

Worship!

August 1, 2021

Overarching Theme: In 2021, FUMC will be SENT with the peace of Christ!

Instructions:

When using this material as teacher, feel free to pick and choose the point you want to emphasize in the lesson. *The format of the curriculum is designed to have an abundance of information in which to refer as desired.*

Core Point:

On Easter evening, the Risen Christ appears to his gathered disciples for the first time since Good Friday and speaks these words: "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I send you." Just as Jesus sent his disciples into a divided, conflicted 1st Century with his peace, so he sends us into a divided, conflicted 2021 with his peace.

Psalms:

The Psalms has nurtured, guided, and given voice to suffering for generations. Its alternating strains of lament and praise show a community coming to understand that "the Lord is King" (Ps 97.1).as such, the Psalms provide a "sung theology" about human nature, God's greatness, and the order (that is, the Law) of God's kingdom. The structure of the book of Psalms shows that the Psalms – with their many voices and forms – are to be understood together as the law of God in song. Singing the psalms ordered the faithful community in Jerusalem, as well as guiding the earliest Methodist societies. The Psalms has a unique power to instruct the community, convey its deepest emotions, and bind it under the lordship of God.

-adapted from the Wesley Study Bible, pp651)

Reflect on this Scripture:

Psalm 150:

¹ Praise the LORD!

Praise God in his sanctuary;

praise him in his mighty firmament!

² Praise him for his mighty deeds;

praise him according to his surpassing greatness!

*³ Praise him with trumpet sound;
praise him with lute and harp!
⁴ Praise him with tambourine and dance;
praise him with strings and pipe!
⁵ Praise him with clanging cymbals;
praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
⁶ Let everything that breathes praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD!*

This Week:

The Hebrew title for the book of Psalms means "Praises". Even though the Psalter contains more prayers of lament or complaint than it does hymns or songs of praise, the designation "Praises" is an accurate one. The whole Psalter moves toward praise. Reading the prayers of lament or complaint we find they all end with an expression of praise or a vow to praise; even in the lament the Psalm writer is still able to offer praise. Psalm 150 is the final crescendo of praise.

Praise is the offering of one's whole life and self to God. Praise involves both life and liturgy. The praise of God in worship reinforces, renews, and reshapes the commitment of the whole of life to God. In this Psalm we hear who we are to praise, who we are to worship – God. Why? For all God has done.

In verses 3 – 5 the worship of God in the Temple is in view, especially music. Every section of the orchestra – horns, strings, winds, percussion – is invited to join in a symphony of praise. The symphony of praise must ultimately involve all creatures and all creation. The songs of praise regularly push toward universality, inviting all nations, all the earth to praise God.

Psalm 150 proclaims that the proper goal of every creature is praise – that is life shaped and lived under God's rule. Everything we do, everything we say, can and should be an expression of praise. Every expression of praise is an act of worship.

We all worship differently – we may prefer a different style or different music, there may be unfamiliar language, but we can all worship. And we can gather together, even with our differences, to shout our praises with one voice.

Let everything that breathes praise God!
Praise the Lord!

Questions to Ponder for Accountability in the Group:

1. Think about your favorite memories in worship. What made it memorable – the style, the music, the preacher, the praise? What makes for a good worship experience for you now?
2. How do you offer praise in your daily life? Do you offer praise alone, or do you encourage others to join with you?
3. What images come to mind as you think of *everything* being able to offer praise to God?

Activity for the Life of a Disciple:

1. Remember to find encouragement for the day by reading the daily devotional from FUMCC.
2. Ponder and pray on this scripture this week (Psalm 150.6):
*⁶ Let everything that breathes praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD!*