

Welcome to Worship June 19, 2022

Suamico United Methodist Church

Suamico United Methodist Church
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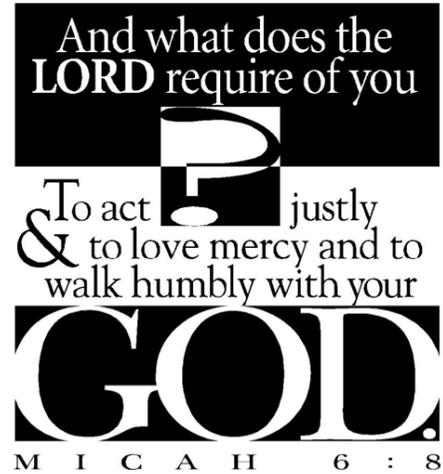
Church Office Hours: Tues, Wed, Thur: 9am -1pm
afternoons by appointment

Email: suamicoumc@gmail.com

Website: www.suamicoumc.org

Social Media: Facebook and Instagram

For pastoral emergencies, you may contact
Pastor Graham West at 715-491-4504



Preparation for Worship

"To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

(Micah 6:8)

* Please stand as you are able

Prelude and Welcome

***Worship Preparation Hymn** UMH 328 *"Surely the Presence of the Lord "*

***Call to Worship** (*Responsively with people reading bold print*)

Full-bodied love is God's goodness poured out on us.

God's love is a blessing indeed - gentle, generous and grace-filled.

We long for God's love praying that Christ fills us anew.

God's mercy, compassion and kindness are embodied by Christ and deserve praise.

***Hymn** UMH 111 *"How Can We Name a Love"*

***Unison Prayer** (*unison*)

Almighty God, your love is strong, faithful and true beckoning us to draw near.

Created in your image, your love is found on every face for life is pregnant with your presence.

Christ's redeeming love is broken and bruised as he offers himself for the people of our world.

We offer this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving assured that tender mercy and grace are our gifts.

Strengthen us by your Spirit so we may do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with you; in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scripture Micah 6:1-8

Children's Time with Ruth Ann Voelz

Special Music *"This Is My Father's World"* by Eva Finke, soloist

Sermon: “Vulnerable” *Love is vulnerable, even God’s love* from Graham N. West, pastor

Hymn UMH 452 *“My Faith Looks Up to Thee”*

Offering FWS 2031 *“We Bring the Sacrifice of Praise”*

***Prayer of Dedication** *(Responsively with people reading bold print)*

God’s love humbles us for we are a blessed people.

We offer ourselves and these gifts praying that you will consecrate us in your service. Amen.

Prayers of the People ~ *Sharing our Joys and Concerns*

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 our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil;

For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

***Hymn** UMH 672 *“God Be with You till We Meet Again”* v. 1, 3 & 4

Benediction and Postlude

UMH - United Methodist Hymnal (blue) FWS - Faith We Sing (black) W&S - Worship & Song (green)



Announcements and information

June 21 9:00a Newsletter items must be to the church office

June 22 6:00p Campfire Night in the church parking lot

June 25 7a-7p Private event: Fellowship Hall & Kitchen

June Noisy Can Mission of the Month: Peace with Justice. Contributions support seeking peaceful solutions, creating and supporting peace-related ministries around the world.

Today is Pastor Graham’s last Sunday with Suamico UMC. There will be fellowship and conversation after worship as we wish him well and say our good-byes to him and Kathi.

This week Wednesday (22nd) at 6pm in the church parking lot: campfire, S’mores, sing-a-long, outdoor yard games...bring a chair—Everyone is invited

Help out the Pulaski Pantry by picking up an item or two:

*Hamburger Helper™ *macaroni & cheese *canned fruit

Collection bins are in the church narthex entryway and the shelf by the church offices.

The July/August “Upper Room” booklets are in the narthex for the taking.

Share your gift of music during summer worship by signing-up in the narthex or speak with Eva at the piano to discuss offering “Summer Special Music”

Please sign up to take a turn hosting Fellowship with a friend or another family by signing up in the narthex. July 10th is the first Sunday with new Pastor Anna Lisa! To welcome and celebrate, there will be an ice cream social after worship that Sunday. Please stop in the narthex and sign-up on the pink sheets to donate supplies, toppings, and your helpful hands.

Vulnerable

Love is vulnerable, even God's love

Vulnerable Love

Frantic parents wait for hours

In the hours following the mass shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas on Tuesday, May 24, some parents still didn't know where their children were. After the gunman had opened fire killing 19 children and two adults, the children were taken to the civic center, where parents were asked to pick them up. Some parents were still waiting into the early morning to be reunited with their kids. Many of the children could not be identified, and they needed DNA to identify them and their families.

Families waited to see if their children were alive. Some were offering support to loved ones; pastors were praying with families. Wait is all they could do if they were to find out the fate of their children.

Robb Elementary School had been celebrating the end of the school year with special "theme days," according to the school's Facebook. On Monday they wore maroon polos—the school's color. Tuesday was "Footloose and Fancy" day, where kids dressed up and wore fancy or fun shoes.

Actor Matthew McConaughey gave an impassioned and emotional speech at the White House on Tuesday, June 7, calling for "responsible gun ownership" in the wake of the school shooting. A native of Uvalde, he choked back tears during his press briefing, talking about one of the student victims killed in the attack. He pointed to her parents holding a pair of green sneakers, saying that they were "the only clear evidence that could identify her after the shooting" as he emotionally hit the lectern.

Imagine the trauma, the sheer horror, fear and uncertainty just waiting.

Vulnerable love

Vulnerability is an emotion that we experience during times of uncertainty, risk and exposure, for example, being served divorce papers; knowing your daughter or son was arrested for DUI; waiting for the doctor to call with your test results; going out on a limb to start a new business. But we're also members of society leaving us vulnerable when the community is hurting; when unrest and discord surface; when neighborhoods are unsafe and threatened; when political leaders are self-serving and disregard the community's interests. Exposed to threat, harm and uncertainty, we feel vulnerable, at-risk, powerless.

We are especially vulnerable when we show love to another for in loving, you have to open yourself and give your heart to the other. So we risk heartbreak and rejection, denial and abuse. Love that is vulnerable suggests drawing closer to another, sharing your thoughts and ideas, feelings and emotions, hopes and dreams. It is scary to be authentic and transparent for you may easily be criticized, judged and belittled. But sharing love implies trust, sharing life, building memories, and creating intimacy. Without this risk, we may remain cooped up in ourselves but we will also be lonely, cutoff and detached. Life expects intimacy so we build relationships, interact meaningfully, and share love and kindness.

Often we are afraid when it comes to love. We fear being taken advantage of. Dropping our guard exposes us to hurt, harassment and harm, again and again.

Even God's love is vulnerable

The scriptures make clear that God is love exposing God to the same vulnerability we face. That is the backstory to Micah. Israel had taken advantage of God's love: "My people, what have I done to you?" God charges. "How have I burdened you?" God is upset with Israel, angry, and deeply offended for the people have disobeyed, denied God's unique character, minimized their relationship with God, and acted offensively. "Answer me," God insists.

In Micah 6, God takes the people to court, leveling charges against them as they have not taken their relationship with God seriously. So, let us inquire whether we have taken our relationship with God seriously? Are we earnest in our relationship with God and our discipleship to Christ? Or, do we mostly pay lip service to God? Though we stand in God's presence, are we insincere in our praise and thanksgiving, unengaged for heart and mind are disconnected, unmoved by God's love? We mouth words that have little impact for we are without passion. Even though God recounts the righteous act of deliverance from slavery and leading the people to the Promised Land, they have not found it in their hearts to return God's love and favor.

What are God's charges against us, the people of the church? It doesn't take much for us to realize that we have favored the ways of the culture, and the ways of society rather than seeking God's way. Our commitment, dedication and devotion are often to what is convenient, expedient and at hand.

God has weighed the scales of justice and found Israel wanting. God also lodges complaints against us and brings charges. We stand accused of injustice politically, economically, socially and personally. We have compromised ourselves. God has been vulnerable in love, yet we have been unfaithful. But all is not lost for God has a way to redeem us from ourselves.

Righteous Love

Loving combats road rage

Mark Collins, Daily Guideposts 2020, p. 22

I have a temporary job delivering supplies for a medical lab. It made sense to hire me—a lifelong Pittsburgher who's familiar with this city's awkward topography and wayward streets. I was, in fact, the perfect candidate, except for one small and off-putting personality trait: road rage.

I'm the guy gesticulating in a traffic jam, tossing random critiques out the open window: Who doesn't turn on red? Oh, now you put your signal on. Did you buy your license online? What is wrong with you?

This insists on the follow-up question: What is wrong with me? I was concerned that my poor citizenship behind the wheel might lead to incidents, accidents, to unemployment.

Instead, the opposite happened: I became calm, uncharacteristically calm. I witnessed so much bad driving that I became sympathetic. Instead of anger, I found compassion, mostly out of curiosity: What would make ordinary people abandon all reason and barrel through an intersection? Selfishness? Possibly, or perhaps they're having a horrible day (or week or year), or maybe the kid's school bus was late and now they're late, and their cold-hearted boss will fire them on the spot, or maybe they are distracted, waiting for biopsy results ...

Sure, I still have my moments, but I am happy with my disposition to spike my morning coffee with sympathy instead of spite, with kindness instead of revenge, with love instead of rage.

Righteous love is from God

Righteousness is God's preferred way, and right living is what God has in mind for us. It confirms that we have a secure place in God and may rely on God's character to be faithful. But it is also the beauty of God's love that permits us to abide in God with grace so that we may know God, speak to God, dwell in God's presence, and be engaged in the worship of God.

Our commitment to God must be singular—to God alone—as all other loyalties fade. The values of society are subservient to God's righteousness, and our emulation of Christ must have a definitive impact on shaping us as God's people. Our life together must be ordered by this commitment. Those who are blameless and righteous, speak truth from the heart; they honor others and act with decency, honesty and steadfastness.

Righteousness is God's way, and right living is what God would have from us. God's people are to live faithfully, exhibiting God's character and love toward others. Faithful people live faithfully; empowered by Christ's Spirit, we live lovingly, obediently and justly, for this is what it means to emulate Christ.

As followers of Christ, we engage in deliberate faithfulness where we stand for truth even in the face of opposition, injustice and immorality. Right relations with God are shown in right relations with others, as Mark Collins discovered in dealing with his road rage. Our desire is to represent Christ in every way, especially in relation to others.

What does the Lord require of you?

Poor habits behind the wheel, and for that matter in any area that compromises our standing before God, can speak to our faith, or lack thereof. What is at stake here is that faith must impact both our private behavior, as well as our public actions. Some may suggest that privately they believe in Christ but publicly they do whatever is needed to succeed. I do what I must do doesn't cut it with God because God has greater expectations of us, greater faith in us and greater love for us. Our public acts must be shown in blameless living, honest speech, friendly conduct, rejection of evil, the honor of the faithful and economic fairness.

As Micah asks, "what does the Lord require of you?" Behind this inquiry is the recognition that love pleases, and great love pleases greatly. Our response must reach the heart, deeply fathom God's love—that's what Jesus meant by compassion—to feel the pain of another so deeply that we are moved to relieve this pain. For Mark Collins, this meant spiking his coffee with sympathy, kindness and love instead of spite, revenge and rage.

So, what does the Lord require of you, of us? Micah offers three simple ways succinctly stated. Simply, "to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Doing justice expects that we change our own interests to reflect those of God's interests; that we speak up as God's voice in society; that we act in ways consistent with God's just acts; that we reflect God's fairness in all our dealings; that we relate to others as we see Jesus relating to others. God's loving-kindness is shown in genuine acts that reveal tenderness, goodness and care. Walking humbly with God not only brings us into God's presence; it also infuses us with Christ's Spirit so we may follow faithfully and act obediently.

These three simple ways—to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with God—have a profound impact and make a world of difference. Love is vulnerable, even God's love, so act simply and make an impact for Christ.