

Worship Brainstorming

“Empowered: Fruit of the Spirit”

Monday, May 3, 2021 in Fellowship Hall

6:00 pm Pizza Dinner

7:00 pm Worship Brainstorming for

May 23 – July 18, 2021

The Worship Team will be brainstorming for a nine-week series that runs from May 23 to July 18. Members of all ages and backgrounds are invited to participate in the one evening commitment. The ideas generated at the brainstorming are used in worship.

Sharing the meal is an important part of our time together. Please join us for a pizza dinner at 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. The brainstorming begin will begin at 7:00 pm.

There is no need to bring anything, but RSVPs are helpful. Sign up at church or contact the church office at 231-798-2181 or Office@LakeHarborUMC.org or Karen Booth at 231-798-8431 (home), 231-557-1069 (cell), or kwbooth@comcast.net.

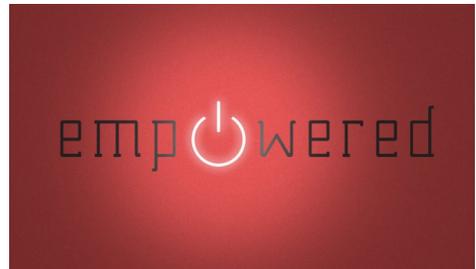
Please pick up the brainstorming packet, read the scripture reading and Pastor Mary’s message synopses, and preview videos if at all possible before we gather. Copies of the packet will be available at church and online. Participants will continue to mask up and observe social distancing.

2021 theme connection: God blesses each one of us with the fruit of the Spirit.

Key word: Recharge.

Key scripture:

- Galatians 5: 22-26 (lectionary 6/30/19) “Fruit of the Spirit”
- Matthew 7: 15-20 “A Tree and Its Fruit”



Related info/synopsis:

During His life on earth, Jesus was empowered by the Holy Spirit to do ministry. In John 14: 12 Jesus said, “I tell you for certain that if you have faith in me, you will do the same things that I am doing. You will do even greater things, now that I am going back to the Father.” While this does not mean that Christians are greater than Jesus, it does mean that Christians, who have the same Spirit as Jesus, can minister to more people than Jesus did because of the sheer number of believers around the world.

We begin our study of the fruit of the Spirit on Pentecost. It is important to remember that we first see that our ministry is simply a continuation of the ministry of Jesus. **The fruit of the Spirit is a list of characteristics and qualities that are given by God through the Spirit of God so that the church of God can minister like the Son of God.**

<https://summitview.net/empowered/>

Resources:

- <https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/spiritual-life/what-are-the-fruit-of-the-spirit.html>

- <https://www.christianity.com/wiki/holy-spirit/what-are-the-fruits-of-the-spirit.html>
- <https://www.bibleinfo.com/en/questions/fruit-of-the-spirit>
- <https://www.umc.org/en/content/our-christian-roots-the-holy-spirit>
- <https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/3140/sermon-series-set-free-the-fruit-of-the-spirit>
- <https://www.ministrymatters.com/bin/9353/feasting-on-fruit-nine-days-of-welcoming-the-holy-spirit>
- <https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/10342/the-power-of-pentecost> Related Trinity illustration from Rebecca McDonald: The “Trinity” poses a stumbling block to Muslims. As with my own kids, I explained the Trinity by separating the yolk, white, and shell of an egg, asking each times, “IS this an egg?” Yes! Each part serves a different purpose, but together they are ONE!
- Related book study: <https://www.lifeway.com/en/product-family/living-beyond-yourself>
- <https://clergystuff.com/daily-devotions/2017/6/1/the-fruit-of-the-spirit-galatians-522-26>
- Prayers: <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/prayer-guide-for-courageous-conversations> and <https://garmentsofsplendor.com/fruit-of-the-spirit-bible-printables/>

Music:

- <https://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/resources-for-fruit-of-the-spirit/>
- Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart UMH #500
- Holy Spirit, Truth Divine UMH #465
- For the Healing of the Nations UMH #428
- Breathe on Me, Breath of God UMH #420
- I’ve Got Peace Like a River TFWS #2145
- Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove
- Sweet, Sweet Spirit UMH #334
- Love Divine, All Loves Excelling UMH #384
- For a Thousand Tongues to Sing UMH #57
- Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus UMH #514
- There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy UMH #121
- We Meet You, O Christ UMH #257
- The Summons TFWS #2130
- Your Love, O God, Has Called Us Here UMH #647
- Be Thou My Vision UMH #451
- He is Lord UMH #177
- Jesus Calls Us UMH #398
- Lord, Dismiss Us with Thy Blessing UMH #671

Visuals: More ideas at <https://lakeharborumc.org/2021/04/may-3-2021-brainstorming-empowered-fruit-of-the-spirit/>

- <https://www.ignitermedia.com/collections/65211-fruit-of-the-spirit>
- Fruit stand stage set <http://churchstagedesignideas.com/fruit-stand/>

- Juicy Fruit stage set <http://churchstagedesignideas.com/juicy-fruit/>

Introductory video:

- “Fruit of the Spirit” by Fervent. Length 1:08. Cost: \$15.00. As followers of Christ, what should our lives look like? How should we act? This video is a creative look at the nine visible attributes of a true Christian life based on Galatians 5: 22-23.
<https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/16949/fruit-of-the-spirit>
- “Fruit of the Spirit Intro” by Vertical Hold Media. Length: 0:51. Cost: \$14.95.
<https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/50279/fruit-of-the-spirit-intro>
- “More Than Words.” Length: 4:50. Cost: \$20.00. What would our world be like if people truly lived out love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, goodness, and self-control? In this musical journey set in the late 1950’s, a young boy sets out to see the world in a whole new way. Scored by Grooters & Beal song, “Seek Me.”
<https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/8389/more-than-words>
- “The Fruit of the Spirit” by Church Fuel. Length: 1:03. Cost: \$15.00. Does your life bear fruit?
<https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/103114/the-fruit-of-the-spirit>
- “Life in the Spirit” by Deeper Impressions Media. Length: 0:34. Cost: \$9.98. Jesus came to give us life – a life that bears fruit. <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/26253/life-in-the-spirit>
- “Intro for the Fruit of the Spirit” by Minister2Kids. Length: 0:36. Cost: \$10.00.
<https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/46376/intro-for-the-fruit-of-the-spirit>

Kids’ stuff

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rezg4jYFoj0>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-hrxEjWxkE>
- <https://michiganumc.org/faith-family-playlists/fruit-of-the-spirit-overview/>
- Game <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/serving-gods-way-game>
- Children’s Time using an orange <https://childrensbibleministries.net/the-fruit-of-the-spirit-a-childrens-bible-lesson>

NOTES: July 4th falls on a Sunday. It’s worth noting that the full passage in Galatians 5 addresses **freedom in Christ**.

Main scripture: Galatians 5: 1, 13-26 (NRSV)

5 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

“Life by the Spirit”

¹³ You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. ¹⁴ For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁵ If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

¹⁶ So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They

are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever^[c] you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

¹⁹ The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²² **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control.** Against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

*EACH WEEK we'll
repeat Galatians 5:
22-26*

We'll look at the original Greek word for each fruit of the Spirit and pay special attention to the order of the list:

²² Ὁ δὲ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματός ἐστιν **ἀγάπη, χαρά, εἰρήνη, μακροθυμία, χρηστότης, ἀγαθωσύνη, πίστις, ²³ πραΰτης, ἐγκράτεια**· κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος. ²⁴ οἱ δὲ τοῦ ^[c]Χριστοῦ τὴν σάρκα ἐσταύρωσαν σὺν τοῖς παθήμασιν καὶ ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις. ²⁵ εἰ ζῶμεν πνεύματι, πνεύματι καὶ στοιχῶμεν. ²⁶ μὴ γινώμεθα κενόδοξοι, ἀλλήλους προκαλούμενοι, ἀλλήλοις φθονοῦντες.

2021 marks two important anniversaries for LHUMC:

1. 65 years since charter (April 22, 1956)
2. 5 years since merger with Lakeside UMC (June 2016)
 - a. Cyd Idsinga will be ordained this year. Lakeside UMC is her home church.

May 23, 2021: “Empowered – First Love, Love First”

Scripture: Acts 2: 1-21 (NRSV) The Coming of the Holy Spirit

² When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

⁵ Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶ And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷ Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? ⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹ Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.” ¹² All

were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" ¹³ But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

Peter Addresses the Crowd

¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say.

¹⁵ Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning.

¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ 'In the last days it will be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.

¹⁸ Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.

¹⁹ And I will show portents in the heaven above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.

²⁰ The sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day.

²¹ Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

Scripture: Galatians 5: 22-26 (top of page 3)

References to:

- John 13: 31-35 (The New Commandment: Love One Another)
- ¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. *John 3: 16*
- I Corinthians 13 (The Gift of Love)
- ⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. *John 4: 7-8*

Synopsis: Love is at the root of the fruit of the Spirit and our spiritual lives. It's where we start.

Felt need: To embrace the love that connects us to God and others

Visuals: Greek words for LOVE - AGAPE

Hands-on item: Fruit of the Spirit bookmark.

Activity: Today is Pentecost. You are invited to wear **red** or **orange** as you worship as a reminder of the Holy Spirit that came down at the first Pentecost.

We'll celebrate Graduation Sunday. Related video: "Endless Seasons Ahead." Length: 1:59. Cost: Free. Last used: 5/17/20. <https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/83727/endless-seasons-ahead>

Media possibilities:

- “Pentecost: The Church Is Born.” Length: 1:37. Cost: \$19.99. The joy of the first Pentecost was all-consuming. This energetic video reminds us of how God’s glory swept over the world, and how we were all brought together through His power when His Church was born.
https://www.easyworship.com/media/MiniMovies/132146/Pentecost--The-Church-Is-Born?utm_source=EasyWorship&utm_campaign=04a0bac358-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_PENTECOST_2021_4_28&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_5973a6294d-04a0bac358-97889301
- “Love Actually Is.” Length: 1:22. Cost: Free with our subscription. Most of us could quote Paul’s “love chapter” off the top of our heads. But how many of us consistently live out those definitions of love in the everyday, mundane moments of life?
<https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/81424/love-actually-is>
- “Love Better.” Length: 1:20. Cost: \$19.99. What if we could love the way Jesus did?
<https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/101836/love-better>
- “Love Never Fails.” Length: 2:09. Cost: \$15.00. This powerful mini-movie used 1 Corinthians 13: 4-8 to describe love, with short scenes depicting each aspect of the verse. <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/57738/love-never-fails>

Music: They’ll Know We Are Christians

Notes: Start worship with Pentecost reading in Acts 2, Use Tony Campolo story

Related devotion: “Beyond Fear” by Lindy Thompson, *Fellowship Reflections*, 4-28-21:

Busted. I have not reached perfection in love. I am dealing with a great deal of fear these days.

However, I hang my hat on that verse. I believe that verse. I KNOW it is true. I can glimpse it. I just can't seem to live there.

Moving past a childish faith (*repeat after me*), moving past a vending machine faith (*if I do this, you will do that, God; awesome, thanks, bye*), moving past utter doubt (*this whole thing is nonsense*), one comes to a much less grounded space. A space where the “I don't know” are too abundant to ignore so you just have to carry them with you. A space where the heart has been broken too much to stay closed so that there is an openness and acceptance in your spirit. A space where you stop trying to skim off the disagreeable parts of yourself and just settle into the idea that God actually does love all of you, and therefore God loves all of everybody. A space that is spacious and has room for us all, no judgment, just love and grace and compassion.

There is no fear in love. Perfect love casts out all fear – God's perfect love, for us and in us and through us.

Amen.

May 30, 2021: “Empowered – Joy Full”

Scripture: Galatians 5: 22-26 (top of page 3)

Scripture: John 15: 9-17 (NRSV)

⁹ As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

¹² "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. ¹⁶ You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. ¹⁷ I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

Reference to Romans 5 (Justified by Faith)

Synopsis: Joy isn't the same as happiness, and many times, joy lives in the midst of sorrow.

Jesus promises his full joy for us even as he faces persecution and death. How can we claim joy that isn't dependent on present circumstances?

Felt need: To understand what joy is and what joy isn't – and to claim joy in God

Visuals: Greek word – CHARA (connected to grace)

Hands-on item:

Activity: Trinity Sunday, Memorial Day - Consecration of gifts and/or Garden tour. Special Sunday – Peace with Justice Sunday

Media possibilities: "Find Your True Identity." Length: 1:37. Cost: Free with our subscription.

How do you answer the question, "Who are you?" The only way to live a life of purpose and fulfillment is to find your identity in Christ as a child of God.

<https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/86707/find-your-true-identity>

Music: How Can I Keep from Singing?, Blessed Assurance

June 6, 2021: "Empowered – Then Comes Peace"

Scripture: Galatians 5: 22-26 (top of page 3)

Scripture: John 14: 25-27 (NRSV)

²⁵ "I have said these things to you while I am still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

References to:

- And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. *Philippians 4:7*
- I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!" *John 16:33*

Synopsis: It's common for us to pray for peace in our world – and even in our relationships and our hearts. But peace doesn't simply happen. It requires trust in God and building trust (and seeking justice) in community.

Felt need: To seek peace within ourselves, with others, and with God

Visuals: GREEK word - EIRENE

Hands-on item:

Activity: Holy Communion, Annual Conference

Media possibilities: "Prayer for Peace" by Rype.tv. Length: 0:53. Cost: \$19.99. This mini movie is a prayer for peace over our nation that is hurting and our people that need healing and hope. <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/98708/prayer-for-peace>

Music: It Is Well; Leaning on the Everlasting Arms; Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

June 13, 2021: "Empowered – Waiting with Patience"

Scripture: Galatians 5: 22-26 (top of page 3)

Scripture: II Peter 3: 8-9 (NRSV)

⁸ But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.

Scripture: Ephesians 4: 1-6 (NRSV) "Unity in the Body of Christ"

⁴ I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

Scripture: James 5: 7-11 (NRSV) "Patience in Suffering"

⁷ Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹ Indeed we call blessed those who showed

endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

Synopsis: Patience is a virtue, and it's also a characteristic of one who lives by the power of the Holy Spirit. We're called to reflect God's patience as we live in community with others.

Felt need: To work on being patient – reflecting God's patience with us

Visuals: GREEK word – MAKROTHUMIA (long-tempered)

Hands-on item:

Activity:

Media possibilities:

- “Impatient People.” Length: 1:00. Cost: \$15.00. have you ever been in a hurry when God wasn't? All throughout the Bible we see God telling people to wait.
<https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/43442/impatient-people>
- “Where's My Panini.” Length: 2:33. Cost: \$15.00. Sometimes we feel like God is far away. It seems like he is not interested in us...If we want God in our lives, all we have to do is invite Him in. <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/38788/wheres-my-panini>
- “While I'm Waiting.” Length: 2:43. Cost: Free with our subscription. Discovering the results of God's plan takes time – and with it, patience. From the movie, “Fireproof.”
<https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/13819/while-im-waiting>

Music: Wait for the Lord, God of Grace and God of Glory

June 20, 2021: “Empowered – Kindness Matters”

Scripture: Galatians 5: 22-26 (top of page 3)

Scripture: Luke 6: 27-36 (NRSV) “Love for Enemies”

²⁷ “But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹ If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. ³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. ³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you.

³² “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. ³⁵ But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

References to:

- Or do you despise the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience? Do you not realize that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? *Romans 2: 4*
- ¹² As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. *Colossians 3: 12*

Synopsis: Kindness isn’t just about what we can do for others, but who we are and how others feel around us. With Jesus’ challenging words that we admire (and possibly struggle with), how do we cultivate kindness in our everyday interactions?

Felt need: To cultivate kindness – where others feel at ease in our presence

Visuals: Greek word – CHRESTOTES

Hands-on item:

Activity: Father’s Day (special prayers and chocolate). Beginning of VBS?

Media possibilities:

Music: What a Friend We Have in Jesus

June 27, 2021: “Empowered – God’s Goodness”

Scripture: Galatians 5: 22-26 (top of page 3)

Scripture: Matthew 20: 1-16 (NRSV) “The Laborers in the Vineyard”

20 “For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴ and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. ⁶ And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ ⁷ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ ⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ ⁹ When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ ¹³ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

Reference to II Thessalonians 1: 11

¹¹ To this end we always pray for you, asking that our God will make you worthy of his call and will fulfill by his power every good resolve and work of faith.

Synopsis: Goodness is grounded in God, and we can only show goodness because God is good.

We struggle, though, to embrace God's goodness for all people – even when it seems unfair in our human view. <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/31836/parables-the-vineyard-workers>

Felt need: To make the connection between goodness and generosity – all grounded in God

Visuals: Greek word – AGATHOSUNE (sometimes connected to generosity)

Hands-on item:

Activity: End of VBS?, Missions Celebration?

Media possibilities: “Parables: The Vineyard Workers.” Length: 1:02. Cost: \$14.98. An intro to the parable.

Music: How Great Thou Art, His Eye Is on the Sparrow; “Goodness of God” by Bethel Music

July 4, 2021: “Empowered – Faithfulness by Faith”

Scripture: Galatians 5: 22-26 (top of page 3)

Scripture: Matthew 25: 14-30 (NRSV) “The Parable of the Talents”

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. ¹⁶ The one who had received the five talents went off at once 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 seed; 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. ²⁹ For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ³⁰ As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Synopsis: Faithfulness calls us to take risks and try new things with God's gifts in our lives. We are the return on God's investment of love and grace.

Felt need: To understand that faithfulness is a product of faith and trust in God

Visuals: Greek word - PISTIS

Hands-on item:

Activity: Holy Communion

Media possibilities:

- "Child Like Faith." Length: 3:16. Cost: \$18.00. We have all been hurt and wounded along this journey we call life. Sometimes it can appear there is now answer or way to be restored to who we were once were. This video is a reminder to return to the creator with childlike faith and be restored. <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/13397/child-like-faith>
- "Deidox – Alyssa." Length: 4:49. Cost: \$19.98. A teenager lives by faith, not by sight. <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/18912/deidox--alyssa>

Music: Great Is Thy Faithfulness, Cry of My Heart, In Christ Alone, 'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus, My Hope Is Built

July 11, 2021: "Empowered – Gentleness"

NOTE: *Pastor Mary on vacation - Pastor Kim Bos preaching.*

Scripture: Galatians 5: 22-26 (top of page 3)

Scripture: Matthew 11: 25-30 (NRSV) "Jesus Thanks His Father"

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; ²⁶ yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸ "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Scripture: Philippians 4: 4-7 (NRSV)

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Scripture: Ephesians 4: 1-6 "Unity in the Body of Christ" (see page 6)

Synopsis: Gentleness isn't weakness or passiveness, but is intimately connected to strength and power under control.

Felt need: To hear the call to gentleness as a reflection of Jesus' character

Visuals: Greek word – PRAUTES (prah-oo-tes)

Hands-on item:

Activity:

Media possibilities: “Kids Talk Gentleness.” Length: 0:47. Cost: \$8.00. In this segment a little boy explains why we need to be gentle. <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/13866/kids-talk-gentleness>

Music: Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

July 18, 2021: “Empowered – Self-Control: Always in Season”

Scripture: Galatians 5: 22-26 (top of page 3)

Scripture: II Peter 1: 3-7 (NRSV) “Christ’s Call and Election”

³ His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴ Thus he has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of lust, and may become participants of the divine nature. ⁵ For this very reason, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with knowledge, ⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, ⁷ and godliness with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love.

Reference to: Matthew 6: 9-15 “The Lord’s Prayer”

Synopsis: The call to self-control sends us back to love – knowing that we can’t bear the other fruit without checking ourselves. We have to be honest about temptation and our need for accountability with God and others to overcome it.

Felt need: To recognize that freedom in Christ requires discipline and commitment

Visuals: Greek word – EGKRATEIA (in strength, in power), road with a deep ditch on each side to show legalism and freedom and the need to stay in the middle

Hands-on item:

Activity:

Media possibilities:

Music: Standing on the Promises, More Like You, Just a Closer Walk with Thee

NOTE: There is a wedding on July 17.