

Order of Worship

“Blessed: A Different Kind of Life”

May 3, 2025

Prelude

“Precious Lord, Take My Hand”

Dorsey (474)

“How Firm a Foundation”

Rippon (529)

Welcome and Announcements

* **Gathering Song** *“Come and Find the Quiet Center” (v.1)* Black Hymnal 2128

* Call to Worship †

L: Psalm 34:18 says that The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

P: Even when things seem overwhelming and impossible, comfort is coming.

L: Psalm 34:4 says that David sought the Lord, and the Lord answered him, and delivered him from all his fears.

P: You’ll never know if Jesus is all you need until Jesus is all you have. Comfort is coming.

L; Psalm 34:8 invites us to *“taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.”*

P: When we’re at a loss because of our losses, when we cry over the condition of others, when our own sins give us exceeding sorrow, and when we weep over the condition of our world, God will comfort us so that we can comfort those in any trouble

* Hymn *“Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me”* UM Hymnal 361

Confession Prayer

God of Light, we confess that we have wandered from Your light. We have chased dimmer lights—success, security, being “right”— thinking they could carry us. We have turned away from the places of sorrow— in our own lives and in the world— because they are hard to face. We have rushed past grief, ours and others’, instead of trusting that You meet us there. Forgive us for seeking comfort in what cannot last. Forgive us for losing sight of Your love for all people. Forgive us for not walking in the way of Jesus, who meets the brokenhearted with mercy and calls us to love one another. Draw near to us again, O God. Meet us in our mourning, and teach us Your compassion. Make us bearers of Your light— gentle, steady, and true— so that Your love might be seen in us. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Friends, hear the good news: God’s mercy is deeper than our wandering, and God’s love meets us exactly where we are. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, and nothing can separate us from that love. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Response

“Grace Alone” (refrain): The Faith We Sing 2162

***“Grace alone which God supplies, strength unknown he will provide.
Christ in us our Cornerstone; we will go forth in grace alone.”***

Pastoral Prayer and 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory. Forever and ever. Amen.

Anthem

“All My Trials”

Arr. N. Luboff

A Modern Affirmation of Faith (UM Hymnal 885)

We believe in God the Father, infinite in wisdom, power, and love, whose mercy is over all his works, and whose will is ever directed to his children’s good. We believe in Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of man, the gift of the Father’s unfailing grace, the ground of our hope, and the promise of our deliverance from sin and death. We believe in the Holy Spirit as the divine presence in our lives, whereby we are kept in perpetual remembrance of the truth of Christ, and find strength and help in time of need. We believe that this faith should manifest itself in the service of love as set forth in the example of our blessed Lord, to the end that the kingdom of God may come upon the earth. Amen.

Invitation to Offering

In a world that often looks away from pain, God draws near. And we are invited to do the same. Through our gifts, we become part of that quiet, steady work—bringing light, care, and hope where it’s needed. Let us give as we are able.

Offertory Music

“Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus”

Stead/Kirkpatrick

* Giving of Our Gifts

“Give Thanks”

Black Hymnal 2036

Prayer of Dedication

God of mercy, you meet us in our need and stay with us in what we carry. Receive these gifts, small as they may be, and use them to bring comfort, healing, and hope into the world. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Scripture Reading

Matthew 5:1-12

Pew Bible pgs. 785-786

Sermon

Blessed Are They Who Mourn

*** Hymn**

"Be Still, My Soul"

UM Hymnal 534

Benediction

Go now, as people who know God meets us where we are. Go with the comfort of Christ, who draws near to the brokenhearted. Go with the Spirit, who gives you what you need for each day. And as you go, carry that same mercy into the lives of others. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Postlude

✠ *Call to worship inspired by Psalm 34. Prayer of confession written by Rev. Mindi and posted on her Rev-o-lution website. <http://rev-o-lution.org/>*

*The flowers adorning the altar this morning are given in thanksgiving for our family
by Frank and Marie O'Connor*

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. René A. Perez
Church Administrator: Lyndsey Melchiono
Director of Music: Dr. Michael Smith
AV Coordinator: Myles Lowery
Treasurer: Elie Harmon
Sexton: John Loewen



blessed

A Different Kind of Life

the poor in spirit • those who mourn

the meek • they who hunger

the merciful • the pure of heart

the peacemakers • the persecuted

JOHN WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

johnwesleyumc.org



We have an exciting change to our flower donation program. You may now **choose silk flowers for display**, your monetary contribution will be directed toward the purchase of a gift card for someone in need, at the pastor’s discretion. The silk flowers will remain with the church, for future use, and **will not be available to take home.** *This option may be considered tax deductible.* **Please visit the flower poster across from the sanctuary entrance to sign up for a memorial. There are many dates still available.**

Due to Demaris Kooker’s memorial service, The Men’s Breakfast for Saturday, May 16 will be postponed. Details regarding a reschedule date will be forthcoming.

Plant Sale Help: The sale will be Friday, May 22, 9am - 6pm and Saturday, May 23, 9am – 2pm.

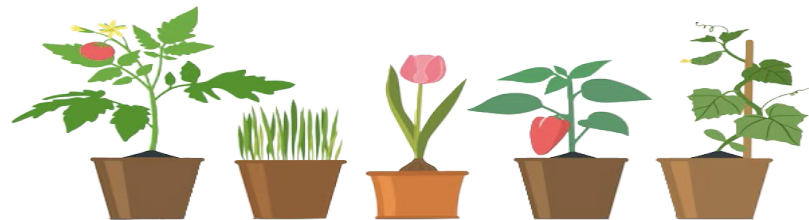
Set up will be on **Thursday, May 21** with **heavy work (tents & tables) from 9am – 12pm** and **light work (unload & organize plants) from 1pm – 5 pm.**

Volunteers arrive at 8:30am to prepare for the sale.

We need a security guard to watch the plants on Thur. & Fri. evenings from 6 pm – 11 pm.

Pack up will be Saturday, May 23, 2 pm – 4 pm.

This is a wonderful fundraiser for the church and brings people from the community to our church and grounds. If you can help, please contact Tom Hoke at tomhoke@att.net or 617-834-8124



WELCOME TO JOHN WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH!

We are a welcoming and active congregation which seeks to **“LOVE GOD...LOVE OTHERS...SERVE THE WORLD.”**

We invite you to experience meaningful worship services, engaging Bible studies, Sunday school, fellowship, preaching, life-changing local and global mission opportunities and more. We are an active congregation. At John Wesley, there is always room for everyone to become a part of something greater than ourselves. **WE ARE GLAD YOU ARE HERE!**

WEEK AT A GLANCE:

Monday 4th

- Crafters Meeting 1 PM (Fitzgerald Room)

Wednesday 6th

- Prayer Meeting 11 AM (Youth Room)
- Bible study on the gospel of Matthew 2 PM (Marie Syverson House)
- Handbell Choir Rehearsal 5:45 PM (Sanctuary)
- Choir Rehearsal 7 PM (Sanctuary)

Thursday 7th

- TLT Meeting 6:30 PM (Fitzgerald Room and Zoom)

Friday 8th

- The Wesley House Thrift Shop Open 10 AM - 2 PM

Saturday 9th

- The Wesley House Thrift Shop Open 10 AM - 2 PM
- Celebration of Life for Marilyn Mugno - 10AM Calling hour, 11AM Memorial service

Changing our World for May is the “Falmouth Service Center Backpack program”. This program uses the money donated to purchase Backpacks for needy students in the Falmouth School System. In addition, the Service Center will provide school supplies for each student.

I asked AI: **What do United Methodists believe about life after death?**

United Methodists believe that **death is real, grief is real, but death does not get the final word.** The Christian hope is not vague optimism. It is rooted in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. A United Methodist answer would sound something like this:

1. We believe in resurrection, not just “going to heaven.” United Methodists affirm the historic Christian faith: “the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting,” as confessed in the Apostles’ Creed used in United Methodist worship. That matters. The final hope is not that our souls escape the earth and live forever in a disembodied spiritual place. The deeper Christian hope is that God will raise the dead and renew creation. Life after death is not less embodied, less human, less earthy. It is more whole. So United Methodists can speak of heaven, yes—but heaven is not the whole story. The fuller hope is **resurrection and new creation.**

2. We believe the resurrection of Jesus is the foundation of our hope. The Methodist Articles of Religion say that Christ “did truly rise again from the dead” and ascended into heaven, where he will return “to judge all men at the last day.” In other words, we don’t begin with speculation about tunnels of light, clouds, mansions, or golden streets. We begin with Jesus. The one who was crucified is risen. And because Christ is risen, death has been broken open from the inside. For United Methodists, life after death is not mainly about geography—“Where exactly do we go?” It is about relationship: **we belong to the risen Christ, and Christ does not abandon those who belong to him.**

3. We believe those who die are held by God. United Methodists generally do not define the “intermediate state” with great precision. The church does not insist on a detailed timeline of what happens one second after death. There is room for reverent mystery here. But pastorally, United Methodists often say that those who die are **with God, at rest in Christ, or held in God’s mercy.** That is not because we know every detail. It is because we trust the character of God revealed in Jesus. This is why at funerals we do not pretend death is harmless. We grieve. We tell the truth. But we grieve as people who believe that the dead are not lost to God.

4. We believe in judgment, but not as cruel divine revenge. The United Methodist Confession of Faith says, “We believe all men stand under the righteous judgment of Jesus Christ, both now and in the last day,” and it affirms “the resurrection of the dead; the

righteous to life eternal and the wicked to endless condemnation.” That is strong language, and it should not be softened into nothing. United Methodists do believe our lives matter. What we do with grace matters. Love matters. Evil matters. Injustice matters. God’s judgment means the world is morally accountable to the holy love of God. But in a Wesleyan tradition, judgment is not separated from grace. The judge is Jesus—the crucified and risen one, the one who ate with sinners, forgave enemies, confronted oppression, wept at gravesides, and gave himself for the world. So the point is not: “God is waiting to catch you.” The point is: **God’s love is serious enough to heal, expose, confront, and finally set things right.**

5. We believe salvation is by grace, and that grace can be received or resisted. United Methodists are not usually “once saved, always saved” in the strict Calvinist sense. Wesleyan theology emphasizes that God’s grace is offered freely, but human beings can resist grace. The UMC puts this in terms of remaining free to resist God’s grace, even to the point of spiritual death and hell as its consequence. That gives United Methodist theology a particular tone. It is hopeful, but not careless. Grace is abundant, but not cheap. God desires salvation, restoration, and holiness—not merely a ticket to heaven.

6. We believe eternal life begins now. This is a big Wesleyan accent. Eternal life is not only something that starts after the funeral. Eternal life begins wherever the life of God begins transforming us. When we love God and neighbor, forgive, seek justice, feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, resist evil, and grow in holiness, we are already participating in the life of the coming kingdom. So life after death is connected to life before death. The question is not only, “Where will I go when I die?” It is also, “What kind of life is God forming in me now?”

7. We do not claim to know more than Scripture gives us. United Methodists have doctrine, but we are not usually obsessed with end-times charts or overly detailed afterlife systems. There is humility in the tradition. We affirm what is central: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again; the dead will be raised; God will judge; God will make all things new. Beyond that, there is mystery.

So, in one sentence: **United Methodists believe that because Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead, those who die are held in God’s mercy, will be raised in God’s future, and will stand before the righteous judgment of Christ, whose justice and mercy will finally set all things right.**