

## Worship Brainstorming Summary

### The Walk: Five Essential Practices of the Christian Life

Based on a book by Pastor Adam Hamilton  
Tues., December 14, 2021 at Booth's home  
January 2-30, 2022 (5 weeks)

**Members present:** Larry Jorgenson, Bonnie Jorgenson, Paul Power, Brad Hilleary, Vicki Zuker, Ron Zuker, Dave Booth, Jim Post, Rose Emmons, Pastor Mary, Diane Thompson, Sue Baranowski, Karen Booth; Jean Kelly via email

#### Social Justice Issue - January 2022 (?)

**Theme:** The Spiritual Journey Continues...Picking up the pieces

- Connecting the pieces
- Transformation
- Serving others (passionately)

#### Metaphors:

- Puzzle/puzzle pieces – making a new picture. Related hands-on item: puzzle piece with scripture reference.
- Mosaic – creating something beautiful from broken pieces

#### Major spoken/unspoken needs:

- Dealing with fear, which often presents itself as anger and rage. One antidote to fear is serving.
- Peace, sense of belonging, safe communities, coming together, compassion
- Finding a new normal – less busy, better sense of priorities, greater gratitude, increased resilience

**Synopsis:** How do we walk with Christ – daily follow him, grow in him, and faithfully serve him?

Discover five essential spiritual practices rooted in Jesus' own walk with God. In the Gospels, Jesus modeled for us the Christian spiritual life. The apostles taught it in their writings. And the Church has, through the last 2,000 years, sought to pursue this Christian spiritual life. In each chapter, Hamilton explores one of these practices – each of which is intended to be part of our daily walk with Christ – its New Testament foundation, and its potential effect on our personal lives and our lives together as the church.

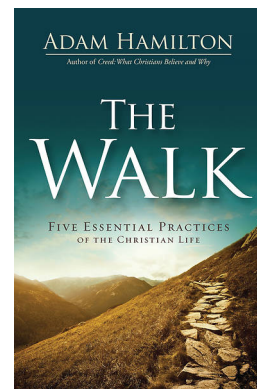
<https://my.amplifymedia.com/amplify/series/unitedmethodistpublishinghouse/29224-the-walk>

**2022 theme connection:** Spiritual disciplines are part of our journey. Adam Hamilton is a biblically grounded and accessible author whose centrist approach can help us on our walk.

**Promotional video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEjpOgGoEWs>

#### Related ideas:

- This series lends itself to New Year's resolutions.



- Wear an invitation (t-shirt that acts as a conversation starter). Stewardship.
- Consider offering a small group study using Hamilton’s book as a resource. **Comments:** Jean is wondering if this will take place between services or will current small groups be encouraged to use *The Walk* as January’s resource?

**Music:** “Holy Spirit” by Jesus Culture (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ktsPuZvH-rQ>)

**Visuals:** Keep trees up to create outside scene much like the book cover.

**God moments:** Use pictures of nature. Helen Jones, Chris Beaudoin, and Janice Hilleary take nice sunset photos.

**Resources:** <https://www.adamhamilton.com/books/the-walk/> - includes free resources like worship slides

**About the author:** Hamilton is lead pastor for the largest United Methodist church in the country, Church of the Resurrection in Leawood Kansas. Their mission is to reach the non-religious.” He has written many books, all of which are accessible to virtual all readers and biblically grounded. Pay particular attention to the “health crisis” analogy he uses here which is often what most people need as a wake-up call to get in better physical shape.

**Ideas:**

- A **photo card** with the five theme words (**worship, study, serve, give, share**)
- A card (or handout of some kind) to share five specific **practices**:
  - Pray 5 times a day (morning, at mealtimes, evening) and worship weekly.
  - Read 5 verses of Scripture a day.
  - Practice 5 acts of intentional kindness each week.
  - Extend 5 acts of extravagant generosity each month.
  - Invite 5 people to church each year.
- **NOTE:** This connects to the Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations
  - Worship - PASSIONATE WORSHIP
  - Study - INTENTIONAL FAITH DEVELOPMENT
  - Serve - RISK-TAKING MISSION and SERVICE
  - Give - EXTRAVAGANT GENEROSITY
  - Share - RADICAL HOSPITALITY
- Connect each week to a specific spiritual formation opportunity.

These five **practices** require intention. They are also very practical ideas, something most everyone could do if they tried.

**NOTE:** Pastor Mary will be on a 4-week “leave” and Men’s Group and friends will lead worship and share for the first four weeks of the series. **We’re in the season of Epiphany when we focus on God coming for all the world - and God “showing up” in our lives in powerful ways.** **What’s the “a-ha moment” for you as it relates to the theme of the day?** The messages will be highly reflective, and preachers are encouraged to use personal stories (their own God moments) as they relate to the topic. :)

**For 9:00 a.m. service:** Familiar hymns/songs will be used and a song leader(s) is needed.

**For both services:** We need someone to lead Children’s Time/Time with Kids.

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**January 2, 2022: “Worship and Prayer: A Living Hallelujah”**

One worship service at 10:00 a.m. - EPIPHANY SUNDAY

**Brad Hilleary** preaching, **Larry Jorgenson** – 10:00 AM worship leader

**Scripture:** Psalm 95: 1-7 (Contemporary English Version) “Worship and Obey the LORD”

95 Sing joyful songs to the LORD!

Praise the mighty rock where we are safe.

<sup>2</sup> Come to worship him with thankful hearts and songs of praise.

<sup>3</sup> The LORD is the greatest God, king over all other gods.

<sup>4</sup> He holds the deepest part of the earth in his hands,  
and the mountain peaks belong to him.

<sup>5</sup> The ocean is the Lord’s because he made it,  
and with his own hands he formed the dry land.

<sup>6</sup> Bow down and worship  
the LORD our Creator!

<sup>7</sup> The LORD is our God, and we are his people,  
the sheep he takes care of in his own pasture.

Listen to God’s voice today!

Lectionary: March 15, 2020
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**Scripture:** Revelation 4: 8-11 (New International Version) **Brad may not use this reading**

<sup>8</sup> Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying:

“‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,’ who was, and is, and is to come.”

<sup>9</sup> Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, <sup>10</sup> the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:

<sup>11</sup> “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”

**Synopsis:** Worshiping regularly with gratitude and nurturing our prayer life is a vital part of walking with Jesus. Worship is our witness that God is worthy of our praise. Prayer fosters an intimate connection and relationship with God.

**Felt need:** To understand what worship is (our response as God’s creation to God as Creator), what worship does (connects us to God and each other), and how prayer is worship

**Visuals:** Patterns of prayer - praise, thanksgiving, confession, petition, yielding; 5 finger prayer

**Hands-on item:** Church of the Resurrection’s worship “report card” (p. 30) **Comments:** Pastor Mary had someone tell her that no one ever has an excuse for missing worship any more since it is always available online.

**Activity:** Holy Communion - **Rev. John Thompson will preside.** Pray 5 times a day (morning, at mealtimes, evening) and worship weekly.

**Media possibilities:**

- “A Psalm of Worship.” Length: 1:33. Cost: Free with subscription. Web license: Yes. Visual liturgy. <https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/54350/a-psalm-of-worship>

- “A Prayer for the New Year.” Length: 1:55. Cost: Free with subscription. Web license: Yes. Based on the Prayer of St. Francis. <https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/16535/a-prayer-for-the-new-year>
- “Worship Him.” Length: 0:40. Cost: Free with subscription. Web license: Yes. So many of us walk into a worship service completely distracted by the things that life throws our way. It’s imperative that we remind our people “why” we are at church and we remove the focus from ourselves and turn our full attention toward God. <https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/64257/worship-him>
- “The Word on Worship.” Length: 1:50. Cost: Free with subscription. Web license: Yes. How churches worship may vary from one congregation to the next, but Who we worship is our great unifier. The Word declares that we worship the Lord in spirit and in truth, and this video combines those Scriptures with an inspiring music track. <https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/46478/the-word-on-worship>

**Music:** CHOIR - *What Feast of Love* (WS 3170); #3034 “God of Wonders”; #2002 “I Will Call Upon the Lord”

**Children’s Time:** Brad Hilleary (or Kate Robbins)

**Prayer:** *Lord, help me to see the beauty of this world you’ve given to us. Help me to notice the blessings all around me. Help me to remember that you are God, and I am not. Help me to trust that somehow you will see me through even the painful things in life and bring good from them. Grant me a grateful heart. Finally, help me to be a living hallelujah. In Jesus’ name. Amen.*

**NOTE:** Wesley’s Covenant Prayer could be used as a part of worship.

#### **A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition**

*I am no longer my own, but thine.  
 Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.  
 Put me to doing, put me to suffering.  
 Let me be employed by thee or laid aside by thee.  
 Exalted for thee or brought low for thee.  
 Let me be full, let me be empty.  
 Let me have all things, let me have nothing.  
 I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal.  
 And now, O glorious and blessed God,  
 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
 thou art mine, and I am thine.  
 So be it.  
 And the covenant which I have made on earth,  
 Let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.*

#### **A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition (Contemporary Version)**

*I am no longer my own, but yours.  
 Put me to what you will, place me with whom you will.  
 Put me to doing, put me to suffering.*

*Let me be put to work for you or set aside for you,  
Praised for you or criticized for you.  
Let me be full, let me be empty.  
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.  
I freely and fully surrender all things to your glory and service.  
And now, O wonderful and holy God,  
Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,  
you are mine, and I am yours.  
So be it.  
And the covenant which I have made on earth,  
Let it also be made in heaven. Amen.*

**Discussion points:** 1) This will be a new year and new beginning. 2) Brad will mostly tell stories, including these: The passionate worship he participated in at Promise Keepers – a rather intimidating situation as a Methodist. Lying prostrate on the ground during worship on the mall in Washington, DC. Hearing the Mona Shores Choir sing in a church grotto in Italy. Participating in Gary Rohs’ adult Sunday School when he talked about what it meant to spend an hour every day with God. 3) There are many ways to both worship and pray. Pat Bethke opened Brad’s eyes to ways to be able to pray aloud. 4) Larry would be happy to do a God moment about his time visiting and praying with people at the hospital. 5) People can worship individually at the beach, in the woods, or on a snowy mountaintop, but it is not the same as worshiping communally. 6) Pastor Mary noted how different worship is now than it was 18 months ago. Who would have guessed that people from other states and countries consider Lake Harbor their home church? She has prayed over the computer with people she has never met. 7) Larry started life as a Baptist. He has been a Methodist for about 50 years. He has seen more change in the past two years than the previous 50. One change has been in how people dress for church. On a related note: When Pastor Mary was in Ravenna, she had a man come to church barefoot because his shoes were muddy from roofing the parsonage – truly a reverent act for not wanting to sully holy ground. 8) We lose the feeling of community if we only worship online. 9) Hallelujah means praise, especially exuberant praise. A living hallelujah is more than just words; it shows in the way we live. 10) How does worship form us? What happens inside us? Worship requires **engagement** and that engagement needs to be with other people too. Diane noted that she is not as invested online. We feel emotion and passion. 11) Returned to the sanctuary after months of being away was a big deal. It made us think about how more senses are engaged when we gather in person. 12) Worship is not about “being fed.” We are not babies. Worship is about God, who is good all the time. Worship nurtures our relationship with God.

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**January 9, 2022: “Study: The Importance of Listening and Paying Attention”**

BAPTISM OF THE LORD SUNDAY

**Jim Post** preaching, **Paul Powers** – 9:00 AM worship leader

**Scripture:** II Timothy 3: 14-17 (New International Version)

<sup>14</sup> But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, <sup>15</sup> and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**Scripture:** Psalm 119: 105 (New Revised Standard Version)

<sup>105</sup> Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Lectionary:  
July 12, 2020

**Scripture:** Psalm 19: 1-4 (Common English Bible)

<sup>19</sup> Heaven is declaring God's glory; the sky is proclaiming his handiwork.

<sup>2</sup> One day gushes the news to the next,  
and one night informs another what needs to be known.

<sup>3</sup> Of course, there's no speech, no words—their voices can't be heard—

<sup>4</sup> but their sound extends throughout the world;  
their words reach the ends of the earth.

God has made a tent in heaven for the sun.

Lectionary:  
March 7, 2020

**Synopsis:** Listening is an important skill we hone, and listening to God's voice is no exception. God speaks to us in many ways, including general revelation (nature, art, life experiences, people, conscience, intuition, reason) and special revelation (Holy Spirit, Scripture, Jesus as God's Word to us).

**Felt need:** To pay closer attention to God's revelation and to commit to deeper study of Scripture

**Visuals:** BIBLE (Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth)

**Hands-on item:**

**Activity:** Read 5 verses of Scripture a day and study the Bible in a small group.

**Media possibilities:**

- "What If." Length: 1:47. Cost: \$15.00. Web license: Yes. This simple mini-movie is designed to stir questions in non-believers and believers alike, from those who are coming to church for the first time, to those Christians who simply do the church thing of Sundays each week with no real depth. <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/60064/what-if>
- "The Good Earth." Length: 2:05. Cost: \$19.99. Web license: No. This inspirational piece is a celebration of nature and the beauty of God's creation. Contains audio of the Apollo 8 astronauts as they looked down on earth from their lunar orbit. <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/96245/the-good-earth>
- "Are You Listening?" Length: 3:08. Cost: \$19.98. Web license: Yes. We serve an active God who does speak in this day and age. One primary way he speaks is through His Word. <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/20465/are-you-listening>

- “Stop and Listen.” Length: 3:28. Cost: \$20.00. Web license: No. In our busy and distracted lives, it’s easy to think God doesn’t speak. But what if He does speak, and we’re not listening? <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/54031/stop-and-listen>

**Music:** *Thy Word* (UMH 601); #451 “Be Thou My Vision”; #529 “How Firm a Foundation”; #3034 “God of Wonders”

**Children’s Time:**

**Prayer:** *Lord, teach me to listen. Help me to pay attention to the ways you are revealed in the world around me - in my everyday life. But also, dear Lord, help me to read and study the Scriptures, finding in them the words of life. In Jesus’ name. Amen.*

**NOTE:** Highlight opportunities for Bible study, prayer group, GriefShare, etc.

**Discussion points:** 1) Jim’s star word from 2020 was listen. He has been told listening is not his strong suit. 2) The bible mentions “listen” 278 times. God is constantly telling people to pay attention. 3) Make a commitment to reading the bible in one year. It is God’s book of instruction and is one way He reveals his will for us. Studying doesn’t happen accidentally. We have to be intentional. 4) Jim will tell some stories, including these: Leading a bible study and needing to provide a bible for each participant; most of the bibles didn’t have any bent pages. Parables as stories that show who God is and how he acts through people (and his Karen saying, “Are you sure?” as a way of getting his attention); God moments/incidences. Disciple Bible classes – noting how different people can interpret the same passages of scripture differently. 5) Brad noted how many devotions Jim has led over the years. 6) Jim has been an avid listener of Chuck Swindoll. 7) Sue: Do we have some one-year bible reading plans? Yes. Fred Woodworth is one person who actually saw the reading plan to completion. 8) The bible is about Jesus. One way to know him is to meditate on Scripture, something Paul recommends. When we say the bible is living and action, we mean that it applies to everyone, meeting you where you are at. 9) Study should be individually and communally.

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**January 16, 2022: “Serve: Here I Am, Lord, Send Me”**

SUNDAY closest to Rev. Dr. MLK, Jr. Day

Special Sunday offering for Human Relations Day

**Jeff Verry** preaching, **Larry Jorgenson** – 9:00 AM worship leader

**Scripture:** Micah 6: 6-8 (Contemporary English Version) “True Obedience”

- 6 What offering should I bring  
when I bow down to worship the LORD God Most High?  
Should I try to please him by sacrificing  
calves a year old?
- 7 Will thousands of sheep or rivers of olive oil  
make God satisfied with me?

Lectionary:  
February 2, 2020

Should I sacrifice to the LORD my first-born child as payment  
for my terrible sins?

- <sup>8</sup> The LORD God has told us what is right  
and what he demands:  
“See that justice is done,  
let mercy be your first concern,  
and humbly obey your God.”

**Scripture: John 13: 1-17 (Common English Bible) “Foot Washing”**

<sup>13</sup> Before the Festival of Passover, Jesus knew that his time had come to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them fully.

<sup>2</sup> Jesus and his disciples were sharing the evening meal. The devil had already provoked Judas, Simon Iscariot’s son, to betray Jesus. <sup>3</sup> Jesus knew the Father had given everything into his hands and that he had come from God and was returning to God. <sup>4</sup> So he got up from the table and took off his robes. Picking up a linen towel, he tied it around his waist. <sup>5</sup> Then he poured water into a washbasin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel he was wearing. <sup>6</sup> When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?”

<sup>7</sup> Jesus replied, “You don’t understand what I’m doing now, but you will understand later.”

<sup>8</sup> “No!” Peter said. “You will never wash my feet!”

Jesus replied, “Unless I wash you, you won’t have a place with me.”

<sup>9</sup> Simon Peter said, “Lord, not only my feet but also my hands and my head!”

<sup>10</sup> Jesus responded, “Those who have bathed need only to have their feet washed, because they are completely clean. You disciples are clean, but not every one of you.” <sup>11</sup> He knew who would betray him. That’s why he said, “Not every one of you is clean.”

<sup>12</sup> After he washed the disciples’ feet, he put on his robes and returned to his place at the table. He said to them, “Do you know what I’ve done for you? <sup>13</sup> You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you speak correctly, because I am. <sup>14</sup> If I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you too must wash each other’s feet. <sup>15</sup> I have given you an example: Just as I have done, you also must do. <sup>16</sup> I assure you, servants aren’t greater than their master, nor are those who are sent greater than the one who sent them. <sup>17</sup> Since you know these things, you will be happy if you do them.

Lectionary:  
April 14, 2022

**Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13: 1-13 (Common English Bible)**

<sup>13</sup> If I speak in tongues of human beings and of angels but I don’t have love, I’m a clanging gong or a clashing cymbal. <sup>2</sup> If I have the gift of prophecy and I know all the mysteries and everything else, and if I have such complete faith that I can move mountains but I don’t have love, I’m nothing. <sup>3</sup> If I give away everything that I have and hand over my own body to feel good about what I’ve done but I don’t have love, I receive no benefit whatsoever.

Lectionary:  
January 30, 2022



<sup>4</sup> Love is patient, love is kind, it isn't jealous, it doesn't brag, it isn't arrogant, <sup>5</sup> it isn't rude, it doesn't seek its own advantage, it isn't irritable, it doesn't keep a record of complaints, <sup>6</sup> it isn't happy with injustice, but it is happy with the truth. <sup>7</sup> Love puts up with all things, trusts in all things, hopes for all things, endures all things.

<sup>8</sup> Love never fails. As for prophecies, they will be brought to an end. As for tongues, they will stop. As for knowledge, it will be brought to an end. <sup>9</sup> We know in part and we prophesy in part; <sup>10</sup> but when the perfect comes, what is partial will be brought to an end. <sup>11</sup> When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, reason like a child, think like a child. But now that I have become a man, I've put an end to childish things. <sup>12</sup> Now we see a reflection in a mirror; then we will see face-to-face. Now I know partially, but then I will know completely in the same way that I have been completely known. <sup>13</sup> Now faith, hope, and love remain—these three things—and the greatest of these is love.

**Synopsis:** The call to follow Jesus is fundamentally a call to service, which we do both individually and together in our church.

**Felt need:** To be open to the opportunities to serve where we are (even when it's an unexpected interruption) and make the connection to our faith

**Visuals:**

**Hands-on item:**

**Activity:** Practice 5 acts of intentional kindness each week and serve with others.

**Media possibilities:**

- "Serve. Not Just a Check." Length: 0:42. Cost: \$6.99. Web license: No. Watch as our main character wrestles with the call to serve, rather than just write a check. <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/61467/serve-not-just-a-check>
- "What You Do Matters – Serve." Length: 2:51. Cost: \$14.99. Serving is a foundation of the Christian life and models the servant heart of Jesus. <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/76921/what-you-do-matters--serve>
- "Perspective." Length: 1:40. Cost: Free with subscription. Web license: Yes. Much of life is perspective. Two people can read the same scripture or look at the same command of Jesus, and hear two completely different things. Great message opener for serving. <https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/29019/perspective>

**Music:** *Here I Am, Lord* (UMH 593); #2174 "What Does the Lord Require of You"; #2223 "They'll Know We Are Christians"

**Children's Time:**

**Prayer:** *Lord, you taught us that your glory is revealed when we, human beings made in your image, extend your love and care for us to others. Make me aware of your "nudges," and give me a heart that is open to interruption when you need me. Amen.*

**NOTE:** Wesley's Covenant Prayer could be used as a part of worship.

**Discussion points:** 1) Service is an expression of love. What options do we have to serve personally and as part of the church? Examples: Family Promise, Mission for Area People,

Unity Music Festival (one of the most tiring and fulfilling jobs people have done), Mission Trips. 2) In the Old Testament, we have examples of people who God called who were not “qualified” by human standards. Moses couldn’t speak. David was a womanizer. 3) Karen Post’s cousin, Gib, has been listening to Pastor/Preacher David Jeremiah. 4) Vicki would like to highlight opportunities to serve within the church. 5) Our lay leadership team has found that people who worship and attend bible study regularly are more likely to serve. 6) When Rose was ready to step back into church after an absence, she was welcomed by the Praise Band. Serving was key. 7) Karen Booth likes to give people an opportunity to “test drive” a volunteer position as finding the right way to serve is very important. 8) As Jim’s mother-in-law was dying, she asked that they take the kids to church and were immediately engaged by the people who knew them well. It was hard to leave those people to move to Muskegon, but they did connect at Lake Harbor right away.

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**January 23, 2022: “Give: Where Your Treasure Is”**

**Mike Layman** preaching, **Paul Powers** – 9:00 AM worship leader

**Scripture:** Matthew 6: 19-24 (Common English Bible)

**Earthly and heavenly treasures**

<sup>19</sup> “Stop collecting treasures for your own benefit on earth, where moth and rust eat them and where thieves break in and steal them. <sup>20</sup> Instead, collect treasures for yourselves in heaven, where moth and rust don’t eat them and where thieves don’t break in and steal them. <sup>21</sup> Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

**Seeing and serving**

<sup>22</sup> “The eye is the lamp of the body. Therefore, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup> But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how terrible that darkness will be! <sup>24</sup> No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be loyal to the one and have contempt for the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

Lectionary:  
November 25, 2021

**Scripture:** Luke 6: 38 (Contemporary English Version)

<sup>38</sup> If you give to others, you will be given a full amount in return. It will be packed down, shaken together, and spilling over into your lap. The way you treat others is the way you will be treated.

Lectionary:  
February 20, 2022

**Scripture:** Acts 20: 32-35 (Common English Bible)

<sup>32</sup> Now I entrust you to God and the message of his grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all whom God has made holy. <sup>33</sup> I haven’t craved anyone’s silver, gold, or clothing. <sup>34</sup> You yourselves know that I have provided for my own needs and for those of my companions with my own hands. <sup>35</sup> In everything I have shown you that, by working hard, we must help the weak. In this way we remember the Lord Jesus’ words: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

**Synopsis:** The way we spend our money is a kind of “selfie” that shows us our priorities, and identifies gratitude and generosity as keys to living a good life. Jesus calls us to invest in God’s kingdom rather than possessions.

**Felt need:** To experience “the good life” - wanting what you already have by giving thanks for what you already possess, living purposefully and meaning-fully, being generous toward God and others (which cultivates joy)

**Visuals:** Tax return selfie (p. 88)

**Hands-on item:**

**Activity:** Extend 5 acts of extravagant generosity each month and give generously through the church.

**Media possibilities:**

- “Generosity.” Length: 1:40. Cost: \$19.99. Web license: Yes. This reminds us of how Christ calls us to bless others with what we have been given. <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/101221/generosity>
- “Reimagine Generosity.” Length: 3:00. Cost: \$19.99. Web license: No. This video casts a vision for whole life generosity that extends beyond just the financial piece and shows that generosity is core to God’s character. <https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/60866/reimagine-generosity>
- “Today We Give.” Length: 1:25. Cost: Free with subscription. Using scripture from Matthew 6: 19-21, this is a statement from us to God expressing the heart behind why we give. <https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/63990/today-we-give>

**Music:** #2036 “Give Thanks”; #572 “Pass It On”

**Children’s Time:**

**Prayer:** *Thank you, God, for everything I have. I recognize that all of life is a gift from you.*

*Please help me to become more generous, more willing to share with others. Help me to live beneath my means so that I might have enough margin to give. Help me to be generous toward you and others, remembering your unending generosity toward me. Amen.*

**Discussion points:** 1) Mike has some stories to tell. 2) Adam Hamilton emphasizes the importance of gratitude and generosity and examines how they affect us and shape our lives. We are transformed when we figure out that our stuff belongs to God. 3) We are fortunate to be entrusted with Community Foundation gift. We are also fortunate to be entrusted with much smaller gifts. 4) Brad sometimes feels that the bible/religion shames people who have money. The bible warns against the love of money, not money itself. 5) Jim is happy that our church is in better financial shape now than it ever was in the past. 6) Gifts are gifts. The giver should not give gifts with strings attached, that includes financial gifts of any size that the giver would like to control. 7) Trust – essential to giving. 8) Parents make financial commitment to lots of kids’ activities, e.g., sports, music, etc. Why is it hard to commit to giving to the church? 8) Scripture is clear on the love of money as evil, not money. It is also clear that giving should be proportional. 9) Pastor Mary: Consistency is

important as a discipline. 10) What don't you want to hear on this topic? How much Jesus talked about money which is more than anything else he talked about. 11) Shaquille O'Neal has not forgotten the struggles of his life growing up poor and has made it his life mission to be generous. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iqp8ehMJoss>. 12) Budgets: Give 10%. Save 10%. Live on the remaining 80%. 13) Favorite Saturday Night Live skit line: "Don't spend money you don't have."

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**January 30, 2022: "Share: Going Fishing, Reflecting Light"**

**Pastor Mary Ivanov** preaching, **Larry Jorgenson** – 9:00 AM worship leader

**Scripture:** Matthew 4: 18-25 "Jesus Calls His First Disciples and Heals the Sick" (NIV)

<sup>18</sup> As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.

<sup>19</sup> "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." <sup>20</sup> At once they left their nets and followed him.

<sup>21</sup> Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, <sup>22</sup> and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Lectionary:  
January 26, 2020

<sup>23</sup> Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. <sup>24</sup> News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and he healed them. <sup>25</sup> Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis,<sup>[a]</sup> Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.

**Scripture:** Matthew 5: 13-16 (New Living Translation)

"Teaching about Salt and Light"

<sup>13</sup> "You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

<sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

Lectionary:  
February 9, 2020

**Scripture:** I Peter 3: 15-16 (Contemporary English Version)

Key verse is **highlighted**

<sup>15</sup> Honor Christ and let him be the Lord of your life.

**Always be ready to give an answer when someone asks you about your hope. <sup>16</sup> Give a kind and respectful answer and keep your conscience clear.** This way you will make people ashamed for saying bad things about your good conduct as a follower of Christ.

Lectionary:  
March 17, 2020

**Synopsis:** We are called to bear witness to Christ by sharing our faith with others, which we do by letting our light shine and by using words to tell people what Jesus means to us.

**Felt need:** To hear the challenge and importance of our witness and testimony to carrying out the Great Commission - and to be intentional about developing our short testimony

**Visuals:** Facebook “like”

**Hands-on item:**

**Activity:** Let others know you are a Christian and invite 5 people to church each year - use FRAN (friends, relatives, acquaintances, neighbors).

**Media possibilities:**

- “Forty.” Length: 1:16. Cost: Free with subscription. Web license: Yes. How many times must the gospel be shared before someone will believe? How many times should you pour another cup? <https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/14888/forty>
- “Go.” Length: 1:50. Cost: Free with subscription. Web license: Yes. It’s never been more possible to be of the world without really being in it. Maybe it’s time to stop standing at the water’s edge and hoping the chaos won’t reach us. Maybe it’s time to go. <https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/48009/go>

**Music:** #2130 “The Summons”; #2218 “You Are Mine”; #572 “Pass It On”

**Children’s Time:**

**Prayer:** *Lord, thank you for your love for us. Thank you for the people you brought into my life who brought me to you. Thank you for giving them the courage to live their faith in such a way that I saw you through them. Bless them for the blessing they have been to me. Use me, Lord, as you used them. Let me be your light that pushes away darkness. Let me be your witness every day. Let me be a fisher who draws people to you. Let me be someone who allows others to see a reflection of you. Amen.*

**Discussion points:** 1) Witness/sharing was adding to the membership vows in the past 20 years. Methodists are not known for evangelism. 2) How has witnessing changed in the past two years since Covid emerged? In many ways it is much easier to invite people to join us in worship since they can try it out online. It just takes an invitation. 3) Bishop Bard noted how powerful the God moments can be. 4) Pastor Mary will encourage everyone to think about their own personal testimony. We should be able to say why we believe in Jesus, why it matters to us, and the difference it makes in our lives in just three sentences. Faith was never meant to be ours alone; it was meant to be shared. 5) Brad is surprised to hear people ask, “Are You saved?” He is not alone. 6) Examples of why it is important: Need for community. Decision made after an illness. 7) Adam Hamilton compares sharing to reviews on FaceBook or other social media. Word of mouth and person to person sharing matters. We may notice negative sharing the most. 8) Pastor Mary has been amazed at how fast people share on FB, especially when she was asking what people’s “help” prayers were. FB can be a quick effective tool and way for people to find Lake Harbor online. 9) Paul was going to grab a quick burger at Culver’s on the way to bible study. He had to wait 25 minutes – not so quick – but made sure he was pleasant to the server. Being kind is the best witness. 10) Vicki notices how many people share events like concerts, craft shows, etc. Do church events get shared too? 11) Hamilton uses the term “Christ’s ambassadors” to

describe how God makes his appeal through us. 12) Sometimes the loudest voices are not very helpful and it takes many quieter, kinder, more pleasant voices to drown them out. 13) Pastor Mary is noticing that weddings and funerals are often the first time many people enter a church. 14) What about the de-churched, i.e., the people who have been hurt or wronged by the church or someone in it? That is not what Jesus wants us to be. 15) People need to know why we serve. 16) We want to be known as the place you can make a mistake and still be loved.