

New Beginnings: Remember**Sunday, June 6th, 2021 || 2nd Sunday After Pentecost || Pastor Christy Wright****Yes, we are meeting indoors at 9:30 AM inside the Church!****For full details, please read below in the Community Announcements Section.**

If you are unable to join us in person, we invite you to light a candle at 9:30 AM and join us in prayer online or over the phone for a pre-recorded service. Audio worship, including the prelude and postlude, prayers, and the sermon is available at <https://georgewhitefieldumc.weebly.com/worship-services> or over the phone at (978) 990-5000, access code 719365#. Just dial in, enter the access code on your keypad, and you will hear the service begin with music. Note that we may not be able to include the hymns in pre-recorded services - thank you for your understanding.

Prelude***Light of Christ****Announcements*****Call to Worship** (Adapted from Tom. M. Schuman)

One: On this day, we gather with thanksgiving in our hearts, remembering all You have done for us.

All: For God's love is ever constant in our lives.

One: On this day, we remember all whom You have given us and the fingerprints they have left.

All: Grace upon grace has been poured into our lives.

One: On this day, we gather with thanksgiving in our hearts.

All: We will sing glad songs for all that God has done.

Opening Hymn**Offering*****Doxology No. 95 & Prayer of Dedication*****Gloria Patri No. 70****First Reading - Psalm 138**

I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart; before the gods I will sing your praise. I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your name for your unfailing love and your faithfulness, for you have so exalted your solemn decree that it surpasses your fame. When I called, you answered me; you greatly emboldened me. May all the kings of the earth praise you, Lord, when they hear what you have decreed. May they sing of the ways of the Lord, for the glory of the Lord is great. Though the Lord is exalted, God looks kindly on the lowly; though lofty, God sees them from afar. Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life. You stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes; with your right hand you save me. The Lord will vindicate me; your love, Lord, endures forever. Do not abandon the works of your hands.

Second Reading - 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1

But just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture - "I believed, and so I spoke" - we also believe, and so we speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen, but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal. For we know that if the

earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Sermon

As I close my time with you all, I'll be sharing a three-part series called "New Beginnings," and we'll progress through our past, present, and future together. This week, we'll be looking back at all the ways in which God has been faithful and how we've witnessed God's great love and presence in our lives. We will also take some time to remember the saints who've gone before us, for we know that they have made us who we are, and we are thankful, so very thankful.

As I was working my other job in hunger relief this week, I drove past a church in Framingham that had a sign outside that read: "The world is charged with the grandeur of God." This was on Tuesday, the first day of the week that was actually pretty nice - not the rainy and cold weather we had last weekend. The road was still a bit damp though, particularly in shaded areas, and as the sun filtered through the leaves above, the pavement glittered as the light danced across it. The statement, "The world is charged with the grandeur of God," gave me great pause as I reflected on what I was seeing in front of my very eyes.

As we continued our route, picking up food from grocery stores and dropping it off at food pantries and shelters, I couldn't help but continue to see God's grandeur everywhere I looked. As you know, the state of Massachusetts has lifted all Covid restrictions - and for the first time, I was seeing the faces of those we were serving. There was no longer a barrier between our humanity; we could truly see one another - and in them, I saw the image of God, the grandeur of God.

I imagine that if we took the time, we could all look back and notice God's presence in almost every moment of our lives, whether we recognized it at the time or not. In this morning's scripture reading from Psalm 138, this is exactly what the Psalmist is doing: looking back and noticing when God was faithful, when God answered, when God gave boldness and courage. And we are invited to do the same, and give thanks - for God has been with us from the very beginning and will continue to walk with us, no matter what.

I'm also sensing resilience here, particularly in our second passage from the New Testament. The Apostle Paul reminds us that we are always in the presence of God, and that we ought not lose heart, for everything is being renewed day by day. For indeed, "the world is charged, energized, buzzing with the grandeur, the majesty, the beauty of God" - and everything that cannot be seen is eternal. But we can still sense the eternal, can't we, even if we can't see it?

My favorite part of this passage is the line that reminds us to take heart, and we sense a beautiful glory beyond all measure is in our midst. What a joy it is to breathe in deep this reality, and remember who we are and whose we are. For we are not self-made creatures; God has created us as whole human beings, gifted and talented in our identity, warm and inviting, bold and courageous. And God has gifted us with loved ones, those who we will always carry with us, no matter if we are separated by distance, by time, or by life eternal. It is here, indeed, where God's great love endures forever in all whom we love. What a blessing to share in their memory. As we close this morning, I invite you to join in our Remembrance of the Saints litany as printed in your bulletin.

Remembrance of the Saints (Adapted from Beth Merrill Neel)

One: A thousand days are but a moment to God; all flesh is grass, and withers away.

All: Still we treasure our days with those whom we love, and reluctantly give them back to God.

One: On this day, we thank God for the saints in our lives, those who are still with us, and those who have gone before.

Evelyn Armitage (11/06/2020)

Judy Bartlett (03/08/2020)

Barry Bennett (08/22/2020)

Dorothy Carpenter (05/30/2020)

Oloose Chicoine (07/16/2020)

Barbara Fraizer (03/14/2021)

Ardell Marona (10/12/2020)

Marge Reim (12/26/2020)

Mandy Robbins (03/03/2021)

Millie Silverberg (12/14/2020)

Raymond Swartz (09/02/2020)

Priscilla Toppin (02/23/2021)

Phyllis Warriner (01/17/2020)

One: In the beginning, God called the world into being, saying,

All: "Let there be light."

One: In the fullness of time, Jesus came from God to us, saying,

All: "I am the Light of the world."

One: In our everyday life, we see the work of the saints,

All: The ones in whom God's light shines.

One: So let us give thanks for the saints this day, and of days before,

All: And let us worship God.

One: We gather this morning to remember our call:

All: To do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with God.

One: We bring with us the events of the week, and the month, and the year in the world and in our lives...

All: Trying to know how to be just and loving and humble in the midst of it all.

One: We gather here, and see those who are doing justice, who are kind beyond measure, whose love we will never forget...

All: And those who set the example for humility.

One: With gratitude for living saints, and those who have gone before, with thankfulness for the purpose of faith...

All: Let us give thanks, give thanks, give thanks.

Pastoral Prayer

In Our Prayers. Thanksgiving for: the sacrifices of those who protected and continue to protect our country, the gifts that make ministry possible, medical professionals and researchers. Holding in our hearts: those experiencing unemployment, those facing racial injustice and violence, for our world as we continue to combat gun violence, for our congregation as we grieve the loss of loved ones, those experiencing illness or health issues - for Al (and family as they care for him), Cindy, Dan D. (Vicki's husband), Haley, Kelly R., Richie B., those in nursing homes or extended care facilities (Betty, Claire), those caring for others (Carrie G., Crystal, Rachel), the United Methodist Church. *Note that this list will renew each month.*

Service of Word & Table (See program located in your pew)

***Closing Hymn - God Be With You Till We Meet Again UMH 672**

Benediction

And now, may the peace of the Lord Christ go with you wherever God may send you; may God guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm; may God bring you home rejoicing at the wonders God has shown you; may God bring you home rejoicing once again into our doors.

Postlude

Community Announcements

- **CHOIR is restarting June 20th!** Be sure to join us at 8:45 AM on June 20th for our first choir rehearsal with our Music Director Melissa - all are welcome!
- **Starting Church at 10 AM?** We need your input! If you would like to start church a half-hour later, please let Pastor Christy know, and we will make a decision as a congregation soon.
- **Reopening Advisory Board Update. YES, WE ARE BACK IN THE BUILDING!** We welcome all back to our building as we celebrate our grand reopening! The Board asks that you sign in when you arrive, continue to social distance, sit only in pews that are marked off, and please keep your mask on. As always, if you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns about in-person worship, feel free to reach out to anyone on the Reopening Advisory Board: Jane Dolan, Tom McKeon, Diane Mundell, Melissa Quilitzsch, or Pastor Christy.
- **NEW UPDATE ON MAILINGS & DAILY DEVOTIONALS.** In order to save on postage, programs for our Sunday services will now be available on Sunday mornings for pickup. They are also available online at georgewhitefieldumc.weebly.com/worship-services. Mailings will no longer automatically be sent out, and our daily devotionals will return to the Upper Room resource. Please let Pastor Christy know if you would like to continue receiving mailings and/or if you need an Upper Room magazine.
- **Air Purifiers.** As we re-enter the building in the hopes of being able to remove masks soon, we recognize the potential need for air purifiers, particularly in the fall and winter of 2021 when air circulation would be reduced due to cold weather. Ad Council has begun exploring options for purchasing air purifiers - the same ones that are currently being used at the Congregational Church in town. We would need two, potentially three air purifying machines, which cost \$400 a piece. If you would like to donate toward this cause, please send your donation to the church with "Air Purifiers" in the memo line. Thank you!
- **Pastor Christy's Office Hours: JUNE.** Pastor Christy's office hours have shifted to **Mondays** and **Tuesdays** from 8 AM to 4 PM and **Wednesdays** from 8 AM to 12 noon. If you have an emergency outside of office hours, please call her cell phone, leave a message, and she will get back to you as soon as possible.
- **Transition.** By now, you will have heard the news that Pastor Christy is being appointed to First United Methodist Church in Stoughton, MA, and we will be receiving Certified Lay Minister Sandy Dam and Coordinating Pastor John Lucy on July 1st, 2021! We are very excited to meet Minister Sandy and Pastor John, and we look forward to their ministry! In the meantime, please continue to be in prayer during this transition as we work out details and prepare for their arrival.
- **Prayer Chain.** As a church, we are a wonderful community of prayer. When a need arises, we send it through the prayer chain so we can all meditate together. If you would like to be a part of this prayer chain, reach out to Jane Dolan, who will put you on the list.
- **THANK YOU for your continued generous donations to the work of the church!** We are so grateful for your gifts, for they make an impact near and far. As a reminder, you can mail your offerings to PO Box 576, West Brookfield, MA 01585. Thank you!

Sonshine Phone Calls and Cards List

If you know of anyone who could be added to our Sonshine list, let Pastor Christy know.

Betty Hubbard
47 E Main St.
West Brookfield, MA 01585

Kelly Rice
98 Lake Shore Drive
West Brookfield, MA 01585

Claire Wirf
(508) 791-8131 (mornings)
838 Mill Street
Worcester, MA 01602

Richie Buzzell
16 Ragged Hill Rd.
W Brookfield, MA 1585

Daily Devotionals:

***The Upper Room Daily Devotionals official magazines are still being distributed.
If you would like a copy, please let Pastor Christy know.***