

10-05-2025 Words of Worship

Good morning! Welcome to each one here this morning – especially visitors or those who haven't been here for a long time; it's good to be together on this beautiful fall morning!

A special welcome to Sheri Ellwood. Sheri comes to us from near Little River – now, I know they're one of our sports rivals, but please don't hold that against her! She lives out there with her husband Scott and their two daughters who are both enrolled at KSU. Sheri is a former Lutheran pastor; she has an MDiv from Luther Seminary and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Social Work from KSU. She's also the Livestock Manager for her family's farm as well as being the Development Coordinator for Kansas InterFaith Action. So, Sheri, amongst the many, many hats that you wear, we're so glad you're here with your preaching hat on this morning! And you're welcome to take it off and exchange it for your Kansas InterFaith Action Hat too!

What are the **opportunities** for celebration and service that you have to share with one another?

- Some of you, by now, have seen Jim Klassen's column in the Anabaptist World in which he wrote about some of his peacemaking work in Viet Nam and other places. At the end of that column, he listed several things and places in which he currently finds hope. In the midst of our current difficult news cycle it can seem pretty hopeless sometimes. Brian Stucky was particularly inspired by Jim's hope list and suggested we have a place here at church where we can post the things that give us hope – wonderful idea! So, at the back of the sanctuary, on the window of the old sound closet, Jim's article is posted and there are lots of post-it notes and pens on the table. Please jot down your sources of hopefulness and stick them up on the window so that we can all read and share, inspire and encourage one another! We'll leave this up for at least a couple weeks, so feel free to join in!

Let's read together our Call to Worship taken from Psalm 95 – these familiar, comforting and hopeful words:

Prayer – Creator God, we are humbled at the thought that you have made all that is and yet you are right here with us, having promised never to leave us. Move among us with your Holy Spirit. Nudge us, inspire us, convict us, love us and challenge us. For we are your people and you are our God, our rock. Amen.

Prayer of Commissioning – (Jared and Laura come and join me, please)

Several weeks ago, Laura and Jared let me know that they had been feeling called to the possibility of starting a new SS class. Inspired and encouraged by the time that Cindy and Gene Hastings had invested in the young adults when Jared was one, they wanted to offer something like that now. The class that they've been part of that meets in the Foundation Room has blessed and encouraged them, offering to support and help this new class when they can. That class will now be called the Foundation Fellowship class and this new group will meet in the Conference Room and simply be called the Young Adult class. We wanted the congregation to be aware of this and to be sure to invite anyone you might think of to attend. With this new endeavor, we

wanted to offer Jared and Laura a prayer of blessing and commissioning. VT 968, but your response after each line is Amen!

May God, who calls you to this ministry, grant you grace, joy and endurance.

Amen!

May Christ guide and empower you for service and leadership.

Amen!

May the Holy Spirit fill you with the gifts you need.

Amen!

May the One whose love unites us as the body of Christ strengthen us to live and proclaim the gospel together.

Amen!

Morning Prayer –

Gracious God, we thank you for this Sabbath day, for the opportunity to gather as your people to worship you, to fellowship, to learn and grow in our faith.

We thank you for your presence with us through all the passages of life. Thank you for the wedding of Kara and Adrian yesterday, for the commitment they made to one another and the joy shared with family and friends at their wedding celebration. We ask for your blessings on this new chapter of life for them.

God we thank you for the successful surgery that Mary had a couple weeks ago and the recovery that she's experienced since then. We ask for your continued healing for her. We continue to keep Steve and Sandy in our prayers, O God. Be a constant comfort to them as the cancer continues to take its course and they continue to be faithful and steadfast to you in this vigil. Uphold them with your love and care, God.

We thank you for the life of Phyllis Nickel and we pray for her family as they grieve her loss and celebrate her life.

We ask for your mercy and comfort, God, for others who are grieving losses – there are so many in this life and in this world. We have prayed for the Palestinians... and there are the Sudanese and the Somalis, the Ukrainians, and the Congolese. There is violence being done to immigrants and peaceful protestors. And there are more fatal shootings in our nation than we can keep track of. O Lord, may the peace of Jesus finally find its way into the hearts of humanity and prevail.

We are grateful, God, for organizations and the people within them who do your good work of advocacy and relief. Thank you for Kansas InterFaith Action, Mennonite Central Committee, the International Rescue Committee and others who work to bring good news and badly needed supplies.

We thank you, God, for this harvest time, for its beauty and bounty. We pray for your blessing and safety as the farmers and their crews are working long hours on little sleep, driving equipment from field to field on busy roads when everyone seems to be in a hurry. Help us all to breathe deeply, slow down, and be grateful and safe.

And help us to remember and live the words of the prayer that Jesus taught us, as we pray it together... Our Father, who art in heaven...

We'll worship God now by **offering** our gifts and tithes. (During the offering, we'll see some photos of the various ways we worshipped through service last Sunday at our "Love Your Community" day – thanks to Judy Goertzen for putting these pictures together!)

Offering Prayer – Thank you God, for these financial gifts that have been given. Everything we have comes from you; this money is a token of our gratitude, given back to you to be used through the Church for ministry and to your glory. Bless these gifts and all the gifts that you've given us – gifts of time, talent, energy and passion. Amen.

Benediction – The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. Amen.