

# MYC ALPHA 2015 WORSHIP RESOURCES

## **MONDAY**

**Theme:** Our Stories Are Unique

**a.k.a.:** YOU MATTER - *Jacob wrestles with God (Genesis 32:22-32)*

### **Opening Sentence (JP)**

*“Let us open our hearts and quiet our minds to worship the Living God.”*

*As we prepare to hear God’s word to us tonight, let us pray:*

Gracious and Loving God,  
Elevate our minds to meet yours.  
Align our hearts to be yours.  
And open our spirits to feel yours.

**Processional** *including offering of children’s books*

### **Music**

1. Awake My Soul
2. Come, Now is the Time to Worship
3. Be Thou My Vision

### **Call to Worship (JP)**

*“Please stand and join me in the invitation to worship”*

One: We gather together full of hope and expectation,

**All: for a week of rest and rejuvenation,**

One: for an opportunity to connect with friends new and old,

**All: and to connect with the God of grace who is alive and at work.**

One: May we open ourselves to God’s Spirit.

**All: May we open ourselves to God’s radical love.**

*“Let us worship God together.”*

### **Call to Confession (JP)**

“We trust in a God who knows us more intimately than we could ever imagine. This God - the author of our lives - knows our hearts. God knows every part of our story, including the profound mistakes that we make. In confession, we have the opportunity to reveal our true selves and to come clean before God and our neighbors. With hope, let us confess our sins together, saying...”

### **Prayer of Confession (JP led) (JP + congregation)**

**All: God of love, you know us fully.  
You know our every gift, and you know our every flaw.  
You know when we succeed, and you know when we stumble.  
You crafted our lives with purpose and gave each of us a voice.  
By your grace, you have named us and claimed us as your own.  
Forgive the ways that we stray from your path.  
We are constantly distracted by our own struggles.  
Focused on ourselves, we tune out your great story.  
Help us to mirror your love rather than our own mess.  
We pray these things in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior.  
Amen.**

### **Assurance of Pardon (JP)**

“The God of grace who knows us intimately, never gives up on us. The Bible teaches us that when we confess our sin, our gracious and loving God sets us free from it. Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel: in Jesus Christ we are loved and we are forgiven.

### **Music - *All in All***

### **Passing of the Peace (JP)**

Friends, we are forgiven! Having received the peace of Christ, let us share that peace with one another.

One: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

### **Prayer for illumination (Eric, Jill, and Alana)**

*“Listen to the Word”*

### **Scripture Reading (JP)**

“Tonight we are going to hear a story about a man who wrestled with God. Most of us in this room are already familiar with what it means to wrestle. In worship, we are reminded that in the midst of our struggle, God is with us and is closer than we could ever imagine.

**Narrator**

*“Listen for the word of God: Genesis chapter 32, verses 3 through 32:”*

Jacob sent messengers on ahead to his brother Esau in the land of Seir in Edom. He instructed them:

**Jacob:**

“Tell my master Esau this, ‘A message from your servant Jacob: I’ve been staying with Laban and couldn’t get away until now. I’ve acquired cattle and donkeys and sheep; also men and women servants. I’m telling you all this, my master, hoping for your approval.’”

**Narrator:**

The messengers came back to Jacob and said, “We talked to your brother Esau and he’s on his way to meet you. But he has four hundred men with him.”

Jacob was scared. Very scared. Panicked, he divided his people, sheep, cattle, and camels into two camps. He thought,

**Jacob:**

“If Esau comes on the first camp and attacks it, the other camp has a chance to get away.”

[*praying*] Oh, God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, GOD who told me, ‘Go back to your parents’ homeland and I’ll treat you well.’ I don’t deserve all the love and loyalty you’ve shown me. When I left here and crossed the Jordan I only had the clothes on my back, and now look at me—two camps! Save me, please, from the violence of my brother, my angry brother! I’m afraid he’ll come and attack us all, me, the mothers and the children. You yourself said, ‘I will treat you well; I’ll make your descendants like the sands of the sea, far too many to count.’”

**Narrator:**

So he slept the night there. Then he prepared a present for his brother Esau from his possessions: two hundred female goats, twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty camels with their nursing young, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. He put a servant in charge of each herd and said,

**Jacob:**

“Go ahead of me and keep a healthy space between each herd.”

“When my brother Esau comes close and asks, ‘Who is your master? Where are you going? Who owns these?’—answer him like this, ‘Your servant Jacob. They are a gift to my master Esau. He’s on his way.’”

**Narrator:**

He gave the same instructions to the second servant and to the third—to each in turn as they set out with their herds:

**Jacob:**

Say 'Your servant Jacob is on his way behind us.'"

[To himself] "I will soften him up with the succession of gifts. Then when he sees me face-to-face, maybe he'll be glad to welcome me."

**Narrator:**

So his gifts went before him while he settled down for the night in the camp.

But during the night he got up and took his two wives, his two maidservants, and his eleven children and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He got them safely across the brook along with all his possessions.

But Jacob stayed behind by himself, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he couldn't get the best of Jacob as they wrestled, he deliberately threw Jacob's hip out of joint.

The man said:

**The Man:**

"Let me go; it's daybreak."

**Jacob:**

"I'm not letting you go 'til you bless me."

**The Man:**

"What's your name?"

**Jacob:**

"Jacob."

**The Man:**

"But no longer. Your name is no longer Jacob. From now on it's Israel; you've wrestled with God and you've come through."

**Jacob:**

"And what's your name?"

**The Man:**

"Why do you want to know my name?"

**Narrator:**

And then, right then and there, he blessed him.

Jacob named the place Peniel (which means God's Face) because, he said, "I saw God face-to-face and lived to tell the story!"

The sun came up as he left Peniel, limping because of his hip. (This is why Israelites to this day don't eat the hip muscle; because Jacob's hip was thrown out of joint.

The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## **Music (Theme Song)**

*"Let Our Story Unfold"*

## **Sermon**

## **Music**

*Your Grace is Enough*

## **Affirmation of Faith**

### **Introduction to the Affirmation of Faith (in song): (Eric)**

"Throughout history, Christians have affirmed their beliefs and their faith in God in many different ways. There are creeds and confessions, music and testimony. Tonight I invite you to reflect on the faith of the church through song. May these words bind us together as they speak of our common faith and our common hope in Jesus Christ."

(Eric) *We Believe* - once through on his own and then with the youth.

### **Prayers of the People - 5 JPs holding mirrors, 1 leading the prayer**

*"Please join me in prayer, but leave your eyes open - because God is present in this space, if only we have eyes to see it. Let us pray:"*

God of love, you know us and have claimed us.  
You know our stories,  
you know what we wrestle with,  
you know our struggles both here and back home.  
Our dreams are not hidden from you –  
you have named us beloved children.

We live in a world where selfies and instagram pictures cover up our real identities.  
Free us this week.  
Remind us that we are all truly beautiful, because we were created in your image.  
Instead of looking in a mirror to perfect our outward image, lead us to mirror your compassion in everything we do.  
Help us recall your promise that we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

We live in a world where you, Holy God, are difficult to see.  
Our screens are flooded with distracting images.  
Our own fears and doubts can blind us.  
Yet your love is never ending and your claim on our lives is true.  
Give us eyes to recognize you in those moments of wrestling.  
Give us ears to hear that you have called each of us by name.

You have called us together at this conference,

as seekers and leaders,  
as disciples and doubters  
as strangers and friends  
as brothers and sisters

As we look around, help us to see the Christ in one another.

Break down the barriers that prevent us from seeing one another as your beloved children.

Bind us together as the body of Christ so that your story becomes our living story.

We rejoice that you have made us in your image and called us beloved.

Just as we need eyes to see your presence in others, shape our lives so that they can see your love through us.

Help us to be a reflection of your light in all that we do.

Above all, remind us that our stories are part of your story, so that your grace and love can shine through.

In the name of the Creator who claims us, Christ who names us, and the Spirit who calls us still, Amen.

### **Closing Music**

*Trees of the Field*

### **Benediction**

## **TUESDAY**

***(Remember Your Baptismal Promises)***

**Theme: Our Stories Are Messy - God meets us in our mess and offers us living water.**

**a.k.a: "YOUR MESS MATTERS" - *Woman at the well* (John 4:5-39)**

*"Let us quiet our minds and open our hearts as we prepare to worship God."*

### **Processional**

#### **Music - 3 songs**

"Wade in the Water"

"Open the Eyes of Our Hearts"

#### **Call to Worship**

*"Please stand and join me as we invite one another to worship."*

One: As the deer thirsts for flowing streams,

**All: so we thirst for You, O God.**

One: You give us life and offer us Living Water.

**All: You invite us to drink deeply and satisfy our thirst.**

One: Refresh and revive us tonight, Holy God,

**All: pour out your Spirit and drench us with your Love.**

One: Let us worship God together.

#### **Call to Confession**

*(JP on black box, with a bucket of water)*

*"Life is messy. (pours water into the font, splashing) We make mistakes, we mess up, and our sin spills out everywhere (water spills out of the font onto the stage). In confession, we let God into the mess, being honest about our brokenness. Please join me in prayer as we seek God's forgiveness and healing in our lives. Let us pray."*

#### **Prayer of Confession**

**All: God of mercy,  
you created us, you know us, and you call us by name.  
Yet, so often we feel ashamed of our differences  
and try to hide who we are.  
Our worries about school and relationships,  
our families and our future  
leave us dry and parched,  
longing for an oasis of acceptance  
and the reassurance of love.**

**In the midst of our mess, we forget that we are not alone.  
You are with us,  
offering Living Water like a stream that will never run dry.  
Forgive us, we pray.  
Drown out the doubts that overwhelm us, and give us hope for new life again.  
We open our hearts to you in silent prayer...**

*....Silent Prayer of confession...*

One: We pray these things in the name of Jesus, the one who knows us and loves us fully.  
**All: Amen.**

### **Assurance of Forgiveness**

“Even in the midst of our imperfect and messy lives, God does not abandon us. *(2 JP come with towels and a mop to clean up the water)* Despite our sin and the many mistakes we make, God loves us and offers forgiveness. In Jesus Christ, God’s grace is poured out for us like water! . Believe the Gospel that promises good news: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

### **Eric - As the Deer**

### **Passing the Peace (JP)**

Friends, we are forgiven! We can be at peace with ourselves, at peace with God, and at peace with one another. And so I say to you:

One: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.  
**All: And also with you.**

Please share the peace of Christ with one another.

### **Prayer for illumination -- Listen to the Word song**

### **Scripture Reading**

#### **Narrator:**

“John Chapter 4, verses 5 through 39-- Listen for the word of God.”

Jesus realized that the Pharisees were keeping count of the baptisms that he and John performed (although his disciples, not Jesus, did the actual baptizing). They had posted the score that Jesus was ahead, turning him and John into rivals in the eyes of the people. So Jesus left the Judean countryside and went back to Galilee.

To get there, he had to pass through Samaria. He came into Sychar, a Samaritan



village that bordered the field Jacob had given his son Joseph. Jacob's well was still there. Jesus, worn out by the trip, sat down at the well. It was noon.

A woman, a Samaritan, came to draw water. Jesus said...

**Jesus:**

"Would you give me a drink of water?"

**Narrator:**

His disciples had gone to the village to buy food for lunch. The Samaritan woman, taken aback, asked,

**Samaritan Woman:**

"How come you, a Jew, are asking me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?"

**Narrator:**

Jews in those days wouldn't be caught dead talking to Samaritans. Jesus answered...

**Jesus:**

"If you knew the generosity of God and who I am, you would be asking *me* for a drink, and I would give you fresh, living water."

**Samaritan Woman:**

"Sir, you don't even have a bucket to draw with, and this well is deep. So how are you going to get this 'living water'? Are you a better man than our ancestor Jacob, who dug this well and drank from it, he and his sons and livestock, and passed it down to us?"

**Jesus:**

"Everyone who drinks this water will get thirsty again and again. Anyone who drinks the water I give will never thirst—not ever. The water I give will be an artesian spring within, gushing fountains of endless life."

**Samaritan Woman:**

"Sir, give me this water so I won't ever get thirsty, and won't ever have to come back to this well again!"

**Jesus:**

"Go call your husband and then come back."

**Samaritan Woman:**

"I have no husband,"

**Jesus:**

You're right when you say: 'I have no husband.' You've had five husbands, and the man you're living with now isn't even your husband. You spoke the truth there, sure enough."

**Samaritan Woman:**

"Oh, so you're a prophet! Well, tell me this: Our ancestors worshiped God at this mountain, but you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place for worship, right?"

**Jesus:**

"Believe me, woman, the time is coming when you Samaritans will worship the Father

neither here at this mountain nor there in Jerusalem. You worship guessing in the dark; we Jews worship in the clear light of day. God's way of salvation is made available through the Jews. But the time is coming—it has, in fact, come—when what you're called will not matter and where you go to worship will not matter.

“It's who you are and the way you live that count before God. Your worship must engage your spirit in the pursuit of truth. That's the kind of people the Father is out looking for: those who are simply and honestly *themselves* before him in their worship. God is sheer being itself—Spirit. Those who worship him must do it out of their very being, their spirits, their true selves, in adoration.”

**Samaritan Woman:**

“I don't know about that. I do know that the Messiah is coming. When he arrives, we'll get the whole story.”

**Jesus:**

“I am he. You don't have to wait any longer or look any further.”

One: The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**Song:** *Let Our Story Unfold*

**Sermon**

**Music:** *Glory, Glory, Halleluia*

**Affirmation of Faith**

“I Believe” Statements: Youth will be planted in the aud to say single sentences about what they believe.

“Usually in worship we affirm the faith of the church using an ancient Creed or a confession. Those words were written by faithful people long ago who felt called to affirm what they believe about God. Tonight, instead, we will hear from some of the students gathered here at Montreat as they share some of their own beliefs as part of the community of God.”

**Remember the promises of God that were given in Baptism/ Prayers of the People**

**JP 1:** Here at Montreat we are surrounded by water. If you take a hike in the mountains you'll cross countless creeks and rivers. If you have some free time you might paddle on Lake Susan or go rock hopping in the stream. Water is key to our survival. Water symbolizes life and refreshment; it cleanses us and keeps us alive. So it is no wonder that Jesus chose to use *water* as a symbol in baptism.

**Taylor:** In keynote yesterday, we heard the story of Jesus' baptism - John dunking Jesus beneath the waves, and the dove descending as he rose, dripping, from the

water.

Baptism marked the beginning of Jesus' ministry. For us, it begins a new chapter in our lives of faith. In baptism, we are marked as God's beloved children, members of the Holy family. It is an outward sign of an inward grace. And through these living waters, God's cleansing, renewing, refreshing Spirit is at work - whether you were baptized as a baby, or as a youth, or even if you've never been baptized at all!

JP 2: That Spirit is at work in us today. So tonight, I invite you to reflect on your lives. Like the woman at the well, we are all thirsty to be known and loved by God. There are parts of our lives that cry out for Living Water. For what do you thirst? In what ways are you longing for transformation?

Charlene: If you look, there are pieces of paper in the pews, and pencils. Please take a moment to write down one thing - one place in your life that feels dry and dusty, that cries out for Living Water. What part of you is longing for transformation? When you think of it, write it down - a sentence, or even just a couple of words - as a personal prayer to God. No one will read it. This is just between you and God. Take some time to reflect and pray for the new life that God offers to us through the waters of baptism. And if you need a piece of paper, raise your hand, and we'll bring one to you.

JP 3: As you leave the auditorium, there will be bowls of water, extensions of our font. We invite you to drop your prayers in the water as an offering to God - and as they dissolve, have hope that the God who knows us completely receives our prayers with love. Be encouraged this night and be renewed by the power of the Spirit who is at work.

**MUSICAL INTERLUDE** -Come Bring Your Burdens to God.  
Pairs of SGLs carry bowls of water from the stage to each exit.

### **Brief Prayers of the People to wrap up baptismal liturgy**

*"Let us pray. Merciful and loving God, we give you thanks for the ways that you cleanse us and heal us. We give you thanks for your amazing grace that claims and renews us. As we leave this evening, enable us to trust in the new chapter that you offer each and every one of us, with pages yet to be written. And help us to be more faithful as your disciples. We pray these things in the strong name of Jesus Christ. Amen."*

### **Hymn**

### **Benediction**

### **Music**

(as youth leave, they drop their papers into the bowls at each exit, where they are dissolved by the other conferees/ushers)



# WEDNESDAY

*(Lord's Supper)*

Theme: "Our Stories Are Intertwined"

a.k.a.: The "Other" Matters – *The Good Samaritan* – (Luke 10:25-37)

## Opening Sentence (JP)

*"Let us prepare our hearts and minds to worship God."*

## Music

## Call to Worship (JP)

*"Please stand and join me as we invite one another to worship."*

One: O God, you created all people in your image.

**All: We praise you for the beauty and the diversity of this planet.**

One: You say that each of our stories matters.

**All: Each story is intertwined with your own.**

One: As we worship you, unite us in love.

**All: And guide us as we seek to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with You.**

One: Let us worship God.

## Call to Confession (JP)

"We trust in a God who hears us when we pray. God promises to intercede for us when we feel weak and words fall short. Let us enter into a time of confession, telling the truth about ourselves and about this world so in need of God's grace.

## Prayer of Confession & Assurance of Pardon (3 JP and congregation)

Close your eyes. Think back and remember a time when you excluded someone else, when you discriminated against someone, or when you failed to reach out to a person who was being ignored. Picture that person. What did they look like? What was their name? Do you even remember it? I'm going to say, "God, forgive us for excluding \_\_\_\_" and I want you to say that person's name. You ready? "God, forgive us for excluding \_\_\_\_\_."

Now I want you to remember a time when you were excluded, when you experienced discrimination, or when you felt like an outsider. How did that feel? Was there someone who reached out to you to help bring you into the group, who spoke up on your behalf, or who otherwise included you? Who were they to you? What was that person's name? When I say, "O God, we give you thanks for \_\_\_\_\_," I want you to say their name. You ready? "O God, we give you thanks for \_\_\_\_\_."

Friends, there is not one of us who is without sin. There is much we have done, and much we have left undone that blocks the way between who we are and the people God calls us to be. The good news of the gospel is this: God knows who we are, and loves us anyway. God gives us to each other to care for one another, and to work for reconciliation. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, and have new life!

### **Musical Response**

#### **Passing the Peace (JP)**

One: Having been reconciled with God, let us be reconciled with one another. The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.”

**All: And also with you.**

*“Please offer a sign of peace to your neighbors with a handshake, a fist bump, or a hug.”*

### **Prayer for illumination**

Listen to the Word

#### **Scripture Reading (JP)**

A – Listen for the word of God. Luke chapter 10, verses 25-37.  
Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus.

B – (from center stage reader stands from sitting in a chair)  
Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?

A – (turns to B) What is written in the law? What do you read there?

B – “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself”

A – You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live. (turns back to congregation) But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus,

B – And who is my neighbor?

A – (turns to B) A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.'

Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?"

B – The one who showed him mercy.

A – Go and do likewise.

A & B – (together, facing congregation) The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

**Eric** “*Let Our Story Unfold*”

**Sermon**

**Music**

**Affirmation of Faith- “We Believe”**

**Invitation to the Table**

*(paraphrase of this by Taylor and Charlene)*

As we gather around the table to celebrate communion tonight, we are reminded that this bread and this cup do not belong to Presbyterians alone. This meal and this table do not belong to the Montreat Conference Center. This table and this meal belong to the Lord. It is Jesus Christ who is the host and it is he who invites to come and be fed and renewed.

The scriptures remind us that people will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south to meet their Lord and Savior around this table. All are welcome at the table of God. Let us pray.

**Great Prayer of Thanksgiving (Kim)**

One: The Lord be with you...

**All: and also with you...**

One: Children of God, lift up your hearts!

**All: We lift them up to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to our gracious God.

**All: It is right to give God thanks and praise...**

It is right, for you are the author of everything, O God...  
you made the world,  
you shaped us in your image.

When we strayed from your path,  
You sent prophets,  
to speak your word to us again  
but still we did not listen.  
So in the fullness of time,  
you sent Jesus to be one of us,  
so we could come home to you.

Jesus embodied your love for the world,  
healing the sick, serving the poor, binding up the brokenhearted,  
and teaching us how to live together.

Holy God, send your Spirit:  
Enliven this bread,  
Awaken our bodies,  
Transform our minds,  
Ignite your church,  
Nourish us and the earth.  
Though we are many, unite us.  
Though we are broken, make us whole.  
Despite death, give us new life.  
Enable us to love as you love,  
serving others as your hands and feet in the world.

*We pray all of these things in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray, saying:*

***Our Father who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy Kingdom Come.  
Thy will be done,  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
Lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil,  
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.***

On the night that Jesus was betrayed, he had supper with his friends in an upper room. After giving thanks to God, he broke bread and gave it to his friends saying: "This is my body broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way he took the cup, saying: "This cup is the new covenant sealed in my



blood, shed for your for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.”

Each time we eat this bread and drink from this cup we together proclaim the saving death of our risen Lord until he comes again.” These are the gifts of God for the people of God. Let us gather around the table together.

(directions for communion)

### **Prayer after communion**

Friends, that was the great feast of the people of God!  
Just as flour and water, yeast and salt, combined to make a single loaf of bread, we are united into one body, the body of Christ in the world.

So put your hands out in front of you, and point your thumbs creekside.  
Take hold of your neighbor’s hands.  
Starting on the end of the pew closest to the creek,  
squeeze and pass a pulse from one person to the next,  
all the way across the auditorium... Go!

Feel that?  
We have shared the bread of life, and it changes us!  
The love of Christ connects us to one another,  
and transforms us! This love is so great, we have to pass it on!

Now, let go, and point your thumbs roadside.  
Take your neighbor’s hands again.  
As brothers and sisters in Christ,  
we are called to support one another in love.  
And to care for those outside of us,  
so that no one is an outsider anymore.

If you are sitting on the end of the pew closest to the road,  
When I start to pray,  
Squeeze your neighbor’s hand  
and pass the pulse all the way to the other side of the auditorium.  
That way, we can be reminded of the connection and the love we share  
as members of the household of God.

Let us pray.  
God of grace,  
You are made real to us tonight,  
in the hands of our friends,  
in the faces of those who were once outsiders,  
who are now our brothers and sisters in Christ.  
Now take us out to live as changed people...

expect much of us,  
enable much by us,  
care for many through us.

In the name of the one who creates, redeems, and sustains us all - Amen.

**Closing Music**

**Benediction (Charlene)**

# **THURSDAY**

***(Offering)***

**Theme: “God’s Story Is Still Being Written”**

**a.k.a.: Your Future Matters- excerpts from *Jeremiah***

*“Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship.”  
(processional)*

*“Please stand and join me as we invite one another to worship.”*

## **Call to Worship (JP)**

One: Glorious God, our souls rise up to meet you,

**All: as the moon rises into the night sky.**

One: We offer you our lives and we offer our praise,

**All: for you are faithful in every time and place.**

One: We lift up our voices with joy and hope.

**All: Let us worship God together.**

## **Call to Confession (JP)**

God’s grace is deeper and more vast than we could ever imagine. Despite our many failings, God relentlessly pursues us and is at work in our lives. With hope and faith, let us confess our sin, trusting in the healing, transforming power of God. Let us pray.

## **Prayer of Confession (JP)**

One: God, you have called us to be who we are, and to grow into who we are meant to be.

**All: And we try. But sometimes we forget who and whose we are. And sometimes we lose our way.**

One: You have called us to be humble, to be open to others, and to find common ground.

**All: And we try. But sometimes we wish others would just act like us and think like us.**

One: You call us to give you our lives and to trust you in faith.

**All: But we are fearful and we lack trust.**

One: For all those times we have lost our way, for all the ways we miss the mark, for the times when we forget what grace means:

**All: Transform us and heal us. With the power of your expansive love, shape us into the people you would have us be.**

*...time of silent prayer...*

**All: We pray these things in the name of Christ. Amen.**

### **Assurance of Forgiveness (JP)**

God hears our prayers, loves us, and forgives us! In the book of Jeremiah we are reminded, "Surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Friends, have hope: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven and set free!

### **Musical Response**

#### **Passing the Peace (JP)**

\_\_\_\_\_ Loved by God, we are forgiven; forgiven by God, we can find peace. Let us share that peace with one another.

One: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

*"Please share the peace of Christ with one another, with a high five, handshake, or a hug, whatever works for you."*

#### **Prayer for illumination**

*(455) Listen to the Word that God has Spoken*

#### **Scripture Reading (JP)**

(Jeremiah 1:1-17; 15:10-11, 15-18; 29:10-14)

#### **Narrator:**

"Our scripture reading for this evening is from the book of Jeremiah.

The Message of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah of the family of priests who lived in Anathoth in the country of Benjamin. GOD's Message began to come to him during the thirteenth year that Josiah son of Amos reigned over Judah. It continued to come to him during the time Jehoiakim son of Josiah reigned over Judah. And it continued to come to him clear down to the fifth month of the eleventh year of the reign of Zedekiah son of Josiah over Judah, the year that Jerusalem was taken into exile. This is what GOD said:

#### **God:**

"Before I shaped you in the womb, I knew all about you. Before you saw the light of day, I had holy plans for you: A prophet to the nations—that's what I had in mind for you."

#### **Jeremiah:**

"Hold it, Master GOD! Look at me. I don't know anything. I'm only a boy!"

#### **God:**

"Don't say, 'I'm only a boy.' I'll tell you where to go and you'll go there. I'll tell you what to say and you'll say it. Don't be afraid of a soul. I'll be right there, looking after you."

*[GOD reaches out, touches Jeremiah's mouth]*

“Look! I’ve just put my words in your mouth—hand-delivered! See what I’ve done? I’ve given you a job to do among nations and governments—a red-letter day! Your job is to pull up and tear down, take apart and demolish, And then start over, building and planting. Disaster will pour out of the north on everyone living in this land. Watch for this: I’m calling all the kings out of the north.”

I’ll pronounce my judgment on the people of Judah for walking out on me—what a terrible thing to do!—And courting other gods with their offerings, worshiping as gods sticks they’d carved, stones they’d painted.

But you—up on your feet and get dressed for work! Stand up and say your piece. Say exactly what I tell you to say. Don’t pull your punches or I’ll pull you out of the lineup.

**Narrator:**

So Jeremiah did everything God told him to do, proclaiming destruction upon Judah. He was the messenger of God’s wrath and judgment and even though he was faithful, he also bore the same punishment as those who disobeyed. He is arrested, imprisoned, and left in a cistern to die, narrowly escaping his life. He loses everything and barely survives. In the midst of his sorrow, Jeremiah cries out to God.

**Jeremiah:**

You know where I am, GOD! Remember what I’m doing here! Take my side against my detractors. Don’t stand back while they ruin me. Just look at the abuse I’m taking! When your words showed up, I ate them—swallowed them whole. What a feast! What delight I took in being yours, O GOD, GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies!

I never joined the party crowd in their laughter and their fun. Led by you, I went off by myself. You’d filled me with indignation. Their sin had me seething. But why, why this chronic pain, this ever worsening wound and no healing in sight? You’re nothing, GOD, but a mirage, a lovely oasis in the distance—and then nothing!

**God:**

“As soon as Babylon’s seventy years are up and not a day before, I’ll show up and take care of you as I promised and bring you back home. I know what I’m doing. I have it all planned out—plans to take care of you, not abandon you, plans to give you the future you hope for.

“When you call on me, when you come and pray to me, I’ll listen. When you come looking for me, you’ll find me. Yes, when you get serious about finding me and want it more than anything else, I’ll make sure you won’t be disappointed.”

“I’ll turn things around for you. I’ll bring you back from all the countries into which I drove you and bring you home to the place from which I sent you off into exile. You can count on it. You can count on me.”

**Narrator:**

The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**Eric “*Let Our Story Unfold*”**

**Sermon**

**Music**

**Introduction to the Affirmation of Faith (JP)**

“Together, let us affirm the faith of the church, using an excerpt from one of the historical confessions of the church, the “*Brief Statement of Faith*”:

From the *Brief Statement of Faith*, 1983

In life and in death we belong to God.

Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit,  
we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel,  
whom alone we worship and serve...

...In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage  
to pray without ceasing,  
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in  
Church and culture,  
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,  
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.

In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks  
and to live holy and joyful lives,  
even as we watch for God’s new heaven and new earth,  
praying, “Come, Lord Jesus!”

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Offering (JP)**

When we go to church on Sunday mornings, at some point in the worship service, an offering plate is passed around to collect the offerings of the congregation. This is the point in the service that many of us might tune out - maybe because we feel that the

offering is just for adults, just for people with jobs – those who have money and debit cards to spare.

But the time of offering is about more than just giving money.

God created each of us with intention and purpose. God gives us gifts and skills, passions and talents. And God calls us to share ourselves with the world – not to impress others or to make us feel accomplished, but to share who we are as a blessing and a gift to others. This is what the time of offering is all about.

We are called to dedicate our lives – our resources, our talents, our time, and our money to God. Therefore, tonight, along with your financial offering, we ask you to make a different kind of offering as well. What gift do you have that you might share with others? In what way might you serve God in your neighbor, in your school, in your family, in your community? Make a commitment with God and those of us gathered here tonight to share that part of yourself, that talent or ability, with others. Set your mind on it, hold it in your heart. And to mark the place in your story where this commitment was made, we have bookmarks - the bookmark is part of a sheet that was painted during the messtival on Tuesday, and now part of it will go with you to remind you of your commitment.

We all have something to offer God! So you are *all* invited to come forward, holding your commitments in your heart, whether you are making a financial offering or not. If you have a donation for Kliptown Youth Program, bring it with you and put it in one of the baskets at the front. And everyone is invited to take a bookmark with them. Let it remind you of your commitment, for you have much offer God and others, and the author of all stories has much in store for you.

At this time, I invite you to share who you are and what you have been given. Your offerings will now be received.

**Prayers of the People - photos of hand prayers taken from Wed. Keynote (JP)**

*“In keynote yesterday, we were invited to write prayers on our hands. Leave your eyes open as we pray together now, silently holding sacred space for the names and situations lifted up on the screen.*

*Let us pray... (hand prayer slideshow with music)*

With our hands, we lift these prayers to you, O God.

We are astounded at the ways you are at work in our lives. There is not one person that has gone unnoticed by your love. There is not one of us that you have abandoned. Though our stories have twists, turns and unexpected events, your promises are sure: you walk with us as we go.

Author of life, you know the situations that trouble our hearts, that bind our communities,

that threaten our world. We are uncertain about what lies ahead. Help us to trust that you have a plan for us. Guide us in our journey, wherever that journey might take us.

Receive our offerings tonight, we pray. Bless the children and youth of the Kiptown Youth Program. May the education and training they receive enable and empower them to flourish.

We pray these things in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **Closing Music**

### **Benediction**



## **FRIDAY**

**(Candle lighting)**

**Theme: "Telling the Story"**

**a.k.a.: The Gospel Matters - *Who do you say that I am?* (Matthew 16:13-18a)**

*Here I Am Lord (Eric & Jill) w/ guitar and stools*

Charlene & Taylor Spoken Word

*"Please prepare your hearts and minds for worship"*

Processional

Gathering songs

*Awake My Soul*

*Christ be our Light*

*Better is One Day*

*"Please stand and join me as we invite one another to worship."*

### **Call to Worship (JP)**

One: The God who gives passion and purpose to our lives

**All: calls us together for worship.**

One: The God whose light shines in the darkest corners of the world

**All: Calls us together to be renewed and sent out.**

One: The God who challenges us to share the good news

**All: draws near to us this night, to enliven us once more.**

One: Come, now is the time to worship.

**All: Let us worship God together.**

### **Waves of Mercy (w/ Kim & Jerry)**

### **Call to Confession (JP)**

This week we have built a community of love and acceptance. Maybe we have even glimpsed the kingdom God promises us. But even here, we have fallen short and made mistakes. Trusting that the God of love hears us, let us seek forgiveness and transformation as we confess our sins before God and one another.

### **Prayer of Confession (JP)**

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Friends, we know God calls us to love others, and to serve one another. But sometimes, we are just too busy and distracted by our own concerns to lend a hand if

someone needs it, or we allow hidden prejudices to hold us back. Instead of running to offer help, we look the other way. So if you have ever ignored someone who was in need, close your eyes.

Jesus walked the way of peace, responding to his critics with care, turning the other cheek when he was attacked by the authorities. Too often, we rely on hostility and violence to solve problems instead of being peacebuilders. So if you have ever dealt harshly with someone, embracing hostility instead of peace, clench your fists.

The world is God's creation, and we are called to be guardians of it. But we are careless, clinging to a culture of consumption instead of caring for the earth. So if you've ever thrown something away instead of reusing it or been wasteful instead of working for conservation, cross your arms.

We are reflections of the divine image, created and claimed as God's beloved children. But too often, that image is distorted and denied. So if you have ever been ashamed of how you look, or denied the divine image in someone else, bow your head.

Friends, THIS is what sin feels like! Cut off from others, closed off from the world, left in the dark, alone and disconnected from God.

But God knows us and loves us. Like a mother with her children, God will not abandon us!

This week, God has revealed Godself in powerful ways.

We have experienced God's love in one another, and maybe even caught a glimpse of God's kingdom. And that changes us!

So if you have ever seen someone in need and responded with care, open your eyes.

If you have ever reached out to someone who is an outsider, embracing differences as beautiful and seeking to tear down the walls that divide us, lift your head.

If you have ever forgiven a friend or sought reconciliation instead of retribution, unclench your fists and open your hands.

If you have lent a helping hand to someone this week, offering support to a friend or even a stranger, uncross your arms and put wrap them around the shoulders of those standing next to you.

And if your eyes are still closed, open them; your head is still bowed, raise it; your fists are still clenched, release them; or your arms are still crossed, uncross them and wrap them around your neighbors, knowing that God's grace is for *all* of us, no matter who we are or what we've done or left undone.

This is what it feels like to be part of God's family. Eyes open, heads up, connected and held fast by a loving community. Known, loved, accepted for who we are. Friends, hear

and believe the good news of the gospel: in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and have new life!

### **Musical Response *Agnus Dei***

#### **Passing of the Peace (JP)**

*As a forgiven people, let us be at peace with God and at peace with each other.*

One: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

*“Please share the peace of Christ with one another.”*

#### **Prayer for illumination**

Listen to the Word

**Music** (including Eric’s theme song “*Let Our Story Unfold*” to be sung before the reading each night)

#### **Scripture Reading (8 JP: Narrator, Jesus, Simon Peter, & Disciples)**

**(Narrator):** “Our Scripture reading for this evening comes from the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 16, verses 13 through 18”

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples,

**(Jesus):** ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’

**(Disciples):** ‘Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’

**(Narrator):** He said to them,

**(Jesus):** ‘But who do you say that I am?’

**(Narrator):** Simon Peter answered,

**(Simon Peter):** ‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.’

**(Narrator):** And Jesus answered him,

**(Jesus):** ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church.

One: The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon:**

**Music - Blessed Assurance**

**Prayers of the people (JP)**

God of all people,  
For the gift of this life,  
And the many joys we have known by living it, we give you thanks.  
For the smell of candle smoke and water rushing over rocks,  
And for the sun-kissed promise of summer sprawled out before us,  
we praise your holy name.

These days have been filled with laughter and tears,  
with singing and playing and talking late into the night.  
We are tired, exhilarated, and thankful for this week together.  
We're a little anxious, a little relieved to be heading home.

We came to Montreat with hopes and fears,  
insecure in our identities,  
holding tightly to the fragile facades we show the world.

We came eager to meet new friends and to reconnect with old ones.  
We brought with us our depression and our delight,  
our faith and our doubts, and a desire to know and love you better, O God.

Here at the end of this week, we look back on the people we were when we  
got here and we pray for your continued transformation - because we have  
experienced your love,  
and we cannot remain the same.

We long for peace,  
we long for acceptance,  
we long to be loved.  
Help us hold on to the feeling of being held by this community this week.

We pray this night for each other.  
We pray for those who suffer from sickness, those who grieve, those who  
are suffering, and all who walk the long road of recovery.  
Send your Spirit to comfort and encourage us.

We lift up to you all whom we hold in the silence of our hearts,  
and pray that they might be enfolded by your loving Spirit this day.

Compassionate God,  
As we return home in the days ahead, we pray that  
your Spirit might go with us,  
Opening our ears that we might hear your voice,  
Opening our eyes that we might see the needs of those around us,  
Opening our hands that we might serve you by our labors,  
And opening our hearts that we might love others as you have loved us.

Amen.

### **Candle lighting Ritual (Charlene)**

Hear these words from Jesus. He said, "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden."

Tonight we light candles as a symbol of the light of Christ shining forth through our lives. We are a part of a much larger story: the ongoing narrative of God in history, working for reconciliation, transformation, justice, and peace in the world. Our lives and our light are a part of God's story; each of us has a critical role to play.

(TAYLOR) As we see the light spread from one candle to the next, burning brightly through the night, lighting the faces of those around us, have hope: we are not alone on the journey. God goes before us and behind us. Through our experience this week, God has brought people into our lives to journey with us. Together, our light shines in the darkness. And the darkness cannot overcome it.

At the direction of the ushers, we invite you to leave the auditorium and walk over to Lake Susan for the conclusion of our worship. Please walk slowly, following your line, there will be a line leader for each section who will direct you over to the Lake.

**Music** - Down to the River to Pray as people head out to the lake.

Light the Fire  
This Little Light of Mine  
I Could Sing of Your Love Forever  
Sanctuary

### **Commissioning Prayer around the lake**

Charlene: Let us join our hearts in prayer.

Loving God, we give you thanks for the gift of this week: for the beauty of this place, for the goodness of deep friendships, and for opportunities to know and love you better.

Help us to turn to you in prayer, to scripture, and to one another as we seek your light and direction, your guidance and hope.

As we gather this night among friends new and old, our brothers and sisters in Christ, fill us with your joy and the peace that passes all our understanding. Strengthen us to return home as new people, overflowing with love and eager to share it with others.

Help us to shine the light of Christ in all that we do and say, that the world might see and know the hope you have for each of us.

We pray all these things in the name of Christ. Amen.

### **Extinguishing of candles**

Taylor: As we prepare to leave this place, we know that God goes with us. The story continues, with each of us contributing as we are able, as we are called to do.

The light of God dwells within each and every one of us, and will guide us on the way.

Tonight, let us extinguish our candles group by group, knowing that the light of God can never be snuffed out.

As you hear the name of the group with which you identify, please blow out your candle.  
(pause between each one)

Sarah: Small Group Leaders... please blow out your candles now.

Charlene: Back Home Leaders... please blow out your candles now.

Nathan: Work Crew and Support Staff... please blow out your candles now.

Taylor: planning team, summer staff, and leadership... please blow out your candles.

Sarah: Rising 9th graders... please blow out your candles.

Charlene: Rising sophomores... please blow out your candles.

Nathan: Rising juniors... please blow out your candles.

Taylor: Rising Seniors... please blow out your candles.

Charlene: Friends, those with candles still burning are our graduated seniors. This is their last conference as a youth. The months ahead will likely bring major changes in

their lives. Find a senior if you can, and put your hand on their shoulder, so that we might offer a blessing for them to carry with them as they go on to the next chapter of their story.

Seniors, we are so proud of you! We ask God's blessing upon you during the adventures and challenges that surely lie ahead. Wherever you go, may you serve God with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love. Remember that we hold you in our hearts, and that the God of hope goes with you, shining through in times of joy, sustaining you through times of pain, and empowering you tell God's story, YOUR story, through all you say and do. Amen.

Graduated Seniors... please blow out your candles now.

Taylor: As you go from this place, remember that you are claimed and given a new name.

Charlene: Remember that God meets us in our mess and offers Living Water.

Sarah: Remember that we are all outsiders and are called to love those outside of ourselves.

Nathan: Remember that our stories are never over, because God has a plan for us.

Taylor: Remember that the story is so good, it is meant to be told, and we are the ones to tell it.

**Charlene: Benediction:**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the communion and fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you now and always. Amen.

Go in peace.

**Go now in peace** song