Art by Sue Carroll

Sunday, May 24, 2026

Culmore United Methodist Church

Welcome and Good Morning!

Welcome and Announcements

Art by Sue Carroll

Happy Birthday!

Once again it's your birthday. Once again the time is here.
What a loving gift from Jesus, He has given you one more year.
Happy time is your birthday, happy time this year.
What a loving gift from Jesus, He has given you one more year.
Oh happy birthday to you, oh happy birthday to you.
For you have Jesus Christ everyday of your life.
Oh happy birthday to you, oh happy birthday to you.
The Lord bless and keep you.
Happy birthday to you. And to Jesus with you.
God bless you and keep you. Happy birthday to you.

Forgiveness – APA definition

Willfully putting aside feelings of resentment toward an individual who has committed a wrong, been unfair or hurtful, or otherwise harmed you in some way. Forgiveness is not equated with reconciliation or excusing another, and it is not merely accepting what happened or ceasing to be angry.

Rather, it involves a voluntary transformation of one's feelings, attitudes, and behavior toward the individual, so that one is no longer dominated by resentment and can express compassion, generosity, or the like toward the individual.

Forgiveness is not an occasional act.

It is a constant attitude.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

Forgiveness represents a decision not to do what instinct and passion urge us to do. It answers hate with a refusal-to-hate, animosity with generosity. Few more daring ideas have ever entered the human situation.

Forgiveness means that we are not destined endlessly to replay the grievances of yesterday. It is the ability to live with the past without being held captive by the past. It would not be an exaggeration to say that forgiveness is the most compelling testimony to human freedom.

It is about the action that is not ***reaction***.

It is the refusal to be defined by circumstance.

It represents our ability to change course,

reframe the narrative of the past and create an

unexpected set of possibilities for the future…

At times it is our only path through the thickets of hate.

Opening Prayer

Wise and All-Knowing God,

Sometimes we just plain don't want to forgive. Sometimes we want to hold onto all the anger and hurt, and vengeance we feel entitled to. Sometimes we want tohurt those who have hurt us Sometimes being entrenched in bitterness gives us a focus and protects us from fear.

Sometimes we just plain don't want to forgive. Open our hearts, Lord, to your love, and let us do the same with one another. ***Amen***

And He will raise you up on eagles' wings
Bear you on the breath of dawn
Make you to shine like the sun
And hold you in the palm of His hand.

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord
Who abide in His shadow for life
Say to the Lord, "My refuge,
my rock in whom I trust!"

The snare of the fowler
will never capture you
And famine will bring you no fear
Under His wings your refuge,
His faithfulness your shield

You need not fear the terror of the night
Nor the arrow that flies by day
Though thousands fall about you,
near you it shall not come

For to His angels He's given a command
To guard you in all of your ways
Upon their hands they will bear you up
Lest you dash your foot against a stone.

Psalm 139: selected verses

O LORD, you have searched me, and you know me. You know

when I sit and when I rise you perceive my thoughts from afar.

You discern my going out and my lying down;

You are familiar with all my ways.

Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD.

You hem me in —behind and before;

You have laid Your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

If I go up to the heavens, You are there; if I make my bed in the depths, You are there.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,

even there your hand will guide me;

Your right hand will hold me fast.

Search me, God, and know my heart

Test me and know my anxious thoughts.

See if there is any offensive way in me,

and lead me in the way everlasting.

Psalm 69: 23-24, 27-28

May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see,
and their backs be bent forever.
Pour out your wrath on them;
let your fierce anger overtake them.

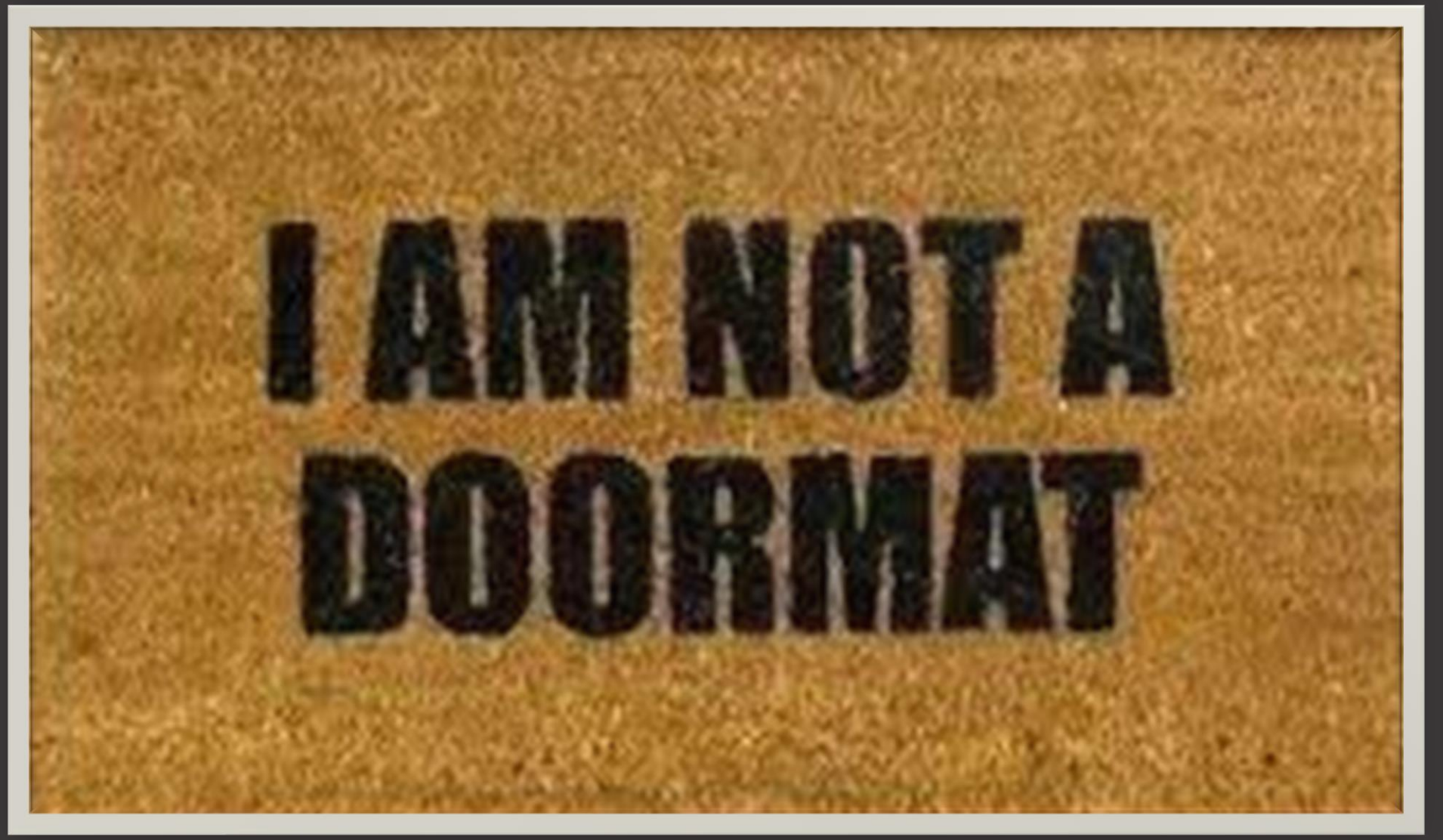
Charge them with crime upon crime;
do not let them share in your salvation.
May they be blotted out of the book of life
and not be listed with the righteous.

Don’t let them live in your head rent-free.

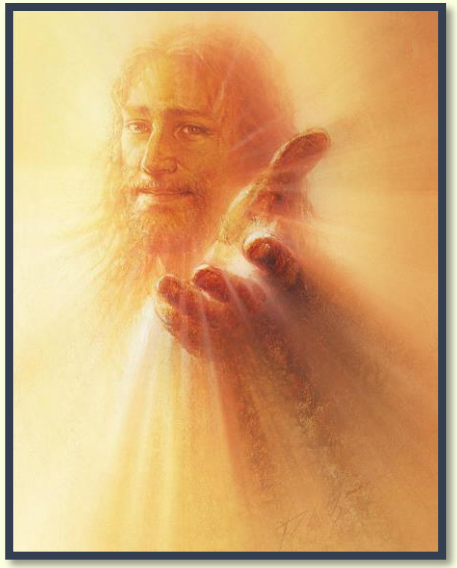
Matthew 18: 21-22

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?"

Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy time seven.


I AM NOT A
DOORMAT

Freely, Freely – UMH 389



God forgave my sin in Jesus' name
I've been born again in Jesus' name
And in Jesus' name I come to you
To share His love as He told me to.

All power is given in Jesus' name,
In earth and Heaven in Jesus' name
And in Jesus' name I come to you
To share His power as He told me to.

He said, "Freely, freely you have received
Freely, freely give.
Go in my name, and because you believe
Others will know that I live."

Community Prayer

LORD JESUS,

Although we usually recognize that You have given us so much, we can still become reluctant to extend the same gift to others. Why is that?

Maybe our sense of justice leads to the desire for those who have harmed us to suffer similar pain. We might want to see others "pay for" what they have done. After all, that only seems fair!

But You have given us new instructions: instead of the "eye for an eye" guidance given in the Old Testament, You told Your disciples that if they did not forgive others from the heart, God would not forgive them either. That's a really high price for us to pay for our stubbornness.

Show us the way to learn from You what seems to be so hard—

forgiving others for what they have done to us. ***AMEN***

Offering

We give thanks for this wonderful,
generous community of faith.

Doxology - UM Hymnal 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 uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Benediction

Photo by James Gardner