

Westminster Presbyterian Church

September 26th, 2021 | 10:00am

Live Streaming | In Person

Prayers by Rev. Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org



Prelude

Steve Johnson

Welcome

Rev. Dr. Len Hedges-Goettl

*Call to Worship

John Rotach & congregation

Here in this space,
We wear our hearts on our sleeves.
There is no use in filters or walls.
This space is an authentic space.

This space is a brave space.
For when it comes to God,
We are always invited to bring our full selves into the room.

So come into this space with your hurt and your joy,
Your prayers and your dreams.
All of God's children are welcome here.

Let us worship Holy God.

*Song of Praise

"For the Healing of the Nations" Glory to God # 346

For the healing of the nations, Lord, we pray with one accord;
for a just and equal sharing of the things that earth affords;
to a life of love in action help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead us forward into freedom; from despair your world release,
that, redeemed from war and hatred, all may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness fear will die and hope increase.

All that kills abundant living, let it from the earth be banned:
pride of status, race, or schooling, dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice may we hallow life's brief span.

You, Creator God, have written your great name on humankind;
for our growing in your likeness, bring the life of Christ to mind,
That by our response and service earth its destiny may find.

Call to Confession

John Rotach

When we gather together we are quick to wave and say hello, to pass the peace,
to comment on the weather, to make small talk and show hospitality;
but how often do we go below the surface? How often do we sit next to the same
people, week after week, oblivious to the things they might be carrying?
Family of faith, I believe God wants deeper connection for us than that,
so listen now to our prayer of confession and then join me in silent prayer
following. Let us listen. Let us pray:

Prayer of Confession | Truth Telling

John Rotach & congregation

I've been meaning to ask...

How are you?
What has your year been like?
Did you know that I have been thinking of you?

I have been meaning to ask...

Is your mom okay?
Did your sister find a job?
Did you ever think we'd still be here?

I've been meaning to ask...

Did it get easier?

Did the grief subside?

Were you ever able to sleep at night?

I've been meaning to ask but I haven't—

Because it's hard.

Because I want to say the right thing.

Because I'm not sure what you need.

I've been meaning to ask, so I'm sorry for my silence.

Forgive me. Show me where it hurts.

Let's start again.

Family of faith, we could all use some practice in asking where it hurts.

Take a moment of silent prayer to think of the people in your world,

in your lives, who may need you to reach out and ask. Give their names to God.

Pause for silent prayer.

Trusting that God hears all things, we say together: Amen.

Words of forgiveness

John Rotach & congregation

Family of faith, in the journey to love and care for one another,

we are bound to make mistakes. Fortunately for us, we worship a God who

showed us how to love, and who extends grace to us when we fail to do so for

others.

So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

We are seen. We are heard. We are loved. We are forgiven.

Thanks be to God for this endless grace. Amen.

Children's Message "Who is with Me?"

Rev. Dr. Len Hedges-Goettl

Prayer for Illumination

John Rotach

Holy God,

Today we will read stories of those who have known hurt—

people who have carried shame,

who have lived with grief and chronic illness,

who have felt alone and ignored,

who have seen the depths of suffering.

As we listen, we will be reminded of

the hurt we have carried during these fragile days—

memories and regrets co-mingling in our chests.

And as we listen, we will be reminded

that our neighbors, our siblings in faith,

also come to this space carrying burdens.

So dust off our ears and stretch open the

canvases of our hearts so that in our pain,

we might lean into one another as we lean into you.

Pull us close.

We are listening.

Amen.

Scripture Reading

Mark 5:21-43

Rev. Dr. Len Hedges-Goettl

When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered around him: and he was by the sea. Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet and begged him repeatedly "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live." So he went with him.

And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. Now there was a woman Who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years.. She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse.

She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, for she said "If I touch his clothes, I will be made well." Immediately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease.

Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?" And his disciples said to him. "You see the crowd pressing in on you: How can you say, "Who touched me?" He looked all around to see who had done it.

But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well, go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader's house to say, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?" But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe."

He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. When he had entered, he said to them, "Why do you make a commotion and weep?" The child is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. Then he put them all outside, and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talithacum," which means, "Little girl, get up!" And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (She was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement. He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon "Take A Risk"

Rev. Dr. Len Hedges-Goettl

***Affirmation of Faith**

John Rotach & congregation

On my best days,
I believe that God is there—standing in the sun with me,
laughing a contagious laugh and cheering me on.
On my hardest days,
I believe that God is there—standing in the rain with me,
holding me up and sharing in my grief.
No matter where I go—
in joy or in loss,
in pain or in love,
in heartache or in gratitude—
I believe that God is there,
leaning in, noticing where it hurts,
and carrying me through it.

And so, I believe we are called
to care for each other
as God cares for us.
On your best days in the sun
and on your worst days in the rain,
I will do my best
to be there for you too. Amen.

Invitation to the Offering

John Rotach

Family of faith, it does not take long to look around the world and point out places of pain and suffering. This year has been hard for so many, but I do not believe that that pain will be the last word. Each week in our worship service you are invited to give to the mission and ministry of this church.

When you give, you are not only supporting this congregation, but you are offering care to the broader community—leaning in, asking the hard questions, choosing connection, choosing generosity. It is these small acts of care, connection, and love that in time, can help heal the hurt in the world.

So friends, I've been meaning to ask... will you give your offering now?

Let us give with grateful hearts.

Holy God,
I know, I know, that you hear our prayers.
You are the God of hospital rooms and graveside services.
You are the God who felt a touch in a crowd.
You are the God who sees and knows all pain—
infertility and illness, despair and death.
You are the God of the hurt and the healing, so I know—
I know, you must hear us today.
So with open hearts and open palms, gracious God,
we come to you with our joy and our pain.
With joy, we give you thanks for all the blessings in our lives...
For friends and neighbors, for sunny days, for beautiful birds, and butterflies, for
family get-togethers, for the sound of children laughing, for doctors, nurses, and
other frontline workers, for time to connect with one another, for time alone, for
hope, for peace, for grace, for love.

We have so much to be thankful for, and we know that you are part of all of that.
And yet in that same breath, we also carry pain. Like Hannah in the temple, who
brought you her prayer, we desperately need your ears, your grace, your healing
touch. So today we lift up to you all the hurt and pain we carry.
For those who suffer from Covid and other illnesses; for empty sanctuaries that
long to be filled, for parents who seek answers on how to guide their children,
for those affected by natural disasters, for all who grieve, for all who are sick, for
the children . . . We lift these things to you.
Holy God, we know, we know, that you are listening.
We know, we know, that you are here,
For you are the God of hospital rooms and graveside services.
Be among us. Hold our hurt.
Heal our wounds.
Draw us closer to one another, and closer to you.
For Holy Communion: Pour out a double portion of your Spirit on this bread and
cup, so that these
ordinary things might tether our hearts to you.

With the hope of people who dream,
we pray to you the prayer you taught us, saying...

The Lord's Prayer

***Closing Song**

"A Covenant of Grace"

We all come from the dusty earth
And from the places of our birth
Ancestral stories who we'll be
We bring it all to come and see.
We all have wounds that no one sees
Oppression trauma, and disease
When we bear witness to the pain
It can begin to heal again.

We all need people who will be
With us in solidarity
No explanation, no defense
Just ministry of their presence.

Surprised by God's unbounded love
From many walks of life we come
To build a covenant of grace
And in our differences embrace.

(Tune: O Waly Waly - The river is Wide)

***Benediction**

Family of faith,
as you leave this place, may God grant you
the curiosity to counter assumptions,
the vulnerability to befriend,
the bravery to speak your truth,
the wisdom to listen,

Rev. Dr. Len Hedges-Goettl

the strength to ask for help,
the resiliency to chose love, even when it's hard,
and the awareness of the Holy Spirit always beside you.
In the name of the Great Connector—Love itself,
go in peace.

Postlude

Steve Johnson

Thank you to those involved in worship today:

Pastor Rev. Dr. Len Hedges-Goettl
Ushers: Adele Trout & Nancy Tompkins
Liturgist: John Rotach
Musicians: Steve Johnson & Choir
Preacher: Rev. Dr. Len Hedges-Goettl

Remember in Prayer

*Pray for all those
touched recently by violence and natural disasters, the healing of national
hostility and mistrust, efforts to feed the poor and provide shelter for the
homeless in our area, and the following people:*

Rev. Innocent Mabuza, Bishop of some churches in Swaziland and friend of **John Hawkins**, is seriously ill.

Ed Carter (102) is under hospice care in the skilled nursing unit at The Moorings. He is comfortable and appreciates our prayers . There are no visitors at this time.

Linda Book continues her battle with multiple myeloma cancer.

Chuck Burton, extended family of **Lois Rayner**, is dealing with issues related to cancer.

Pauline Cottingham is doing well, despite the general decline in her health.

Peter Culin, **Sue Culin's brother-in-law**, is undergoing chemotherapy.

Carol Geiger, cousin of Charlotte Jacobs and John Still, is struggling to heal and recover mobility following a fall that left her with 100 stitches to her face, a concussion and cracked bones on the left side of her face.

Rob Harkins, son of Bob and Claudene Harkins, is fighting a serious, resistant foot infection. Bob and Claudene have returned to Florida to support him.

Bill Hrin fell on August 25th, fractured his knee- cap, he is ambulating with difficulty, using a walker.

Sandra Hrin is home and recovering from surgery, but is still dealing with back pain. We keep Sandra and Bill in our prayers.

Clare MacDonald reports that her son-in-law, **Jay Carlson,** who suffered a blood clot in his head, has returned to work on a part-time basis and is gradually improving. She requests our continued prayers for him and his young family.

Lib Macnab was released from hospital and is home and much improved. Her daughter, who I believe was in Spain, is here now and with her. Lib and her family and caregivers also remain in our prayers.

Lacey Meade, Betty Pratt's daughter, completed her last round of chemotherapy.

Betty Pratt is feeling better, though she has some memory issues.

Greg Solt, friend of Karen and Glenn Dixon, is battling pancreatic and liver cancer.

Janet Waugaman, Sally Waugaman's daughter, continues to lose mobility due to Multiple System Atrophy.

Our church has a prayer chain of members who will pray for any person you ask. Contact Leslie Marsh by phone at 302-542-9927 or email at cmarshjr@verizon.net

Westminster Presbyterian Church

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