

But it can catch you a little off. So let's get into the word a little bit and see what God may be up to with this little burst of surprise.

So you already heard the reading, but I'm going to start with just verses 1, 2, and 3. 1, 2, and 3. So, after these things, the Lord appointed 70 others also.

And sent them two by two before his face into every city and place where he himself was about to go. Then he said to them, The harvest is truly great, but the laborers are few.

[37 : 19] Therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest. Go your way. Behold, behold, I am sending you out as lands among wolves.

Surprise. So, with that, I want to throw us back a little bit, because one of the things that happens here is this opens in chapter 10.

We get this idea. It says, After these things. One of the things that struck me about that, when you lead with that, when you start with a passage, you kind of get, Okay, so after what things? So, if you go into chapter 9, you realize that chapter 9 is pretty packed.

That Luke chapter 9 has a lot going on in it. It opens with Jesus ending up to 12, with some pretty similar instructions. We also see the feeding of the 5,000. We also get the transfiguration.

But one of the things I wanted us to think about was also in chapter 9, there are two places where Jesus talks about what it means to follow him, where he illuminates these ideas of the costs of discipleship.

[38 : 28] And in fact, right before this, we get this idea of the people who come up to him, and Jesus tells them things like, Foxes have no holes. Foxes have holes.

Birds of the air have nests. But the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. And then he also tells another follower, let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God.

And then it concludes with this idea of no one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

And that's where we get this idea of, after these things, that's where we come in. after these things. So again, this notion of, okay, so I haven't heard all of that.

Surprise, I'm putting you to work. Now, the reason why that's a big thing is because I think Jesus is trying to do something that we don't often expect.

[39 : 36] Because we may be reacting to the surprise of having been sent, but, but, Jesus, is working on us in a unique and loving way.

See, one of the things I have found to be true in my journey, and I'm trusting to be true in my journey as I started with you, is that Jesus does not set us up to fail. And so, while we may be coming from a place of saying, wow, I'm kind of surprised here, Jesus is setting us up for something great.

And so, as he shares this news with us, and we start to hear all this sort of challenge in it, and we look out at our world, and we see so much challenge in it, and we look at all the things that we think we can't do.

But let's remember, as we read through the rest of this passage, Jesus is equipping us. Jesus has empowered us, and Jesus is prepared for us to do well.

And in fact, if we even read further, we see that the mission did go well. People come back and they report, and they say, even the demons are subject to your power.

[40 : 54] They're the ones who are surprised, not Jesus. And that's important for us. So, this sense of being surprised, at being sent, I'm hoping that as we enter into this new chapter of our journeys together, as we look at what Jesus may be doing, as he sends out his people, we have to remember that this being sent is something that Jesus does to all his disciples.

All of us are sent. Jesus is very clear that the mission is for everyone. And so, we might feel a bit overwhelmed.

We might be taken aback. We might be a bit surprised. But, verse 2 reminds us why.

Because Jesus says, the harvest is great, the laborers are few. Pray to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the field.

In other words, the harvest is there. And what Jesus is preparing us for is to join him in this work. when we think of the world we're in, the moment in which we find ourselves, the challenge of living under COVID-19 and all the ways it's impacted our lives.

[42 : 28] People can name people who have been sick. People can probably not be too far removed from someone who may have lost their life. Then you move into the economic challenges that have flowed from COVID-19.

People worried about their businesses. People worried about their jobs. People not sure what's coming next. We then see a movement to move toward the beloved community that was always promised.

An awakening around the need for racial justice that we've not seen in this nation for some time. But it is adding on to all of our challenge. Adding on to all of our stress.

We know that people we love and people we encounter are living under a weight right now. We know that people are living under some challenge right now. Like we've never seen.

The harvest is ripe. Because we who know Jesus know that it is only Jesus who has what people need right now.

[43 : 32] the harvest is ripe. So as we are sent know that Jesus is preparing us not scaring us. He's not telling us that we're lambs among wolves because the wolves are going to win.

He's telling us that the world may not be receptive. The world may not always be open. The world may be scared and it may not be ready to receive what we're bringing. But He is with us.

and because He is with us because He has empowered us as He might surprise us a little bit and remind us that the world is ready.

We have been sent. Jesus looks to us to go into this world and make a difference for Him. and that is a tremendous joy.

So friends as we walk together even with the challenges of the world that I've previously named and you add the challenges of everyday life that all of us are facing and in our faith community there is real grief and some real anxiety.

[44 : 48] Pastor Tom and Pastor Lisa left great legacies of fruitful ministry here and people are feeling that absence and so all of that is with us. So in this moment even though there may be some of that stress and even though Jesus reminds us that the mission is still happening and it may feel a bit surprising let's remember that He has prepared us for success success and He sends us into a world that needs what only He can provide.

I am so happy to be with you on this adventure because we know that He has prepared us for success even if sometimes His call comes to us as a bit of a surprise and it comes to us with a bit of overwhelming and expectation but He is with us and we are sent.

I'm so grateful to Pastor Scott for leading us this morning after the scripture reading and we are going to keep looking at this passage and some of our thoughts are even so close to being the same.

I would like to start and actually end with a quote from Sister Teresa of Avila. Christ has no body on earth but yours.

No hands but yours. No feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which the compassion of Christ looks out into the world.

[46 : 42] Yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good. Yours are the hands with which He is to bless others now.

We heard about chapter 9 and moving into chapter 10 Jesus has been about changing the landscape of His time and His era and even for all of eternity.

He's been preaching and healing and teaching and feeding people and the excitement and the power is this new way of life is creating such energy and the time had come for Jesus to send other people out to do this ministry as He called them to go.

He first sent the 12 and then He's sending the 70 appointed believers to go ahead not to follow Jesus which would be so much easier but to go ahead of Jesus and change the world.

A version of what He might be saying is go light up the world with the good news. We have a story to tell He says and it's urgent.

[47 : 56] Jesus doesn't have much time left to do this ministry Himself and He knows that others who believe will proclaim His message. They must proclaim His message.

You know there are Bible stories where it's easy to see ourselves in the story and there are others where we can't even seem to find ourselves. It doesn't we can't see our faces.

We can't see faces of people we know. This story I think invites us to begin to imagine imagine yourself being one of the 70.

Imagine yourself drawing close to Jesus to hear what He has to say to hear the plan to get marching orders or even to be watching.

What do you think you'd be feeling? Can you think about that? Would you be excited? Would you be nervous wondering why did Jesus pick me?

[48 : 59] And how am I possibly going to do what He has asked? Do you suppose anybody's out there in the 70 having second thoughts? Do you suppose anybody is watching wishing they were one of the 70?

Would you be doing a risk analysis? Checks and balances of whether it's a good thing or maybe not or you're standing back to hear more information? or would you be so excited that you're ready to just get on the road and run?

I hope over the coming weeks and certainly months that we will find ways, old ways and new ways where I can hear what is your answer to this question?

Where would you see yourselves among the 70? because I see all of us there. I want to know where would you be?

Would you be in the front intently listening or maybe jogging in place just ready to roll? Maybe you'd be in the third row just as excited and just as happy to be called and just as intent but maybe Jesus wouldn't pick on you if there was a question.

[50 : 17] He wouldn't point to you and say how about you give the answer? Maybe you'd be in the middle or maybe you'd be in the back. Where are you today?

Where would you be sitting if we were sitting in worship? Because I think the way we sit in worship when we're all together sometimes says a little bit about where we see ourselves among the 70.

I can't wait to see you here sitting among us. What we know is next to what we don't know.

The 70 were called to be sent. Even biblical scholars haven't been able to really figure out who are they? Where did they come from? What were their names? It seems we don't really know much about them and yet what we know at least what I trust we know is that number one they were people who had come to believe in Jesus and in his teachings.

Number two they were people that probably seemed a lot like you and I. Just regular people. Number three I believe they said yes.

[51 : 30] They said yes somewhere along the way. Yes to Jesus yes to the call and yes to being sent. Long ago and far away I accepted that call to be sent.

That's how we United Methodists are. We say yes not only to our call but to be sent. A bishop laid his hands on my head and recognized the call of God on my life setting me on the road into pastoral ministry.

I sure didn't know what it was going to look like. I didn't know all the places I would be. I didn't know who I would meet and I didn't know how incredible it would be and how inspired I would be by people like you.

Sure I'm inspired by great people popular people famous people famous people but I've been most inspired by people like you. I also didn't know how hard it would be sometimes.

I just know that the call was to go and while I didn't always see it in the moment God has never ceased to provide me what I have needed for the journey.

[52 : 49] I've never had all the answers because none of us do. There have been times when God was saying to me and I think says to all of us trust me.

Trust me. Trust yourself with me. You have what you need and to me Kathy Hall Stengel you are who you need to be so let's go because you are all you need to be.

In sending these new missionaries Jesus was very clear. He doesn't mess around with a lot of conversation about how this is going to look.

number one he told them it's going to be hard work that it might be dangerous because Jesus knew the world that he was sending these missionaries into and he knew it sometimes could be really really hard.

Jesus knows what's going on in our world and how hard it is for us. Number two Jesus told them put that roller bag away no extra sandals or robes or a bag and Jesus told them don't take a cooler of road food.

[54 : 20] Don't take all those snacks you pick up at Wegmans or Tops or the corner store. No marshmallows no s'more making. You go and hope that maybe the house you visit will have those things.

Number four go where you are sent. Stay with those who have welcomed you. Don't look at the family at the door who's welcoming you and think you'd rather be at that family across the way.

If God called you to go to that zip code then that's where you go. Don't be fickle. Listen. Number five cure the sick.

Those who are sick in body mind or spirit love them all. Love them all. Friends I'm going to tell you right now I have more than one pair of shoes and I have suitcases of clothing.

Not so much food in the house yet but I have found Wegmans. We may not live like the 70 and we may be called into different kinds of ministry than they were but let's not mistake the call on our own lives mine and yours and ours.

[55 : 40] I believe that we are called to first God's good news is still and always God's good news. We are loved. We are saved by grace and we are called to have that truth show up in our lives.

Whether we're home or whether we're out kayaking or walking or wherever. God has called us yes in this crazy hurting world to be here together and we might not be together in body but we are called to be together for such a time as this to know that we can still make a difference differently than last summer differently than six months ago but we still can.

Second God is calling us to be willing to find new ways to be the church to take some risks and accept that change is just the way it is. Those 70 oh my goodness they were at the mercy of strangers for shelter for food for protection in the night for warmth God believed he believed then that there were so many who needed the good news of the gospel and I think now friends that is so much more true than it has ever been.

We are in a place in this crazy hurting world and God needs us to show up in whatever ways we can to be lights in the dark to be people of reconciliation and God's grace because God's good news is still God's good news and it will never change the call is real and new the same every day together we are called to open our ears and our hearts and our eyes to God's teaching and to step into the messy and the hard the changed and change I know can be hard I am standing here and I cannot see your faces and I do not yet know your names and I I don't know what you're doing with your lives and I don't know yet what life is doing to you but if you are watching or listening in some way hear this know this

I stand here convinced I stand here absolutely sure I stand here with God as my creator and Jesus as my savior and the holy spirit as my sustainer knowing trusting believing that the Jesus I know and work hard to follow is looking at you and me and us we're the 70 or the 700 or the 7000 and we have the same call believe it's okay for us to do something new we won't leave anybody behind know that you and I we don't go alone we don't go alone in our sharing of the good news of Jesus Christ because Jesus told those 70 this is the buddy system we don't go alone it just doesn't have to happen up here I am not

[59 : 11] Pastor Scott Pastor Sherry we are not the only proclaimers of this message in fact it's been said preach the gospel always but only sometimes use words in case you don't know this or it's sort of in the shadow somewhere hear this you are and I am created in the image of God known by God since we before we were knit together in our mother's womb called by Jesus to serve with your gifts the ones that God gifted you with and we all are Jesus knows your name and has and will always call you by name and God will never forget you or abandon you even if it feels like it sometimes I am convinced as Roman 8 says that nothing nothing nothing will separate us from his love from our love of the love of God in Christ

Jesus not a pandemic not the disagreements and the brokenness of the world and not the chaos that might be in here or in here Jesus called those 70 to be vulnerable Jesus called me and Pastor Scott and Pastor Sherry our staff but most of all God has called all of us all of us to take risks to step out in faith without barriers of doubt sometimes it's like that extra robe and everything it covers up what we're afraid of and sometimes we're afraid we're not enough without wondering if we're getting it all right and without hiding behind the fear of what we don't trust and don't understand God has called you and I to be here in whatever ways are safe and right God has called me to not only lead but to love you that's always been my calling be a vehicle for the grace of God because I am always so standing in that need and I think we all are whether we've met or not whether you are ready or not

I will be here we will be here having said that hear this it's okay to miss what used to be it's okay to miss Pastor Tom and Pastor Lisa we will honor and respect those feelings always and God has sent us here to hear what God is whispering in your ear or to hear what God is shouting to you from the mountaintops to hear and go together proclaiming the good news living the good news with the help of the Holy Spirit we won't always get it right we won't because we're humans we're not Jesus I'm sure not right all the time so let's sit together let's make decisions together let's hear where the Holy Spirit is guiding you and guiding me let's realize that we're going to get it wrong but you know if we get it wrong and we've come to those decisions together then no matter what happens we will be encouraging each other supporting and reminding each other that most of all you and I we've been gifted for this call for this road

I invite you let's take the risk let's be willing to come together and then let's take our faith
let's take who we were made to be and get on the road and light up the world amen there
is a candle in every soul some some brightly burning some dark and cold there is a spirit
who brings a fire ignites a candle and makes his hope carry your candle love run run run
run to the darkness seek out the homeless confused and torn hold out your candle for all
to see it take your candle go go light your world take your candle go light your world go go
go go go go go go go go go go go go go come go go go go go go go go go go go go go
go go go go

But tired and long Hold up your candle For all to see it Take your candle Go light your world Take your candle Go light your world We are a family Whose hearts are blazing So let's raise our candles And light up the sky Pray to our Father In the name of Jesus Make us a beacon In darkness hide

[66 : 33] Carry your candle Run to the darkness Seek out our helpless Deceived and poor Hold up your candle Hold up your candle Fall to see it Take your candle Go light your world Carry your candle Run to the darkness Seek out our hopeless Confused and poor Hold up your candle Hold up your candle Hold up your candle Hold up your candle For all to see it Take your candle Go light your world

Take your candle Go light your world guitar solo guitar solo guitar solo guitar solo guitar solo guitar solo who you want us to be where you wanted us to be saying what you would have us say forgive us please oh Lord and guide us into your path in the name of Jesus Christ know that you

and your sins are forgiven glory be to God Amen God and to honor God and to honor our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ we offer the prayer that our Lord taught us to pray 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 and lead us not into temptation and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever Amen friends as you go into your world this week and you live according to what has been landed on your heart in today's messages I would ask you to consider in your prayer time that God reveal to you how you have been sent open your heart and ask directly

God where might you be telling me to go and even if it lands on you as a bit of surprise even if it lands on you with a bit of anxiety trust that Jesus is telling you so that you feel prepared for the mission that you feel he is the one who is feeding you supplying you and taking care of you no matter how it feels and no matter how daunting it appears God is with you but ask for that revelation ask that he show you where you are sent and as you are praying for that discernment be reminded that Christ has no body but yours Christ has no hands or feet but yours yours are the eyes through which the compassion of Jesus Christ is seen yours are the feet with which he is going to do good yours are the hands with which he is to bless others now so hold your hands think of your body as the tool that Jesus Christ has called for such a time as this and let's light up this world

I invite you to join us in singing Pass It On It only takes a start to get a fire going that's how it is with God's love that's how it is with God's love once you've experienced it He spread his love to everyone He wants to pass it on

[75 : 07] I wish for you my friend this happiness that I've found you can't depend on me it matters not where you're bound I'll shout it from the fountain time I want my world to know the Lord of love has come to me I want to pass it on We are going to go out into this world even if it's your living room or to your workplace you have heard the good news

God has gifted you with grace and salvation and may you take that and find peace as you go through this week be well be blessed know that you are loved in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit Amen God has your faith and will see you through His■■■ illustration And I will talk to you that has a nice day that approaches the Father who know He was and then Minecraft but before it speeds up Luke Ganes all of us and sees him and then or he can trust you and then I keep in mind and if can watch your Listen Thank you.

Thank you.