



Serenity

WHITNEY

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

September 13, 2020 10:00 a.m.

Rev. Christina Thompson

Welcome Welcome to worship at Whitney United Methodist Church I am Rev. Christina Thompson and I am grateful you are worshipping with us today. We are beginning a new worship series today entitled Finding Peace in an Anxious World. May we indeed find the peace of God through our worship this morning.

Opening thought using Psalm 46

Psalm 46 speaks to some of the anxiety we are feeling in our lives.

Though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult. The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts.

Feeling any of that anxiety recently? Hurricanes, pandemics, cities and nations in an uproar, violence and unrest. The anxiety is real. And we wonder where God is? Does God care? Is it possible to find peace and serenity?

And yet, this psalm says,

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;

God will help it when the morning dawns.

The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

These next four Sundays, we will explore finding peace in our anxious world. Peace that comes from the God who created us and the God who gives us peace.

Lighting the candle

As we begin our worship this morning, I invite you to light your candle as a reminder that God is our refuge and strength, God is our very present help in trouble. May this light remind us of that truth.

Prayer - Centering us for worship

O Holy one, we gather for worship once again together in spirit but still physically apart. There is a part of us that is very tired of this way of worship and for the anxiety that feels so heavy on our hearts and in our world.

We ask for your forgiveness for our struggle to live in freedom and joy and for the ways that we have masked our anxiety in behaviors that are not helpful and lead us away from you.

May in this time of worship we feel your love and grace forgiving us of our shortcomings.

May we also find in this time of worship, the gift of serenity that comes from walking close with you. May you open our hearts to experience this sense of peace. In your name we pray, Amen

As we sing, may this be our prayer--- Be Still my soul, may we know that God is on our side.

Opening Song-- Be Still My Soul #534 v. 1, 2

CCLI Song # 4645047

Jane Laurie Borthwick, Kathrina Amalia von Schlegel, Nathan Copeland

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Verse 1

Be still my soul the Lord is on your side
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain
Leave to your God to order and provide
In every change God faithful will remain
Be still my soul your best your heavenly Friend
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end

Verse 2

Be still my soul your God will undertake
To guide the future as in ages past
Your hope your confidence let nothing shake
All now mysterious shall be bright at last

Be still my soul the waves and winds still know
The Christ who ruled them while He dwelt below

Children's Moment

Kimberly Gardner

Scripture

Proverbs 3:21-26

Gena Waller

Sermon

Serenity

Rev Christina

Response---- Introducing The Examen (Spiritual Practice)
Our spiritual practice for the week is The Examen from the 16th century priest and spiritual guide St. Ignatius of Loyola. It encourages us to reflect on the content of our daily life much like Proverbs does. It helps us to be more present in the moment that we live and where God is in those moments.

We are going to do a very shortened version of the Examen.

1. Invite God in with a short prayer for the Holy Spirit to enter the space and your experience.
2. Gratitude—finding gratitude for God's wonders and where God has been in the more challenging parts of the day. Ask yourself what in this day and in this moment you are thankful for?
3. Review your day using pairs of questions. Where did I find God today? And Where did I feel God's absence, or When were times that I knew God's serenity, and when were times that I was anxious?
4. In God's hands. The Examen helps us to be more aware of the present moment in our daily lives and helping us not dwell on the past. Pray for all you have considered, the good and the bad, to be put into God's hands and for you to be released from it. Pair this with any physical or verbal act that helps you let things go. Pray that wisdom and serenity may begin to follow.

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Anthem—The Unclouded Day

CCLI Song # 45538

Josiah Kelly Alwood

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Verse 3

O they tell me of the King
In His beauty there
And they tell me
That mine eyes shall behold
Where He sits on the throne
That is whiter than snow
In the city that is made of gold

Chorus

O the land of cloudless day
O the land of an unclouded sky
O they tell me of a home
Where no storm clouds rise
O they tell me of an unclouded day

Verse 4

O they tell me that He smiles
On His children there
And His smile
Drives their sorrows all away
And they tell me
That no tears ever come again
In that lovely land of unclouded day

Chorus

Pastoral Prayer

**Response after each petition—Lord in your mercy--
Hear our prayer**

Together let us pray for

The people of this congregation.

The ministry that God is with and through us in our
community, including the new Bible studies that are
beginning this fall.

For teachers, administrators, staff, students and parents as we
navigate this unfamiliar school year.

For those who suffer and those in trouble, for those who are
ill and those who are dying.

For the concerns of our local community

For our nation, for our leaders, for injustice, and for an end
to violence, racism and division.

For our world, its peoples and its leaders

For the church universal, its leaders, its members and its
mission.

In communion with all the saints

We lift to you these are our prayers O holy God. In Jesus
name we pray, Amen

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The Lord's Prayer

Dewey Knowles

Offering

Let us give as God has so abundantly given to us.

You can give of your tithes and offerings by sending in a check
to the church by mail, or giving electronically through our
website.

Let us pray over the gifts that will be given. "Almighty God,
receive these gifts that we offer with grateful hearts and use us
for your ministry in the world. Help us to let go of the anxiety
of whether we have enough and trust fully you're your
provisions. We pray this through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen."

It is through living close to God and finding serenity that we are
able to say "it is well with my soul."

Closing Hymn *It is Well with My Soul #377*

CCLI Song # 25376

Horatio Gates Spafford | Philip Paul Bliss

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Verse 1

When peace like a river

Attendeth my way

When sorrows like sea billows roll

Whatever my lot

Thou hast taught me to say
It is well
It is well with my soul

Chorus
It is well with my soul
It is well
It is well with my soul

Verse 3
My sin O the bliss
Of this glorious thought
My sin not in part but the whole
Is nailed to the cross
And I bear it no more
Praise the Lord
Praise the Lord O my soul

Chorus

Verse 4
And Lord haste the day
When my faith shall be sight
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll
The trump shall resound
And the Lord shall descend
Even so it is well
With my soul

Chorus

Sending Forth

As we go into the world this week may we find the serenity to pray these words from Proverbs 3:5-6

May we Trust in the Lord with all our heart,
and do not rely on our own insight.

In all our ways acknowledge God,
who will make straight our paths.

Passing the Peace

May the Peace of the Risen Christ be with you
And also with you.

Invitation to next week

I invite you to join us next week as we continue Finding Peace in an Anxious World based on the serenity Prayer. Next week we will explore acceptance.

After worship, you are invited to our virtual coffee hour on zoom. The link to join us is in the email you received with the links to this service. There are also instructions on this screen. We will gather about 10:45.

You are also invited to join us on our Facebook Group Whitney United Methodist church group to chat about the service. You can join the conversation anytime.

Also remember that there are many ways to connect with us even as we are physically distancing.

Also remember our radio program Reach out and Trust which is broadcast on KBXL 94.1 FM on Sunday morning at 7:30 am and 11:30 am.

May God be with us until we meet again.

NOTES