**All Church Worship Brainstorming Summary**

**Dare to Dance Again**

Mon., March 27, 2023 at Booth’s home

April 16 – May 28, 2023 (7 Sundays)

BD15034_**Members present:** Karen Booth, Irene Booth, Kim Gaver, Lynne Richmond, Pastor Mary Ivanov, Carole Koch, Sue Baranowski, Marie Kordecki, Jim Post, David Booth, Ed Baranowski, Betty Kinney, Paul Powers, Jean Kelly, Barb Gripton

*“The worship we hope to develop will be rooted in Scripture, centered on Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. It will be relevant to local and emerging culture, while addressing the needs of believers and unbelievers alike. Above all, it will intentionally engage people physically, emotionally, intellectually, and soulfully.”*

BD15034_Felt needs: What physical, emotional, intellectual, or spiritual need are we addressing in this service so that worship is engaging and a means of making disciples? What question needs to be posed/answered so that we are making disciples?

**2023 Theme:**  Jesus is Our Past, Present, and Future Hope

**Key verse:** 38For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Romans 8: 38-39 (NIV)*

**2023 theme connection:** Hope comes from a higher power. God has been faithful in the past. We can rely on him today and in the future.

**Major spoken/unspoken needs:**

* It is so easy to not attend church when I can watch it online. Worship is for God, not us. Convenience vs. sacrifice. Logistics vs. routine.
* Pastoral care, especially around losses: Grief. Family. Division. Addiction. Unrealized dreams. Financial woes. Abortion. Open marriages.
* Relationships. Reconciliation.
* Fear and regret

**Social justice issue for April 2023:** Creation Care (Earth Day is April 22)

**Social justice issue for May 2023:** Addiction - esp. impact on families and communities

**Synopsis:** *As Easter people, we are called to dance our dances of freedom for all the world to see – even and perhaps especially in times of great difficulty. Dances of hope. Dances of justice. Dances of love. During this season, post-resurrection stories point to the joy of living in the beloved community and extending that fellowship through our witness as we dare to dance again.*

**Theme verse:** *“Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.”* Psalm 30:5b

**Related video:** “Psalm 30 – Mourning into Dancing.” Length: 1:48. Cost: $9.00. Web license. This video showcases modern dancers illustrating this transformation mentioned in Psalm 30. <https://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/19677/psalm-30--mourning-into-dancing>

**Resources:**

* <https://worship-design-studio.mn.co/courses/4501555/about>
* [Introductory video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8y5-AG3O5Y)
* Hallelujah Anyway: Rediscovering Mercy “Mercy is radical kindness,” Anne Lamott writes…. It’s the permission you give others – and yourself – to forgive a debt, to absolve the unabsolvable, to let go of the judgment and pain that make life so difficult.
* Ask our dancers (Lisa Jirikovic, Kim Gaver, Tatum Dean, Ellery Gaver) to explain nuances of learning to dance - solo, with a partner, or in a group

**Anchor image:** Umbrellas

**Visuals:**

* Dare to Dance Again Pinterest board <https://www.pinterest.com/worshipstudio/dare-to-dance-again/>
* Umbrella Alley in Louisville, Ohio <https://rootedinohio.com/umbrella-alley-ohio/>
* Liturgical dance

**Images/videos:**

* Picture and story of children who dance in worship. Two-year-old David and four-year-old Axl Goodburn come into church in anticipation of dancing at the end of the Celebration Service. They have now added high-fives to their routine. Ezra (7 months) has started dancing recently.
* Where the H\*\*\* is Matt? dancing videos <https://www.wheretheheckismatt.com/> Length: Various. Not sure if we can livestream them. **Comments:** His tagline: “I travel all around the world dancing badly with people.” Pastor Mary remembers seeing these videos when they came out in 2005. She couldn’t help feeling anything but joyful.
* LookUP NY Times film: <https://vimeo.com/481464739>. Length: 3:18. Cost: Free. Web license: Not sure.
* Strathdee’s **Dance with the Spirit** and animals: <https://strathdeemusic.com/DanceSpiritIm.html> Length: 1:56. Cost: Free. Web license: Not sure. **Comments:** Love it! Use on May 7 for Children’s Sunday.
* “Church Appropriate Dance Moves” countdown. Cost: $10.00. Web license: Yes. <https://www.worshiphousemedia.com/countdowns/47397/church-appropriate-dance-moves>
* “Become Yourself – Dance.” Length: 1:32. Cost: $20.00. Web license: Yes. Today everyone wants to blend into the crowd. In reality, we each have talents gifted by God. Those giftings may at first confuse or even alarm those around us, but when we live fully in the talents that God gives us, we inspire those around us to live out their own. <https://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/39997/become-yourself-dance> **Comments:** Somewhat mixed reviews, but funny. You need to read the descriptions of each dance for it to make the most sense. It might be worth using for one service’s countdown.
* Marcia McFee has a threshold moment video ready for each week which include liturgy and song. The liturgy, songs, and videos are part of the paid resources.

**Hands-on item:** Drink umbrellas

**Music:**

* *Dare to Dance* by T. Watts/M. O’Brien (original song for this series)
* *This Is the Moment (Come, Won’t You Dance)* by D. Chance (original song for this series)
* *Teach Me to Dance* by Graham Kendrick
* [*Singing in the Rain*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swloMVFALXw)  (click [here](https://www.stlyrics.com/lyrics/singinintherain/singinintherain.htm) for lyrics)
* [*Trading My Sorrows*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHDix8HHWCg)
* *Did You Feel the Mountains Tremble?*

**Children’s Time:** Each Sunday, we introduce the children to the story of a “dreamer” – a public figure – someone who brought their unique “dance” to the world and made it a better place.

**General discussion points:**

* Specific memories of dancing:
  + “[Footloose](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P4narQca4Oc).” 1984. It portrays the timeless struggle between innocent pleasure and rigid morality, when city-boy Ren McCormick (Kevin Bacon) finds himself in an uptight Midwestern town where dancing has been banned. Ren revolts with best friend Willard (Chris Penn) and the minister's daughter (Lori Singer).
  + “[Flashdance](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9aqbkd19pMA).” 1983. Alex Owens (Jennifer Beals) is a beautiful young woman who works a day job in a steel mill and dances in a bar at night. When Alex discovers that her handsome boss, Nick Hurley (Michael Nouri), is both interested in her and supportive of her performing career, she renews her efforts to get accepted into a prestigious dance conservatory. Although Alex is frightened of failure, she is cheered on by Nick, as well as by her mentor, former ballet performer Hanna Long (Lilia Skala).
  + “Magic Mike” movies (2012, 2015, 2023): This revealing drama is set in the world of exotic male dancing. Tatum Channing plays Magic Mike, a womanizing hustler with an entrepreneurial spirit who makes his living on the stage.
  + “[Saturday Night Fever](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZTP586-Y9E).” 1977. The film helped to popularize disco music around the world.
  + In college, Carole and her friend Michelle started singing in the rain after leaving a play. They were so happy; they couldn’t do anything but sing and dance.
  + Lynne remembered seeing “Riverdance” with Michael Flatley in Detroit.
  + Several people have taken ballroom dancing classes. 1) 1) Pastor Mary and Ivan took classes when Ana was a baby. 2) Karen and Dave Booth took classes for a couple years. In their beginner’s class, one couple found that arguing and dancing aren’t compatible. In the immediate class, the teacher actually got down on the floor and moved someone’s feet when he just couldn’t “get it.”
  + Learning to dance on daddy’s shoes (Irene Booth). Teaching kids to dance on her shoes (Carole and her boys).
  + “Dancing with the Local Stars” has not only raised money for local charities, but has changed the lives of the dancers. The amount of time and energy that dancers need to spend learning to dance is huge. Related TV shows: “Dancing with the Stars,” “America’s Got Talent,” etc. are positive and upbeat.
  + Dancing is:
    - Social – it brings people together. Wedding receptions (YMCA, Proud Mary, Macarena, Chicken Dance, Electric Slide). Square dancing (Irene). Line Dancing (Irene, Jean)
    - Transformational. 1) Betty’s Gary took ballroom dancing for one of his college physical education credits and partnered with a woman who had no arms. That experienced changed everyone in the class. 2) One of the “Where in the H\*\*\* Is Matt?” dance videos included a clip from Ethiopia where Matt dance with a class where everyone used crutches.
    - Cultural. Ed – polka.
    - An expression of joy. Lynne dancing in the kitchen with her dog. Betty singing and dancing in the kitchen.
    - A part of growing up. Ballet classes for little girls. High school dances with the boys standing around the edge of the gym and the girls dancing in the middle. Daddy/daughter and Mother/son dances.
    - Intimate. “[Dirty Dancing](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eIcmQNy9FsM)” (1987) In the summer of 1963, innocent 17-year-old Baby (Grey) vacations with her parents at a Catskills resort. One evening she is drawn to the staff quarters by stirring music. There she meets Johnny, the hotel dance instructor, who is as experienced as Baby is naive. Baby soon becomes Johnny's pupil in dance and love. This movie inspired many people, including Betty’s granddaughter and her boyfriend, to try the lift in the movie’s final dance.
  + Sports: Miami (FL) coach [Jim Larrañaga](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ceseMbgwQdI) showed off his dance moves in the locker room as the Hurricanes celebrated their win over No. 1 Houston in the Sweet 16.
* Growing up where/when dancing and other social activities (playing cards, movies) were forbidden: Sue Baranowski, Paul Powers, Barb Gripton
* Biblical examples: 1) 2 Samuel 6: 14-22: King David danced as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David. 2) Exodus 15: After the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, Miriam sang and the Israelites probably danced.
* Joy is not dependent on present circumstances. It is deep.
* Children are natural dancers. They are not self-conscious.

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**April 16, 2023:** “With Great Power: Dancing Together” - Easter 2

**Scripture:** John 20: 19-31 (MSG) “To Believe”

19-20Later on that day, the disciples had gathered together, but, fearful of the Jews, had locked all the doors in the house. Jesus entered, stood among them, and said, “Peace to you.” Then he showed them his hands and side.

20-21The disciples, seeing the Master with their own eyes, were awestruck. Jesus repeated his greeting: “Peace to you. Just as the Father sent me, I send you.”

22-23Then he took a deep breath and breathed into them. “Receive the Holy Spirit,” he said. “If you forgive someone’s sins, they’re gone for good. If you don’t forgive sins, what are you going to do with them?”

24-25But Thomas, sometimes called the Twin, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples told him, “We saw the Master.”

But he said, “Unless I see the nail holes in his hands, put my finger in the nail holes, and stick my hand in his side, I won’t believe it.”

26Eight days later, his disciples were again in the room. This time Thomas was with them. Jesus came through the locked doors, stood among them, and said, “Peace to you.”

27Then he focused his attention on Thomas. “Take your finger and examine my hands. Take your hand and stick it in my side. Don’t be unbelieving. Believe.”

28Thomas said, “My Master! My God!”

29Jesus said, “So, you believe because you’ve seen with your own eyes. Even better blessings are in store for those who believe without seeing.”

30-31Jesus provided far more God-revealing signs than are written down in this book. These are written down so you will believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and in the act of believing, have real and eternal life in the way he personally revealed it.

**Scripture:** I John 1:1–2:2 (NIV)

1That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. 2The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. 3We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. 4We write this to make our joy complete.

5This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. 6If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. 7But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

8If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 10If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

2My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. 2He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

**Synopsis:** Dancing requires that we pay attention to our dance partners. It requires finding rhythm together. The Sunday after Easter brings the story of Jesus appearing to the disciples and breathing the Holy Spirit on them. Other scripture this week points to the power of being together, of finding fellowship in the presence of Jesus and the presence of the community. What does it take to dance together?

**Felt need:** To receive the gift of peace and allow it to help us build deeper relationships in the community of faith.

**Visuals:**

**Hands-on item:**

**Activity:**

**Media possibilities:**

**Music:** *Thine Be the Glory* (UMH 308); *I Hope You Dance* sung by Lee Ann Womack; *The Summons* (FWS 2130); *Dona Nobis Pacem* (UMH 376) - sing as a canon/round

**Children’s time:** This week’s dreamer: Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Social media:**

**Discussion points:**

* I John tells us who Jesus is.
* Pastor Mary’s roommate at GVSU choreographed dance, an amazingly complex process – timing, position, physicality, training, discipline, listening. Dance can only look graceful and effortless because so much effort was put into learning.
* How do we stay in rhythm so that we stay in community as Easter people?
* Good examples of rhythm:
  + Kim loves [Swan Lake’s Dance of the Little Swans](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xd2nTXsivHs). The dancers must be perfectly in sync to finish together before the corps de ballet enters. She had just come from teaching a dance class where she had spent 20 minutes learning two eight count measures of a dance. The kids wonder how it can take so much effort to learn so little.
  + Barb’s granddaughter dances on a cruise ship as part of the entertainment.
  + New York City Rockettes
* Bad examples of rhythm:
  + [Elaine dancing at an office party](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jsl3IBAsEH4) on Seinfeld.
  + Pastor Mary feels has a good sense of rhythm and finds being off rhythm very bothersome.
* Carole spent time teaching her son(s) to feel the rhythm.
* Dances with different rhythms: Bunny Hop, Charleston, Zumba, Line dancing, Jazzercise, Cupid’s Shuffle (not *Cuban* Shuffle)
* “[I Got Rhythm”](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mM-K2xVFyk0) by George Gershwin sung by Gene Kelly in the film, “An American in Paris”

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**April 23, 2023:** “While in Their Joy: Dancing Sure” - Easter 3

**Scripture:** Luke 24: 36b-48 (MSG)

36-41While they were saying all this, Jesus appeared to them and said, “Peace be with you.” They thought they were seeing a ghost and were scared half to death. He continued with them, “Don’t be upset, and don’t let all these doubting questions take over. Look at my hands; look at my feet—it’s really me. Touch me. Look me over from head to toe. A ghost doesn’t have muscle and bone like this.” As he said this, he showed them his hands and feet. They still couldn’t believe what they were seeing. It was too much; it seemed too good to be true.

41-43He asked, “Do you have any food here?” They gave him a piece of leftover fish they had cooked. He took it and ate it right before their eyes.

44Then he said, “Everything I told you while I was with you comes to this: All the things written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets, and in the Psalms have to be fulfilled.”

45-49He went on to open their understanding of the Word of God, showing them how to read their Bibles this way. He said, “You can see now how it is written that the Messiah suffers, rises from the dead on the third day, and then a total life-change through the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed in his name to all nations—starting from here, from Jerusalem! You’re the first to hear and see it. You’re the witnesses.

**Scripture:** I John 3: 1-7 (NIV)

3See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 3All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

4Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. 5But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. 6No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.

7Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

**Synopsis:** Sometimes we are unsure about our steps in this world. For the disciples, even “while in their joy” at seeing Jesus post-resurrection, they were still “disbelieving and wondering.” But 1 John reminds us that even though we may not know our next steps, we can be sure in them because we are “beloved” children of God and we will be like the one in whose steps we can surely follow – the resurrected Jesus.

**Felt need:** To understand that joy isn’t dependent on circumstances - and can even be apparent in uncertainties

**Visuals:**

**Hands-on item:**

**Activity:**

**Media possibilities:**

**Music:** *Lord of the Dance* (UMH 261); *He Lives* (UMH 310); *We Are Singing* (FWS 2235); [*Come and Join the Celebration*](http://www.carolynshymns.com/come_and_join_the_celebration.html) by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette (sung to the tune of “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”)

**Children’s time:** This week’s dreamer: Langston Hughes

**Social media:**

**Discussion points:**

* The Luke passage takes place after the walk to Emmaus. Some translations of Luke 24: 41 (like the NRSV) say, “Yet for all their joy they were still disbelieving and wondering…”
* Joy is not dependent on one’s circumstances.
* Who would you describe as joyful? Kim – Ellery (daughter), her 5-y-o students, the Goodburn boys, Lexi Kever. Irene – Miles (great grandson). Lots of people – Madonna Borgerding – she is a joy giver. Smiley people (like Betty’s son). Joyful people find the good in everything.
* Dave: Why does joy vaporize (for at least some people) as they age? On a related notes: Why can some people still sing in the rain? (Carole)
* Joy givers vs. joy suckers
* Paul sees joy and joyful people as a gift from God.

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**April 30, 2023:** “By this We Will Know: The Dance of Love” - Easter 4

**NOTE:** It’s possible that Pastor Mary will be leading Confirmation Camp this Sunday. If

so, she will find a colleague to fill in.

**Scripture:** John 10: 11-18 (MSG)

11-13“I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd puts the sheep before himself, sacrifices himself if necessary. A hired man is not a real shepherd. The sheep mean nothing to him. He sees a wolf come and runs for it, leaving the sheep to be ravaged and scattered by the wolf. He’s only in it for the money. The sheep don’t matter to him.

14-18“I am the Good Shepherd. I know my own sheep and my own sheep know me. In the same way, the Father knows me and I know the Father. I put the sheep before myself, sacrificing myself if necessary. You need to know that I have other sheep in addition to those in this pen. I need to gather and bring them, too. They’ll also recognize my voice. Then it will be one flock, one Shepherd. This is why the Father loves me: because I freely lay down my life. And so I am free to take it up again. No one takes it from me. I lay it down of my own free will. I have the right to lay it down; I also have the right to take it up again. I received this authority personally from my Father.”

**Scripture:** I John 3: 16-24 (NIV)

16This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. 17If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? 18Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

19This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence: 20If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. 21Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God 22and receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him. 23And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. 24The one who keeps God’s commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

**Synopsis:** How do we know the rhythm and dance of our lives is faithful? Drummer Mickey Hart, wrote: “To fall in love is to fall in rhythm.” It is love for each other by which we know we are followers of Jesus, the ever-attentive Shepherd. In the face of societal rules and attitudes that strive to foster “everyone for themselves,” they will know we are Christians by our love. How can we listen to the music that draws us together, “falling in rhythm” with our neighbor in order to build up the whole?

**Felt need:** To hear the call of Jesus to love as he loves us

**Visuals:**

**Hands-on item:**

**Activity:**

**Media possibilities:**

**Music:** “[Let All Creation Dance](https://www.hopepublishing.com/find-hymns-hw/hw2733.aspx)” by Brian Wren; *Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us* (UMH 381); [*Reckless Love*](https://songselect.ccli.com/Songs/7089641/reckless-love) by Corey Asbury; *They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love* (FWS 2223 - add “*we will dance with each other, we dance once again…”*)

**Children’s time:** This week’s dreamer – Greta Thunberg

**Social media:**

**Discussion points:**

* I John describes who Christ is and what he does **and** what we are called to do.
* *They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love* was written in 1968. The message has staying power, at least in part because it spells out how we show the love of Christ. Paul noted that it was written in the 1960s, when there was a good deal of divisiveness in the church. The song asks us to put aside our differences to find joy.
* *If I Had a Hammer* by Peter, Paul, and Mary also called for freedom and justice for all
* Examples of when we don’t see this kind of joy:
  + The Greensboro Baptist Church shooting
  + Clergy FB pages
  + News, social media. Think before responding or don’t respond at all.

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**May 7, 2023:** “From You Comes My Praise: Guide My Steps” - Easter 5

Children’s Sunday - **One service at 10:00 a.m.**

NOTE: We may modify Scripture readings based on further plans for Children’s Sunday.

**Scripture:** Acts 8: 26-40 (MSG)

26-28Later God’s angel spoke to Philip: “At noon today I want you to walk over to that desolate road that goes from Jerusalem down to Gaza.” He got up and went. He met an Ethiopian eunuch coming down the road. The eunuch had been on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and was returning to Ethiopia, where he was minister in charge of all the finances of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. He was riding in a chariot and reading the prophet Isaiah.

29-30The Spirit told Philip, “Climb into the chariot.” Running up alongside, Philip heard the eunuch reading Isaiah and asked, “Do you understand what you’re reading?”

31-33He answered, “How can I without some help?” and invited Philip into the chariot with him. The passage he was reading was this:

As a sheep led to slaughter,  
    and quiet as a lamb being sheared,  
He was silent, saying nothing.  
    He was mocked and put down, never got a fair trial.  
But who now can count his kin  
    since he’s been taken from the earth?

34-35The eunuch said, “Tell me, who is the prophet talking about: himself or some other?” Philip grabbed his chance. Using this passage as his text, he preached Jesus to him.

36-39As they continued down the road, they came to a stream of water. The eunuch said, “Here’s water. Why can’t I be baptized?” He ordered the chariot to stop. They both went down to the water, and Philip baptized him on the spot. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of God suddenly took Philip off, and that was the last the eunuch saw of him. But he didn’t mind. He had what he’d come for and went on down the road as happy as he could be.

40Philip showed up in Azotus and continued north, preaching the Message in all the villages along that route until he arrived at Caesarea.

**Scripture:** John 15: 1-8 (ICB)

15“I am the true vine; my Father is the gardener. 2He cuts off every branch of mine that does not produce fruit. And he trims and cleans every branch that produces fruit so that it will produce even more fruit. 3You are already clean because of the words I have spoken to you. 4Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can produce fruit alone. It must remain in the vine. It is the same with you. You cannot produce fruit alone. You must remain in me.

5“I am the vine, and you are the branches. If a person remains in me and I remain in him, then he produces much fruit. But without me he can do nothing. 6If anyone does not remain in me, then he is like a branch that is thrown away. That branch dies. People pick up dead branches, throw them into the fire, and burn them. 7Remain in me and follow my teachings. If you do this, then you can ask for anything you want, and it will be given to you. 8You should produce much fruit and show that you are my followers. This brings glory to my Father.

**Synopsis:** The Ethiopian says, “How can I understand unless someone guides me?” So, Philip begins to proclaim the good news of Jesus and the eunuch commands his chariot to stop so that he can go down to the water and be baptized. How has the testimony of the people in our lives and through the generations guided our steps into dances of praise at the good news that we are loved and blessed? What transformation is possible as we abide with God, the vine from which we find our sustenance?

**Felt need:** To celebrate how God uses all of us to guide one another and share Good News

**Visuals:** Use art projects in sanctuary

**Hands-on item:** kid/youth to design bulletin cover

**Activity:** acolytes, Holy Communion, Mission Team commissioning

**Media possibilities:**

* Reflection from Ross Park staff – Melissa Dolphin maybe?
* PPT slideshow of pictures
* Strathdee’s **Dance with the Spirit** and animals: <https://strathdeemusic.com/DanceSpiritIm.html> Length: 1:56. Cost: Free. Web license: Not sure. **Comments:** Love it!

**Music:** Piper Sroka playing *Jesus Loves Me* on piano while Maggie signs. Bells/sign language/singing from youngest class; *Jesus Loves Me* (UMH 191); *Gather Us In* (FWS 2236); *Guide My Feet* (FWS 2208); *Lead Me, Guide Me* (FWS 2214); *Here I Am, Lord* (UMH 593); *Testify to Love; Did You Feel the Mountains Tremble?*

**Children’s time:** This week’s dreamer – kids and youth, Scouting Sunday, thanks to Christian Ed leaders

**Social media:**

**Other notes:** have a family greet, kid/youth to share a God moment, kid/youth to lead prayers and read Scripture

**HS Youth Mission Team will serve breakfast after worship.**

**Discussion points:**

* Acts shows the importance of Christian education.
* Kids learn about Jesus from many people outside of Sunday morning offerings. Helpful illustration: A large container full of tennis balls can represent all of the time and opportunities for learning. A much smaller container of small object can represent the Sunday morning opportunities.
* John 15 is about staying connected to Jesus.
* Teachers and facilitators learn from their students and not just about the bible and faith. Parents play a role.
* The Booths’ grandson Luke described learning about the bible in Vacation Survival School. He told his sister, Julia, it was a very confusing book.
* Could we have the kids offer God moments?
* This might be a good day to ask, “Does joy vaporize as you get older?”

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**May 14, 2023:** “Who Can Withhold? Break Forth!” - Easter 6

Mother’s Day

**Scripture:** Psalm 98 (NIRV)

1Sing a new song to the Lord.  
    He has done wonderful things.  
By the power of his right hand and his holy arm  
    he has saved his people.  
2The Lord has made known his power to save.  
    He has shown the nations that he does what is right.  
3He has shown his faithful love  
    to the people of Israel.  
People from one end of the earth to the other  
    have seen that our God has saved us.

4Shout for joy to the Lord, everyone on earth.  
    Burst into joyful songs and make music.  
5Make music to the Lord with the harp.  
    Sing and make music with the harp.  
6Blow the trumpets. Give a blast on the ram’s horn.  
    Shout for joy to the Lord. He is the King.

7Let the ocean and everything in it roar.  
    Let the world and all who live in it shout.  
8Let the rivers clap their hands.  
    Let the mountains sing together with joy.  
9Let them sing to the Lord,  
    because he is coming to judge the earth.  
He will judge the nations of the world  
    in keeping with what is right and fair.

**Scripture:** John 15: 9, 11-15a (NRSV adapted)

Jesus said, “As God has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. 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.

**Scripture:** Acts 10: 44-48 (MSG)

44-46No sooner were these words out of Peter’s mouth than the Holy Spirit came on the listeners. The believing Jews who had come with Peter couldn’t believe it, couldn’t believe that the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out on “outsider” non-Jews, but there it was—they heard them speaking in tongues, heard them praising God.

46-48Then Peter said, “Do I hear any objections to baptizing these friends with water? They’ve received the Holy Spirit exactly as we did.” Hearing no objections, he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Then they asked Peter to stay on for a few days.

**Synopsis:** The Psalm describes everything in creation offering joyful noises to God. Our joy is complete because the joy of Christ resides within us. We cannot help but break forth. This joy is available to all, which is a realization for the community in Acts. The Holy Spirit finds its way even and especially in what feels like unlikely people and places. Where do we see the Spirit at work? In as many places as we look! And who can withhold the living water and our living praise? No one!

**Felt need:** To know the friendship of Jesus and to share it with others

**Visuals:**

**Hands-on item:** sweet treat (usually chocolate) for all women in the congregation

**Activity:** Special prayers for all experiences of mothering/being mothered. Lynne loves how all experiences of mothering are honored at Lake Harbor.

**Media possibilities:**

* Where the H\*\*\* is Matt? dancing videos <https://www.wheretheheckismatt.com/> Length: Various. Not sure if we can livestream them.
* “With You (I Feel Again).” Length: 3:54. Cost: Free with subscription. Web license. Probably not. The story follows an emotionally numb teen who discovers friendship and community in a surprising setting. <https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/46076/with-you-i-feel-again> **Comments:** We didn’t watch this together.

**Music:** *I Come with Joy* (UMH 617, v. 1,4,5); *A Place at the Table* (WS 3149); *The Trees of the Field* (FWS 2279)

**Children’s time:** This week’s dreamer – Amanda Gorman

**Social media:**

**Discussion points:**

* Acts 10 shows that God’s love is for everyone.
* Joy has to find an expression. What is it like growing up when joyful activities like dancing, playing card, and watching movies are forbidden because they were worldly, not godly? Paul said it wasn’t good. He had to go to church twice on Sundays and again Wednesday evening. He no longer had to follow those rules when he turned 18 and was glad.

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**May 21, 2023:** “Gone Up with a Shout: Clap Your Hands” - Easter 7

Ascension Sunday, Graduation Sunday

**Scripture:** Psalm 47 (NIV)

Clap your hands, all you nations;  
    shout to God with cries of joy.

2For the Lord Most High is awesome,  
    the great King over all the earth.  
3He subdued nations under us,  
    peoples under our feet.  
4He chose our inheritance for us,  
    the pride of Jacob, whom he loved.

5God has ascended amid shouts of joy,  
    the Lord amid the sounding of trumpets.  
6Sing praises to God, sing praises;  
    sing praises to our King, sing praises.  
7For God is the King of all the earth;  
    sing to him a psalm of praise.

8God reigns over the nations;  
    God is seated on his holy throne.  
9The nobles of the nations assemble  
    as the people of the God of Abraham,  
for the kings of the earth belong to God;  
    he is greatly exalted.

**Scripture:** Luke 24: 44-53 (MSG)

44Then he said, “Everything I told you while I was with you comes to this: All the things written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets, and in the Psalms have to be fulfilled.”

45-49He went on to open their understanding of the Word of God, showing them how to read their Bibles this way. He said, “You can see now how it is written that the Messiah suffers, rises from the dead on the third day, and then a total life-change through the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed in his name to all nations—starting from here, from Jerusalem! You’re the first to hear and see it. You’re the witnesses. What comes next is very important: I am sending what my Father promised to you, so stay here in the city until he arrives, until you’re equipped with power from on high.”

50-51He then led them out of the city over to Bethany. Raising his hands he blessed them, and while blessing them, made his exit, being carried up to heaven.

52-53And they were on their knees, worshiping him. They returned to Jerusalem bursting with joy. They spent all their time in the Temple praising God. Yes.

**Synopsis:** As Jesus prepares to leave the disciples, he opens their minds and blesses them. The result after he ascends is their return to Jerusalem with great joy and a desire for “continually” worshiping and blessing God in the temple. What happens when the “eyes of our hearts are enlightened?” We know the hope to which we have been called. As we wait for the Spirit with hope, we celebrate with abandon because we have no other ruler than the One who reign with love and justice.

**Felt need:** To receive the blessing of Jesus and worship him with our lives

**Visuals:** “[The Ascension](https://thejesusquestion.org/2012/03/31/jesus-the-dancer-part-8-conclusion/)”, 1983 oil painting by Bagong Kussudiardja

**Hands-on item:**

**Activity:**

**Media possibilities:**

**Music:** *He Is Exalted* (FWS 2070); *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty* (UMH 139); *I’ll Fly Away* (FWS 2282); *Crown Him with Many Crowns* (UMH 327); *Ancient of Days*

**Children’s time:** This week’s dreamer – Jesus, Recognize graduates

**Social media:**

**Discussion points:**

* The Ascension takes place forty days after Easter and ten days before Pentecost. Jesus explains who he is, why he had come, and what would happen (yet again) before blessing his disciples and ascending to heaven. The disciples worship him with abandon.
* The Ascension is an important piece of the story and one that Methodists haven’t always recognized/celebrated to the same extent as other denominations.
* It seems appropriate to honor our graduates today. Like the disciples, they are starting something new.
* Example of “bursting with joy”: Seeing Ellery and Charlie lead worship with Michael and Diane this past Sunday.

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**May 28, 2023:** “Spirit Poured Out: Dare to Dance Again” - Pentecost

Memorial Day weekend - **One service at 10:00 a.m.**

**Should we use an audio recording (like The Bible Experience) of one or both of these Scripture passages?**

**Scripture:** Ezekiel 37: 1-14 (NIRV)

37The power of the Lord came on me. His Spirit brought me away from my home. He put me down in the middle of a valley. It was full of bones. 2He led me back and forth among them. I saw a huge number of bones in the valley. The bones were very dry. 3The Lord asked me, “Son of man, can these bones live?”

I said, “Lord and King, you are the only one who knows.”

4Then he said to me, “Prophesy to these bones. Tell them, ‘Dry bones, listen to the Lord’s message. 5The Lord and King speaks to you. He says, “I will put breath in you. Then you will come to life again. 6I will attach tendons to you. I will put flesh on you. I will cover you with skin. So I will put breath in you. And you will come to life again. Then you will know that I am the Lord.” ’ ”

7So I prophesied just as the Lord commanded me to. As I was prophesying, I heard a noise. It was a rattling sound. The bones came together. One bone connected itself to another. 8I saw tendons and flesh appear on them. Skin covered them. But there was no breath in them.

9Then the Lord said to me, “Prophesy to the breath. Prophesy, son of man. Tell it, ‘The Lord and King says, “Breath, come from all four directions. Go into these people who have been killed. Then they can live.” ’ ” 10So I prophesied just as he commanded me to. And breath entered them. Then they came to life again. They stood up on their feet. They were like a huge army.

11Then the Lord said to me, “Son of man, these bones stand for all the people of Israel. The people say, ‘Our bones are dried up. We’ve lost all hope. We are destroyed.’ 12So prophesy. Tell them, ‘The Lord and King says, “My people, I am going to open up your graves. I am going to bring you out of them. I will take you back to the land of Israel. 13So I will open up your graves and bring you out of them. Then you will know that I am the Lord. You are my people. 14I will put my Spirit in you. And you will live again. I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I have spoken. I have done it,” announces the Lord.’ ”

**Scripture:** Acts 2: 1-21 (NIRV)

2 When the day of Pentecost came, all the believers gathered in one place. 2Suddenly a sound came from heaven. It was like a strong wind blowing. It filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3They saw something that looked like fire in the shape of tongues. The flames separated and came to rest on each of them. 4All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit. They began to speak in languages they had not known before. The Spirit gave them the ability to do this.

5Godly Jews from every country in the world were staying in Jerusalem. 6A crowd came together when they heard the sound. They were bewildered because each of them heard their own language being spoken. 7The crowd was really amazed. They asked, “Aren’t all these people who are speaking Galileans? 8Then why do we each hear them speaking in our own native language? 9We are Parthians, Medes and Elamites. We live in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia. We are from Pontus, Asia, 10Phrygia and Pamphylia. Others of us are from Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene. Still others are visitors from Rome. 11Some of the visitors are Jews. Others have accepted the Jewish faith. Also, Cretans and Arabs are here. We hear all these people speaking about God’s wonders in our own languages!” 12They were amazed and bewildered. They asked one another, “What does this mean?”

13But some people in the crowd made fun of the believers. “They’ve had too much wine!” they said.

14Then Peter stood up with the 11 apostles. In a loud voice he spoke to the crowd. “My fellow Jews,” he said, “let me explain this to you. All of you who live in Jerusalem, listen carefully to what I say. 15You think these people are drunk. But they aren’t. It’s only nine o’clock in the morning! 16No, here is what the prophet Joel meant. 17He said,

“ ‘In the last days, God says,  
    I will pour out my Holy Spirit on all people.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy.  
    Your young men will see visions.  
    Your old men will have dreams.  
18In those days, I will pour out my Spirit on my servants.  
    I will pour out my Spirit on both men and women.  
    When I do, they will prophesy.  
19I will show wonders in the heavens above.  
    I will show signs on the earth below.  
    There will be blood and fire and clouds of smoke.  
20The sun will become dark.  
    The moon will turn red like blood.  
    This will happen before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.  
21Everyone who calls  
    on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ ([Joel 2:28–32](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joel.2.28-Joel.2.32&version=NIRV))

**Synopsis:** Ezekiel has a vision of a valley full of bones receiving life, breath, sinew, and flesh after encountering the word of God. When they arise, they receive Spirit and they dance! As Easter people, we celebrate the Spirit that continues to give life and breath to our dry bones. We dare to dance in the face of fear, in the face of cynicism, in the face of despair. We dare to dance “as long as we live” for we, like the early Christians, are the recipients of the Spirit of God which intercedes even when we think we can’t make it to the dance floor. In hope we are saved!

**Felt need:** To believe in God’s Spirit and power to revive us and help us to move with faith and joy

**Visuals:**

**Hands-on item:**

**Activity:** Kim would like to teach the kids a dance. Lynne volunteered to make ribbons on a stick for the kids as part of the dance if they do something for Pentecost.

**Media possibilities:**

**Dance videos:** We would need to have live music, rather than a recording, if we plan on livestreaming any dances.

* “Song of Ezekiel (Dry Bones)” – Dance. Length: 6:40. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vt4cj1fXfeU>
* “Come Alive (Dry Bones)” – Lauren Daigle Drama. Length: 3:46. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0wle9IoKH4>
* “Come Alive (Dry Bones) Visual Sound Spring 2017.” Length: 4:04. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zv_DdlHnp0o>

**Music:***Breathe on Me, Breath of God* (UMH 420); *Go to the World* (WS 3158)*; Holy Spirit, You Are Welcome Here; Spirit Song; Sweet, Sweet Spirit; Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove; Pass It On; Let It Rise; Holy Spirit, Come to Us; The River Is Here*

**Children’s time:** This week’s dreamer - God

**Social media:**

**Discussion points:**

* Pentecost is a story of complete chaos. Examples of how we have portrayed it:
  + Leaf blowers shooting red toilet paper over people’s heads (2015)
  + Recordings of voices speaking in many different languages
  + Pulling long banners of fabric over the congregation
  + Kids running through the aisles waving ribbons on sticks
  + Red pinwheels for kids
  + Asking people to wear red, orange, or yellow clothes
  + Red, orange, and yellow fabric cascading from the cross, over the ledge, and onto the floor
  + Red candles on the altar
* The Spirit breathes life into dry bones in Ezekiel’s vision. Some of the dances, above, offer an interpretation of the story.