



**Worship Celebration**  
**March 12, 2023**

*Twin Towers United Methodist Church*  
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## **WORSHIP GUIDE**

*Before you begin your time of worship, find a comfortable place to be and gather whatever you might need: your Bible, something to write on and with, your computer/connected device (if you intend to listen to music online), etc. Feel free to adapt this worship guide in any way that makes best sense to you and those you might be gathered with. (Consider inviting someone – a friend, a family member – to worship with you.) Commit to spending the next hour with God.*

**PRELUDE** – Listen and sing along to a song or hymn that blesses and centers your spirit!

**OPENING HYMN** – “Breathe on Me, Breath of God”

UMH #420

*Listen [here](#) for a gift featuring Lucca, Anne, Brian, Rod and those in the building.*

**OPENING PRAYER** - Listen [here](#) for the Opening Prayer led by Rod.

Let us join our hearts and spirits in prayer.

God of love, we are tempted by many things, many urges, voices and powers.

Help us listen to you, trust you and serve you. As we hear your Word, we return to you.

Help us always to return to you, in the Spirit and the company of Christ.

Amen.

**SCRIPTURE READING** – Philippians 4:8-9 (NRSV) led by Rod.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

**LISTEN – Sermon**– *You can listen to the sermon from Deacon Judith [here](#).*

Lent is a 40 day season, not counting Sundays, marked by repentance, fasting, reflection, service, and ultimate celebration at Easter. My topic today is about the reflection aspect of Lent. As you reflect on your life, what is your spiritual legacy? We can only articulate this by reflection on our lives, on our lives in God, in the spirit, in Jesus Christ, and in our relationships with others, perhaps especially those in our church. The story of your past, present, and even future with the divine, with other people, with scripture, with your own ethics and morality is your sacred story. As you reflect on these aspects of your life, your sacred story becomes a special gift to share with your loved ones and your church.

A spiritual legacy gives you a chance to leave behind non physical things such as wisdom and memories. Questions of the heart and soul become dominant as we age. We ask, what is my meaning in life? Have I fulfilled my purpose? For what will I be remembered? Billy Graham said, the greatest legacy we can pass on to our children and grandchildren is a legacy of character and faith. In Galatians 6 verse 9, we read, so let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. Working on your spiritual legacy is like reaping at harvest time. It is the result of a life of thinking and acting in certain ways.

In Philippians 4 verses 8 and 9, we hear, "...whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you." In a written spiritual legacy, you are telling others about your thoughts and actions over time. Hopefully, this will be a blessing for you and your loved ones and the God of peace will be with you.

There are ways to leave a track record of your legacy of beliefs and actions of faith as relates to loving God, neighbor, and self. Psalm 37 verses 30 through 31 says "The mouths of the righteous utter wisdom, and their tongues speak Justice. The law of their God is in their hearts; their steps do not slip." With the spiritual legacy, you are showing what is written in your heart: Your history, life lessons and achievements, values and beliefs, and hopes for the future. Cesar Chavez said, "True wealth is not measured in dollars or status or power. It is measured in the legacy we leave behind for those we love and those we inspire." In other words, you leave what is in your heart.

And another Bible verse related to legacy: Deuteronomy 4 verse 9 says "... take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children." A written spiritual legacy helps you make known the important God events that your eyes have seen. This is what psalm 78 verse 4 states also: "We will tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders God has done." Clearly, from these scriptures, thinking about and sharing our spiritual legacy is something God wants us to do!

There's a whole outline of steps you can go through to discern your spiritual legacy, but there are also by-products of your spiritual life that can give people an idea of your beliefs, faith, and values:

1. Notes you've written in your Bible or books you've read. How many of you have a favorite Bible? I have a lot of Bibles, and some of them are heavily marked. If you don't like to write in your Bible, mark beloved passages with post it notes.
2. Journals are another by-product of your spiritual life. I used to have drawers full of journals, but in my downsizing, most of them have disappeared. However, I do have my daily prayer journal and that is a useful guide to what is on my heart.
3. Letters you've written to others, especially your children and grandchildren. I still have letters from my childhood girlfriend who was also a spiritual friend. We used to... We continue to write letters back-and-forth even in our old age. I do keep these as they are precious to me. Of

course, these days we send and receive texts and emails and some of those are worth saving for sure, as part of the track record of your spiritual life.

4. Stories, poems, and artwork that demonstrate your God-given gifts as well as your faith. I have recently taken up acrylic painting.
5. Scrapbooks or mementos highlighting how God has worked in your life. I have one of these and in it I put prayers and meditations I've read and liked. I bet you have a stack of such favorite items, too.
- 6 - memorial service plans. The hymns and prayers that you choose and memories you would like to have shared are part of your sacred story. These are all clues that help you write your spiritual legacy.

As I've said, there are actual steps you can go through as you work on a spiritual legacy in writing, but 1st there are some process pointers that might be helpful.

1. Spend time with God in Bible study. Using a daily devotional such as the Upper Room gives you a good start to the day, especially if you look up the Bible verses they suggest.
2. Pray without ceasing, or at least ATTEMPT it, including the Lord's prayer and praying for the spiritual and physical needs of loved ones.
3. Practice what you preach. Now, we're not all preachers, but we are talkers, and we should be mindful of how what we say might be perceived by others. What we say is part of our spiritual legacy.
4. Practice forgiveness, as you have prayed in the Lord's prayer.
5. Experience yourself as a forgiven person. In other words, write about your feelings as a forgiven person. What does Jesus mean to you?
6. Take care of yourself, in the sense of loving your neighbor as yourself. We ARE meant to care for and love ourselves. This doesn't mean being self centered or selfish.
7. When you see a beautiful sunset or sunrise, lake, ocean, or mountain, point it out to your loved ones as revelations of the creator. I remember how when I was a child, my mother used to sing hymns as we drove cross country which called to our attention the beauty of the earth. This made a lasting impression on me and is part of her spiritual legacy to me.
8. Consider having a spiritual director or a spiritual companion with whom you can share your experience of God and prayer. This is a very common practice in the Roman Catholic faith, but its been a little slow in catching on with Protestants, even though John Wesley talked about spiritual conferencing as an important means of grace. If you are interested in having a spiritual director, there is a website you can go to locate one, Spiritual Directors International.
9. Talk about and work toward justice with your loved ones following Micah 6 verse 8, do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God. Have family discussions about injustice in today's world and the God-given inherent value of all people.
10. Foster an attitude of gratitude. Carve out time to recount God's wondrous works. You might even write a poem about it, like this one by James Dillet Freeman....

“Do you need Me ?

I am there.

You cannot see Me, yet I am the light you see by.

You cannot hear Me, yet I speak through your voice.  
You cannot feel Me, yet I am the power at work in your hands.  
I am at work, though you do not understand My ways.  
I am at work, though you do not understand My works.  
I am not strange visions. I am not mysteries.  
Only in absolute stillness, beyond self, can you know Me  
as I AM, and then but as a feeling and a faith.  
Yet I am here. Yet I hear. Yet I answer.  
When you need ME, I am there.  
Even if you deny Me, I am there.  
Even when you feel most alone, I am there.  
Even in your fears, I am there.  
Even in your pain, I am there.  
I am there when you pray and when you do not pray.  
I am in you, and you are in Me.  
Only in your mind can you feel separate from Me, for  
only in your mind are the mists of "yours" and "mine".  
Yet only with your mind can you know Me and experience Me.  
Empty your heart of empty fears.  
When you get yourself out of the way, I am there.  
You can of yourself do nothing, but I can do all.  
And I AM in all.

Though you may not see the good, good is there, for  
I am there. I am there because I have to be, because I AM.  
Only in Me does the world have meaning;  
only out of Me does the world take form; only because of ME does the world go  
forward.

I am the law on which the movement of the stars  
and the growth of living cells are founded.  
I am the love that is the law's fulfilling. I am assurance.  
I am peace. I am oneness. I am the law that you can live by.  
I am the love that you can cling to. I am your assurance.  
I am your peace. I am ONE with you. I am.  
Though you fail to find ME, I do not fail you.  
Though your faith in Me is unsure, My faith in you never  
wavers, because I know you, because I love you.  
Beloved, I am there.”

11. Talk with loved ones about the gifts and talents God has given them. I treasure the letters loved ones have given me, thanking me for certain talents I have used.

12. Periodically do a spiritual checkup. Share your struggles and high points with a small group or spiritual director or companion.
13. Do works of service in the community. Many of us here...
14. Share how you came to faith, how God continues to make a difference in your daily life. What were you taught by your ancestors?
15. Think about the role of your community of faith in your spiritual journey. What has this church meant to you? This is a long list of processes and actions, actually spiritual practices, that can greatly aid in writing your spiritual legacy.

So what are the actual steps in writing your spiritual legacy? 1st, you write an opening - for instance, you say, I write this to you my blank, naming the people, in order to blank, and you explain what your purpose is in writing. For example, I write this to my niece Debbie and my best friends, in order that you might know how much you have meant to me and what values, beliefs, and spiritual practices have been important to me. 2nd, you write your history, past and present, including your parents, siblings, ancestors, events that helped shape your family, people who strongly influenced your life, events that helped shape your life, things you are grateful for and things you have loved and love to do. That also includes roles you've played in your life, perhaps especially in your church. 3rd, you write down your personal values and beliefs, specific teachings from spiritual, ethical or religious sources that have influenced you the most. Also include rituals that are important to you. I started here on my spiritual legacy and got kind of sidetracked by all I wanted to write down. This might not be a good place to start. 4th, you write your life lessons and main achievements, your ethical ideals and practices that found expression in your life. 5th, you write down your hopes for the future, suggestions you'd like to pass on. And 6th, you write a closing, with wishes, hopes, and dreams for others. Include messages to loved ones, blessings, deeds for which you need forgiveness, how you want to be remembered, and what you wish you'd known at an earlier age.

This is a lot of input, I know. And I hope that we have a chance to do a class on this sometime in the future when we can follow the steps and share some of what we have learned and what we have written with each other over time. Most of all I hope and pray that the process of thinking about and writing your spiritual legacy will be a blessing for you and for your loved ones. May this time of reflection give you God's peace as you let your loved ones know what have been the guiding principles of your life and what your hopes for them are. Amen

**HYMN of RESPONSE** – “Remember Me”

UMH #488

Listen [here](#) for a gift featuring Lucca, Anne, Brian, and those in the building.

**PRAYERS of the PEOPLE** – *Spend time in prayer. What did you hear for yourself through today's scripture and reflection? Talk to God about it. Then lift up the joys and concerns that are in your heart. You might write them down, speak them aloud, or pray for them in silence.*

*We would be honored to pray with you and for you.*

*Please send a note via text, mail, or email or give a call to our Healing Prayer Team.*

## SHARING OUR GIFTS

*How might you offer yourself and all that you have to God this week? How are you being invited to practice generosity? Spend a moment listening for God's direction.*

*You are invited to contribute financially towards the purpose and ministry of TTUMC. We are a congregation committed to being conduits of God's healing in our neighborhood and beyond, and in so doing, impact the last and the least. You can contribute by mailing in a check, dropping off cash, or giving online (visit [www.twintowersumc.org](http://www.twintowersumc.org)).*

## CLOSING HYMN – “Be Thou My Vision”

UMH #451

*Listen [here](#) for a gift featuring Lucca, Anne, Brian, and those in the building.*

## BENEDICTION

## NOW GO AND PASS CHRIST'S PEACE!

### **Please make note of the following updates and invitations:**

**Lenten 40-Day Reading Plan on the Gospel of Luke** – Please continue reading the reading the Gospel of Luke as part of your Lenten practice this year which each Sunday's message will be based, as well as the book study. The 40-day Gospel of Luke reading plan is available [here](#).

**Lenten Time of Prayer Beginning on Wednesdays** – During Lent you're invited to join P. Akesa on Wednesdays between 12:15 and 12:45 p.m. to connect and pray via Zoom by clicking [here](#). If you have challenges with the above link, here are the Zoom log-in details:

*Meeting ID: 827 9929 9325*

*Passcode: Prayer*

**“Healing the Sick” book study** – You are invited to join the Healing Prayer Team on a book study of the book *Healing the Sick* by Alex and Hannah Absalom that will begin Thursday, March 30, at 6:30 p.m. and held every Thursday via Zoom facilitated by Jen Tellier and Deacon Judith Pruess-Mellow. The book will introduce not only how to pray for healing in real-life situations, but also how to respond with love and wisdom when there is both success and disappointment. Please register by clicking [here](#) to receive the Zoom details and order your book.

**Sign-up for Refreshments After Sunday Morning Worship** – Those of you who attend worship service in person are invited to please stop by for a cup of coffee and fellowship in the Wesley Room after Sunday services around 10:30ish. Brian has prepared and posted a sign-up sheet if you'd like to bring a favorite refreshment to share with others during our time of fellowship. Please click [here](#) to see where the sign-up sheet is posted in the Wesley Room. Thank you!

**Dine & Connect on Monday, 4/3/23** – Volunteers needed on Monday, 4/3/23, 12pm-3pm Cooking & Plating; 4pm-5:30pm Serving & Cleaning Up. We serve the first Monday of each month, where we will be preparing and serving 150 dinners. If you can help on 4/3/2023, please click [here](#) for more information and please sign up.

**Midway Shelter Needs Our Help** – We support Midway Shelter, the only women and children shelter operating in Alameda, by providing 30 meals twice a month (2nd Tuesday and 4th Wednesday of each month). Donors can participate as financial donors or as meal preparers. To participate, please complete the information by clicking [here](#) and we will contact you. We can really use more help with this critical ministry. Thank you!

**Alameda Warming Shelter** – The shelter is currently open 7 nights—and days—a week through April 2023 and need volunteers in two areas. First, to staff days in two shifts: 8 am – 12 pm and 12 – 4 pm; with 2 people per shift. There is coverage for evenings and nights (by paid staff from the Housing Coalition of the East Bay and the Village of Love). Second area where help is needed is by providing dinners and breakfasts. If you are able to volunteer for either of the shifts available through the end of March 2023, please sign-up by clicking [here](#). If you would like to provide dinners or breakfasts, please sign-up by clicking [here](#). The Warming Shelter is hosted at Christ Episcopal, 1700 Santa Clara Ave., Alameda., entering via the parking lot on Grand Street. To learn more, contact 510-832-1382 x123, [warmingcenter@hceb.org](mailto:warmingcenter@hceb.org), or Christ Church at [stephen@christchurchalameda.org](mailto:stephen@christchurchalameda.org).

**Need help with groceries** – If you or you know of anyone who needs help with groceries once a week or once a month, the Alameda Food Bank has a Community Market available for individuals who live or work in the City of Alameda. Please click [here](#) for the QR code and for more information.