

*Sunday Worship
November 8, 2020
Draw near to God
for God is waiting for you.*

CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 146)

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul;

I will sing praises to my God all my life long.

Do not put your trust in worldly rulers,

For they are temporary, their plans will fall apart.

Happy are those whose help and hope is in God,

For God made heaven and earth, and all living things.

God executes justice for the oppressed and gives food to the hungry,

God sets the prisoners free, and opens the eyes of all.

God watches over those on the margins, the strangers, the widows and orphans;

And God will reign forever. Praise the Lord!

OPENING PRAYER

We gather today, O Lord of Life, seeking fullness. Not the fullness our world offers, but fullness that comes from you. We spend so much of our lives on things that do not count—things that promise much and give little.

Help us now—today—to find fulfillment in your love. May we discover all you have to give, and seek you while we yet have the gift of days. Lift us O God, to a higher plane of living, as we lift our hearts and minds and souls into your holy presence. Amen.

HYMN #630 Fairest Lord Jesus

1. Fairest Lord Jesus, Ruler of all nature, O thou of God to earth come down,
thee will I cherish, thee will I honor, thou, my soul's glory, joy and crown.

2. Fair are the meadows, fairer still the woodlands, robed in the blooming garb of spring.
Jesus is fairer; Jesus is purer, who makes the woeful heart to sing.

3. Fair is the sunshine, fairer still the moonlight, and all the twinkling, starry host.
Jesus shines brighter; Jesus shines purer, than all the angels heaven can boast.

4. Beautiful Savior, Ruler of the nations, Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, praise, adoration, now and forevermore be thine!

CALL TO CONFESSION

In God's presence, our lives are exposed, our words are shown for their hollowness, our need is revealed. Let us confess who we are, as we ask God to embrace us with grace and hope.

PRAYER OF BROKENNESS AND CONFESSION

We need to confess, O God, how often we are not content with the simple gifts and lives you offer. Tempted by everything, we can become insensitive to those who have nothing. Encouraged by the world to accumulate more, we may miss the chance to gather your goodness and godliness. Chasing after all which has no value, we may not have the energy to pursue the faith, the love, the gentleness you have for us.

Forgive us, God of Reversals. You have sent the One who speaks the words we need to listen to in order to have life. Help us to remember how you have redeemed us, and in remembering, may we make that good confession that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior, now and forever. Amen.

WORDS OF BLESSING AND ASSURANCE

*This is the good news that comes from God: I will hear your prayers; I will answer with hope and peace; I will deliver you from your sins. God has covered us with grace; under God's hope we will find shelter. Remember your baptism and say: **Jesus died for me. Jesus forgives me. Jesus loves me. Jesus is good to me. Amen.***

GOSPEL LESSON Luke 12:13-21

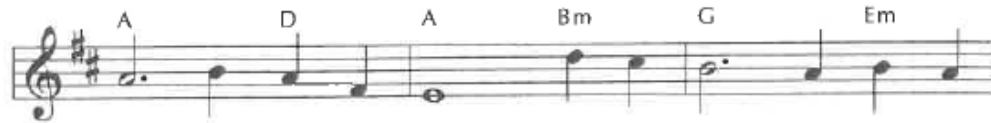
¹³Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.” ¹⁴But he said to him, “Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?” ¹⁵And he said to them, “Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.” ¹⁶Then he told them a parable: “The land of a rich man produced abundantly. ¹⁷And he thought to himself, ‘What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?’ ¹⁸Then he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’ ²⁰But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ ²¹So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.”

TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

44 Like a Mother Who Has Borne Us



1 Like a moth - er who has borne us, held us
 2 Like a fa - ther who has taught us, grasped our
 3 Though as chil - dren we have wan - dered, placed our
 4 When we of - fer food and com - fort, grasp our



close in her de - light, fed us free - ly from her
 hand and been our guide, lift - ed us and healed our
 trust in power and might, left be - hind our broth - ers,
 neigh - bor's hand in love, tread the path of peace and



bod - y, God has called us in - to life.
 sor - rows, God has walked with us in life.
 sis - ters, God still calls us in - to life.
 jus - tice, God still walks with us in life.

EPISTLE LESSON 1 Timothy 6:6-19

⁶Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; ⁷for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; ⁸but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. ⁹But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

¹¹But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. ¹²Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³In the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you ¹⁴to keep the commandment without spot or blame until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵which he will bring about at the right time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords. ¹⁶It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see; to him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

¹⁷As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, ¹⁹thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

SERMON What Makes for a Good Day?

What is your definition of a good day? Here are some answers I received from our congregation when I posed this question.

Walter C: When you're heading towards 82, a good day is just waking up. But if I wake up then a good day starts with a good cup of coffee, eggs and bacon – ok, a little toast and jelly. Sunny day required and then I go

out and play with my 100+ conifers, 100+ hostas, etc...in other words, play in the garden...that would be God's garden.

Linda B.: "I was very concerned about my 21 year-old cat today when I found evidence something was very wrong in her litter box. The vet got her right in and assured me that older cats often have this issue and gave her an antibiotic. Also, the growth on the side of her neck (that I had previously been told was cancerous) was a type of tumor that although a real problem for dogs seemed not to cause real damage in cats. I had been putting a product on it a friend recommended and it seemed to be breaking apart. She assured me that it was only in the skin. The other growths she has previously had have disappeared. I was so afraid I'd be told it was time to put her down. Instead, I got all this good news and as I was standing in the vet's parking lot the most glorious, orange and pink sunset appeared. It was like God was celebrating with me!!!"

Brad S.: "I am working on finishing stuff up here at the office so I can get to the polls and vote. But this email intrigued me... your question "What is a good day?" and you mentioned the wind whipping through... it made me think.

My morning started off rough today. This whipping wind tore down our backyard pool that I thought was winterized and spent hours setting up. This morning I spent almost two hours cleaning it up and setting it back up again... as the wind continued to blow hard and moving the tarp around while I tried to tie and clamp it down. I found myself being mad at God. Yeah, I know it's crazy... but I am like "come on God, can you please just stop the wind for a few moments so I can tie down this tarp?" After almost two hours, I finally secured the tarp... I thought that was a waste of time... I gotta get to the office get my work done...so I can leave early and vote.

On my way into the office, I got pulled over... no, no I was not speeding... that would make sense... but I just got a "new to me" car last Wednesday and the registration was still not up to date. The Officer was really kind of cool... I just have to call him once my registration comes in to confirm that everything is good. (btw the DMV is a little behind according to the dealership).

I feel like I should be upset... (I was upset at 7:15am fixing the pool tarp)... but, I am really not at the moment... God works in amazing ways sometimes (all the time). Even though I didn't feel like God was with me as the wind whipped through my backyard this morning making it very difficult to secure this crazy flapping tarp... I know he was there... teaching me to be patient and chill out.

Life is crazy, especially now during this Covid time, virtual education, etc...and now with the pool situation and getting pulled over made my day even more crazy. Just writing this email has been a good release. Even when things don't go exactly as planned and you feel you've learned something about yourself... I chalk that up to being a good day."

Sue H.: "A good day to me is on the beach. We drive onto the beach...unload our chairs, umbrellas, table...I then go shelling and looking for sea glass...I try to pick up only whole shells, because I already have MANY shells at my house. Finding any type of sea glass is very exciting!!!! I also pray when I look for shells and sea glass. I do pray to find a piece of sea glass...but I also pray for all the people and circumstances on my prayer list. I always feel so close to God at the beach.

I go back to the truck and sit under the umbrella and read. When I get hungry, we have a portable grill that we grill hot dogs on...nothing like a hot dog on the beach.

Then I would go shelling again...then I would read and when the water gets close to the truck tires...it's time to leave...but there is always the next day at the beach!!!"

Pat G.: "I was out all morning and just opened my email. Your question stopped me in my tracks, and I have been thinking about my definition.

My good day is defined by a lot of little things, and I try to be mindful of them. I enjoy the wonderful feeling of water in the shower. I pay attention to the food when I'm eating. There is something to be accomplished each day - even if it is as simple as cleaning my room or scrubbing the tub. Connecting with people by phone, email, or in person adds "very" to the good. And I take time at the end of the day to express my gratitude to God."

Bill M.: "Today is Earl of Sandwich day, 11/3. He was playing poker and did not want to break for dinner so he asked to have his meat in between 2 pieces of bread.

A good day for me is having a sandwich of meatloaf that my wife made with a glass of Chianti. She is the best!!! What more would a guy want?"

Paul W.: "My idea of a good day is everything went as planned on the job, I got paid and I didn't get hurt doing it!!"

Carol E.: "Last Christmas we had the joy of having our son and his family here. They had moved to Pennsylvania from Florida the summer before. It gave us the chance to see them all, but especially our great grandson, Ryan, whom we had not seen in almost three years. He and his mother are still living in Florida. We shared all the good things, food, memories and laughter. Many pictures were taken. Games were played and much love was shared. As they were leaving and we were waving goodbye, Ryan said to all in the car "What a good day!" This from the mouth of a four year old. We should all take a lesson from him.

No one will ever forget the time that we are in right now. And when this world is better, I pray we can learn not to take the small things for granted ever again. Hopefully, we can make every day a good day."

In today's Epistle lesson, Paul, through Timothy, is giving advice for all God's people. It was written to give warnings about false teaching. Timothy was in the city of Ephesus tending to the church which Paul started. It was an ancient port city whose well-preserved ruins are in modern-day Turkey. The city was once considered the most important Greek city and the most important trading center in the Mediterranean region. This would then imply that there was considerable wealth in that area as well as influence that reached beyond their borders.

The counsel that Paul provides in today's passage is basically concerning what constitutes not just a good day, but also a good life when he instructs Timothy to tell the wealthy of the community to... "go after God, who piles on all the riches we could ever manage—to do good, to be rich in helping others, to be extravagantly generous. If they do that, they'll build a treasury that will last, gaining life that is truly life."

Did you notice anything in the descriptions of a good day that I received from some of you? Not one of them said that a good day was winning the lottery, the stock market being up five hundred points, getting money back from the IRS, or collecting \$200 for doing nothing more than passing "Go." Not that any of these are bad in and of themselves or wouldn't make you happy on any given day, but none of them appeared in your reflections.

When I asked you to describe a "good day," you said things like love received and given, connecting with God through simple God-given things, protection, and peace. I have to say that when I read your responses, I was inspired and blessed by the presence of God. You spoke the words of Paul so beautifully and better than anything I could have said.

As I said, Paul wrote this letter to counter false teachings. These included what it takes to have a full and worthwhile life – good days all your days. The prosperous community of Ephesus believed, as many with considerable wealth believe, that wealth, material goods will bring you the happy good life you so greatly desire.

E. Stanley Jones was about to go across a street. A woman pulled on his arm and said, "Look at the red light." Jones replied rather weakly, "But look at the people going across." She replied, "Don't look at them. Look at the light and follow it." That's the advice Paul was passing on. Don't follow what others may be thinking and doing that may seem alright but in fact are not. Many of us are content to watch other people and to do as they do losing sight of what is important and right.

Fredrick Buechner, "There are people who use up their entire lives making money so they can enjoy the lives they have entirely used up."

Jesus said that it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. Maybe the reason is not that the rich are so wicked they're kept out of the place but that they're so out of touch with reality that they can't see it's a place worth getting into."

Paul says that the place that is worth getting to is the kingdom of God. As followers of Jesus we are to be in this world but not of it, not of the mindset that so much seems to be a part of our society that is all "me, myself and I. It is so much about revenge, suspicion and division. I'm right, you're wrong. I'm good, you're bad. God's kingdom is all about "we," peace, justice, forgiveness, compassion, and joy in the Lord's abundant good gifts. You don't get there through the accumulation of "stuff" and wealth but rather through doing good, helping and loving others, and being extravagantly generous by sharing what God has given you. I believe that is what you all defined as a good day which is much different than the foolish rich man's definition.

In her song, "Soak up the Sun," singer Sheryl Crow says, "I don't have digital, I don't have diddly squat. It's not having what you want, it's wanting what you've got." In other words we don't have to run after stuff, but God has already given us all that we need through our time, talent and treasure and if we use them as Paul describes and as Jesus taught, then we will provide for our present that will take us into a good future. It is what stewardship is all about – appreciating our gifts and using them for our own good and for the good of all creation.

Think about it. How would you define a good day? This is what God wills for you and all of creation, we just need to get our priorities straight and, with God's help, we can make it happen so that we can all have the life that is truly life – a good day, a good life.

RECOGNITION OF THE OFFERING

DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise him all creatures here below; Praise him above ye heavenly hosts; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Beloved God, who richly provides for our needs and enjoyment, thank you for your many gifts. You have trusted us with our lives, with this world, and with your love. May the gifts we offer you today be used for your service and your glory. Help us store up for ourselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, that we may take hold of the life that really is life. We offer these gifts, trusting in our savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF NEW MEMBERS: Bob and Janice Propsner

PRAYER OF WELCOME

Almighty God, we thank you for the life journey that brought Bob and Janice to join the Forest Grove Church today. We celebrate the unique impact they will make here and already has made here, through their presence, gifts and talents. May we offer our support in times of trouble and rejoice with them always. May our church home strengthen their faith and deepen their discipleship. All this we pray in Christ's Holy Name. Amen.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN #175 See Ye First

1. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

Allelu, Alleluia!

2. As, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and the door shall be opened unto you.

Allelu, Alleluia!

3. You shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God

Allelu, Alluia!

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. Live boldly, trusting God with everything you are and everything you have. Take hold of the life to which God calls you. Go forth, rejoicing in God. And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you always. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESUMES ON TODAY - Our Christian Education committee is ready to meet that challenge by offering a Zoom Sunday School class for all ages 11:30am on Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/127591875>. For one half hour our children will be hearing stories, singing songs, engaging in activities and games about God and God's teachings. These simple lessons pack a lot into thirty minutes, but our teachers know that our kids love to be busy! If you prefer, Sunday School Class Kits are available either at the church for pick up or by delivery to your home. Please contact Su Fall about how you would like to receive these materials.

Exploring The Book Of Acts: Thursday evening, 7pm on Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/127591875> Meeting ID: 127 591 875 or by phone: 301-715-8592 or 253-215-8782. This is the last week for this study led by Seminary intern Ryon Herin. A new study will begin on November 19 that will focus on Advent and the coming of the Messiah.

CHURCH COOKBOOKS - After all the gathering of recipes, copying and proofing, the cookbooks are available for purchase for \$15. Call the church office with your order. The book is a very colorful small three-ringed binder so you can add more to it and will fit nicely in a draw or on a shelf. Remember, the holidays are coming and this would make a great gift. All proceeds will go toward the repair of our leaking steeple.

Church Service in our Sanctuary - Due to the limited number of people allowable in the building at one time, reservations are required and must be made by 2:00 Thursday afternoon by calling the church office.

Saturday, November 28: ZOOM ADVENT WREATH MAKING PARTY. Each Advent Sunday during worship we light candles on our church Advent wreath. This year we will be inviting those worshipping with us a home to join in this ritual as we all light the candles on our own wreaths together during the service. To do this, all are invited to make their own wreath. We are going to make a party of this by Zooming our collective creativity at 4:00 Saturday afternoon. **If you would like to receive an Advent wreath making kit, please contact the office no later than Tuesday, November 17.** Not everyone will need all the items in the kit so here are the possibilities. When you reserve your kit, please indicate which items you will need:

- a metal tray to serve as the wreath base
- floral wet foam oasis
- live greens
- four candle pillars (candle pillars replaces the need for a wire circular candle holder for tapers)

Kits will be labeled and available at the church anytime from November 22-25 or for a donation, we will deliver to your home.

In our thoughts and prayers: Linda Bowers, Aleena Lang, David Posnett, Natalie Pizza, Louise Stemplewicz, Sally Theissen, Marilyn Cook