



Photo by James Gardner

Sunday, October 22, 2023

Culmore
United Methodist Church

Welcome and
Good Morning!

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.



Even If



They say it only takes a little faith
To move a mountain
Well, good thing
A little faith is all I have right now


But God, when You choose
To leave mountains unmovable
Oh, give me the strength to be able to sing
It is well with my soul.

It's easy to sing
When there's nothing to bring me down
What will I say
When I'm held to the flame
Like I am right now.

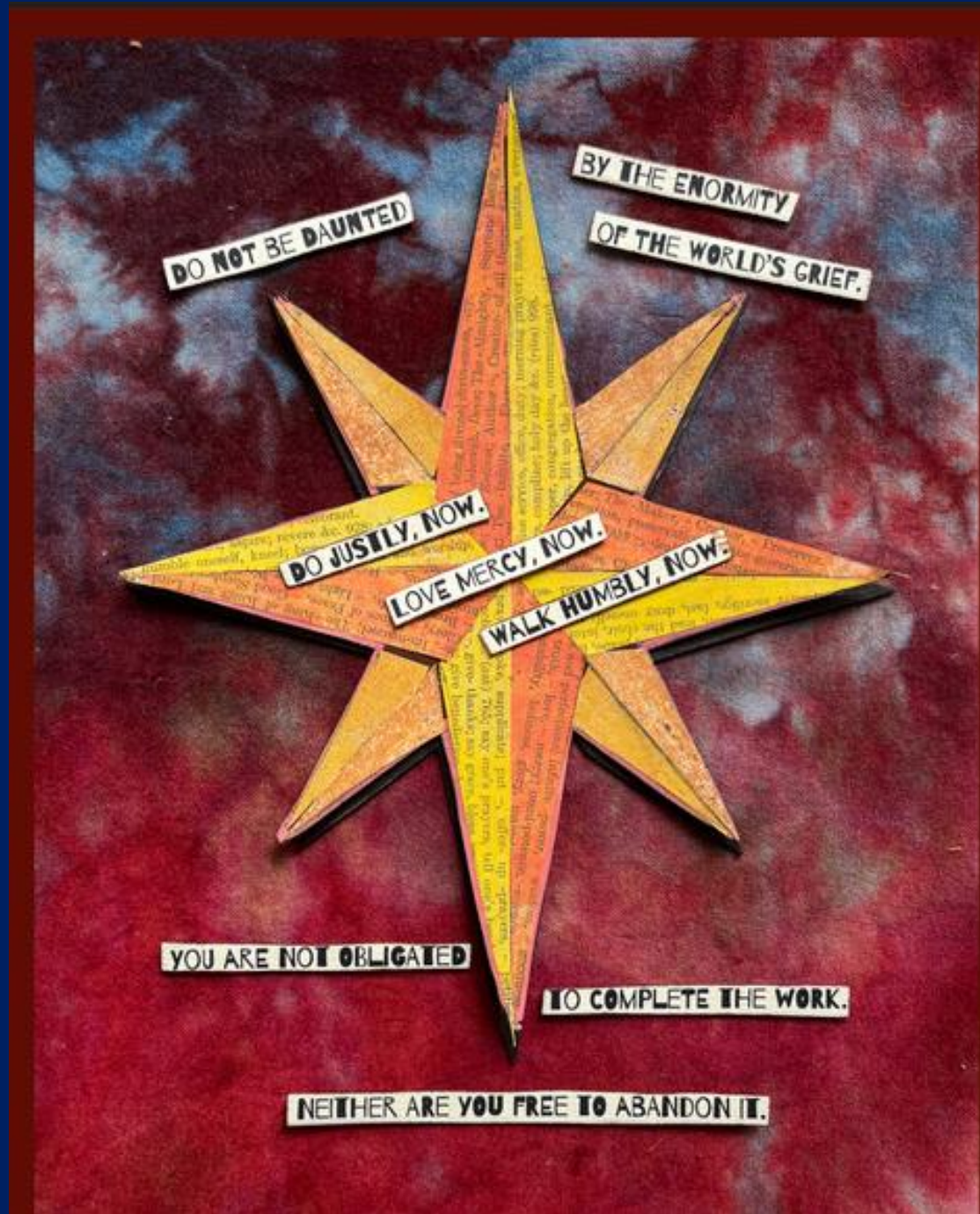


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**I know You're able and I know You can
Save through the fire with Your mighty hand
But even if You don't, my hope is You alone**



Wisdom from the Prophets

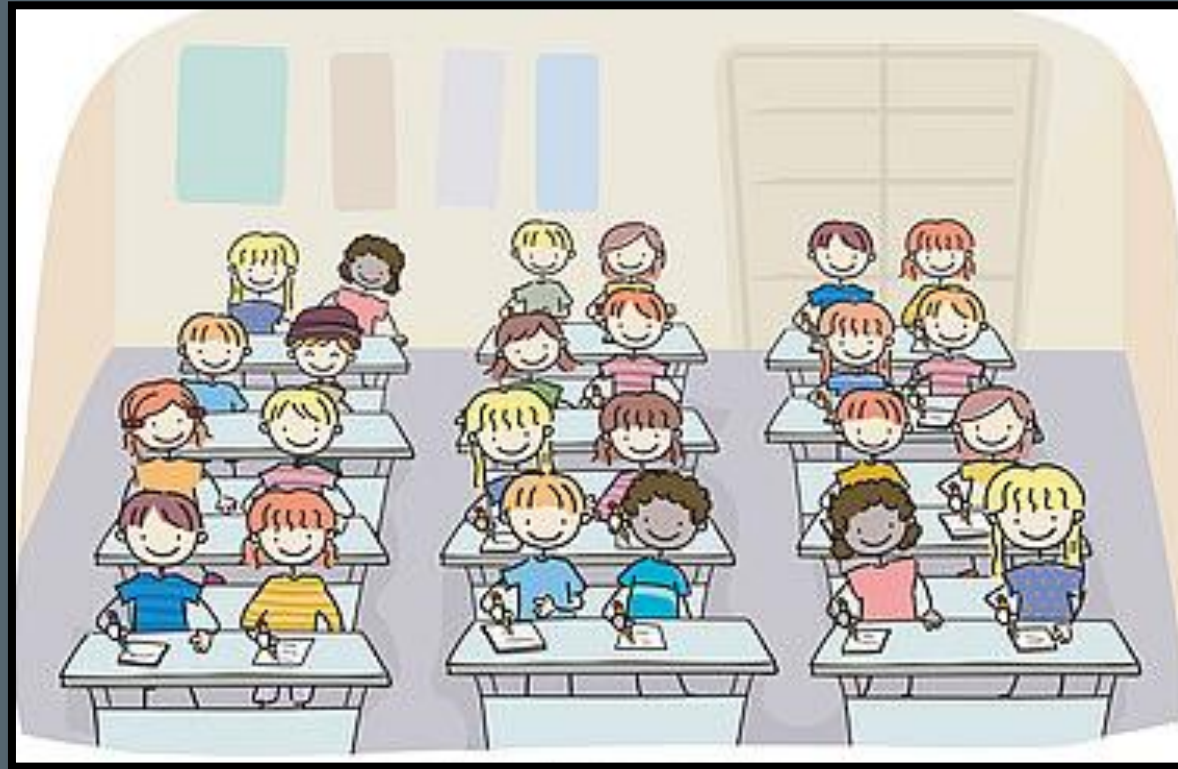


Artwork by Sue Carroll

**DON'T BE A
WEASEL!**



Lessons for the Young and Young at Heart



Here's my gift to you!



No need to thank me...



Hosea 6:6

**For I desire mercy, not sacrifice,
and acknowledgement of God
rather than burnt offerings.**



Amos 5: 21, 24

If you offer me burnt offerings, I will not accept them;
I will pay no heed to your gifts of fatlings
... But **let justice well up like water,
righteousness like a never-ending stream.**

Responsive Reading Isaiah 1: 11-13, 16-17 (NIV)

“The multitude of your sacrifices, what are they to me?”
says the Lord. “I have more than enough of burnt offerings,
of rams and the fat of fattened animals.”

**When you come to appear before me,
who has asked this of you, this trampling
of my courts?**



Stop bringing meaningless offerings!

Wash and make yourselves clean.

Seek justice, encourage the oppressed.

**Defend the cause of the fatherless,
plead the case of the widow.**



Take your evil deeds out of my sight.

Stop doing wrong! Learn to do right.



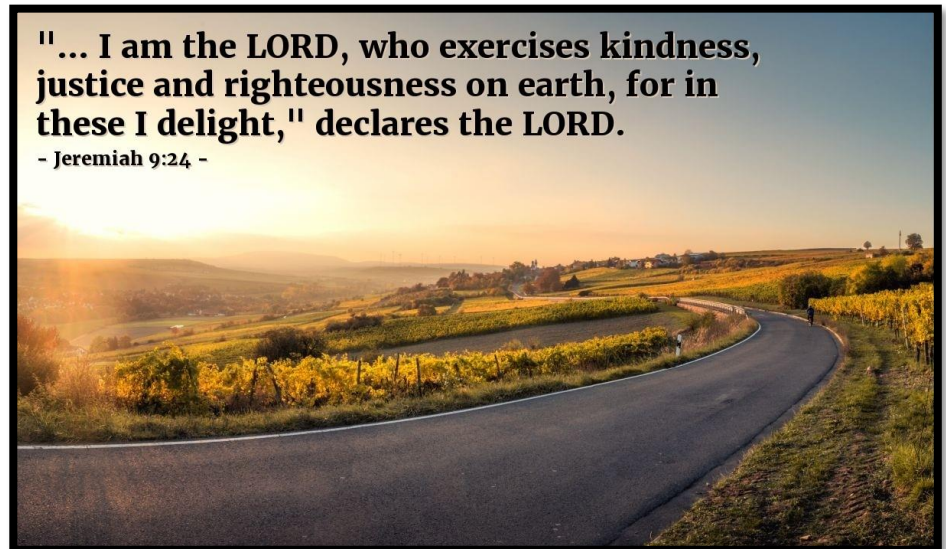
Opening Prayer



All wise, all knowing God,

Just like children, we can struggle to share. Just like children, we find it hard to be kind, especially if it means giving up something we want ourselves. Just like children, we try to convince ourselves that it's okay to do this. We then hope You won't notice or care when we do this.

You are the Lord, who exercise kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these You delight. Help us do the same for each other. ***Amen***



"... I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the LORD.

- Jeremiah 9:24 -

Micah 6: 6-8



With what shall I come before the Lord
and bow down before the exalted God?

Shall I come before him with burnt
offerings, with calves a year old? Will the
Lord be pleased with thousands of ram,
with ten thousand rivers of oil?



Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

He has shown you, O man; he has shown you
what is good. And what does the Lord require
of you?



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



How shall I come before the Lord,
and bow myself with heart outpoured?
And shall I come with offerings?
What shall I give? What shall I bring?

Will finest gifts bring God's delight?
Will wealth bring favor in God's sight?
What must we be? What must we do?
What does the Lord require of you?

Let justice shine in all your ways.
Let loving-kindness rule your day,
that, as this earthly path you trod,
you shall walk humbly with your God.

How Shall I Come Before the Lord? — The Faith We Sing 3124



The prophets were not criticizing sacrifices per se.

They were criticizing something as real now as it was in their time....

What distressed the prophets to the core of their being was the idea that you could serve God... and at the same time act disdainfully, cruelly, unjustly, insensitively or callously toward other people.

"So long as I am in God's good graces, that is all that matters."

That is the thought that made the Prophets incandescent with indignation.

If you think that...

then you haven't understood either the scripture or God.

Jonathan Sacks

Community Prayer

Eternal God,

You have continuously told us that meaningless gestures are not good enough. When you said, through Isaiah, “I have more than enough of burnt offerings,” your message was clear. Nothing could be clearer than what you spoke through the prophet Micah: “What does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

Lord, remind us that you don't want empty gestures or insincere outward expressions of tribute. Fill our hearts with Your Holy Spirit so that we may walk humbly with You, reflecting the light of your love, kindness and grace to all.

Amen

Create in Me a Clean Heart



Create in me a clean heart, oh God
And renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from Thy presence,
And take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation
And renew a right spirit within me.



Art by Sue Carroll



Benediction

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