



Seward United Methodist Church
May 14, 2023

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Pam McConnell

Passing the Peace

Call to Worship

L: Come, listen, hear the stories that shape our faith.

P: We will be attentive and listen with our hearts and minds.

L: These are the stories Jesus told, the parables that sneak up on us with layers of meaning and mystery and challenge.

P: We will seek beyond easy answers for the deeper truths the parables teach.

Hymn

My Life Is in You, God

TFWS 2032

My life is in you, God;
my strength is in you, God;
My hope is in you, God;
in you, it's in you.
My life is in you, God;
my strength is in you, Lord;
my hope is in you, God;
in you, it's in you.

I will praise you with all of my strength;
with all of my life,
With all of my strength.
All of my hope is in you. (Refrain)

Common Prayer (in unison)

God of Word and Breath and Life, thank you for the gift of stories that teach us who you are and who you call us to be. Remind us that the best stories are worth repeating time and again and again. Open up to us the parable we hear today. Allow it to teach us anew and strengthen our faith. In the name of Jesus, who first shared the parables. AMEN.

Children's Time

Pastor Jo Ellen Axthelm

Scripture Lesson: Matthew 25:14-28

¹⁴ "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵ to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. At once ¹⁶ the one who had received the five talents went off and traded with them and made five more talents. ¹⁷ In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸ But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹ After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' ²¹ His master

said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' ²² And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' ²³ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' ²⁴ Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you did not scatter, ²⁵ so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' ²⁶ But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I did not scatter?' ²⁷ Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸ So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents.

Hymn

O God, We Yearn for Safety

ANGEL'S STORY 7.6.7.6 D ("O Jesus, I Have Promised")

O God, we yearn for safety; We long to be secure.
Yet faithful, loving service Is what you value more.
You give us what is needed; You love, forgive and save.
Then, sending us to serve you, You call us to be brave.

You give to some ten talents — to others, two or three;
To some you give one blessing To manage faithfully.
For you, O Lord, are loving And don't demand success;
You daily call your people To lives of faithfulness.

You give your church the gospel — Good news for us to share.
You give us great compassion For neighbors everywhere.
You give us skills to serve you And loving work to do.
We're blest to be a blessing, And called to risk for you.

O God, it seems much safer To live from day to day,
Protecting what you lend us And hiding it away.
Yet all these gifts can't flourish When hidden in the ground;
When we are brave to share them Your blessings will abound.

Biblical References: Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 19:12-27
Tune: Arthur Henry Mann, 1888 ("O Jesus, I Have Promised")
Text: Copyright © 2011 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved.

Sermon

"Talents to Share"

Rev. Dr. Mary Kay Totty

Prayers of the People

Prayer Hymn

Into My Heart

TFWS 2160

1. Into my heart, into my heart,
come into my heart, Lord Jesus;
come in today, come in to stay;
come into my heart, Lord Jesus.

2. Out of my heart, out of my heart,
out of my heart, Lord Jesus;
out of my heart, Lord Jesus;
shine out of my heart, Lord Jesus.

Pastoral Prayer/Lord's Prayer

Recognition of Graduates

Offering

Offertory

Doxology**Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow****UMH 94**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below; Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power up lifts! Praise the Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Prayer of Dedication (in unison)

Thank you, God, for the greatest of all gifts, the saving action of Jesus Christ in human history. Your gift inspires our generous response. We bring our offerings and renewed commitment. Help us to be faithful disciples. Amen. *(from: "Fresh Winds of the Spirit" by Lavon Bayler, p. 52)*

Hymn**God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens****UMH 150**

1 God, who stretched the spangled heavens,
infinite in time and place,
flung the suns in burning radiance
through the silent fields of space;
we, your children in your likeness,
share inventive pow'rs with you.
Great creator still creating,
show us what we yet may do.

2 We have ventured worlds undreamed of
since the childhood of our race,
known the ecstasy of winging
through untraveled realms of space,
probed the secrets of the atom,
yielding unimagined pow'r,
facing us with life's destruction
or our most triumphant hour.

3 As each far horizon beckons,
may it challenge us anew,
children of creative purpose
serving others, hon'ring you.
May our dreams prove rich with promise,
each endeavor well begun.
Great creator, give us guidance
till our goals and yours are one.

Benediction**Postlude****Pam McConnell**