

HOLY COMMUNION

THANKS FOR YOUR FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP

“Thank You” - “Great is Your Faithfulness”. *Disciples who practice stewardship recognize God as the origin of life, the giver of freedom, the source of all they have and are and will be.* 5th Ave. Leadership and I, personally thank you for your giving of your time, monies and yourself to 5th Ave. United Methodist Church. We’re honored you would bless us with your generosity. Stewardship like yours make a big difference in the work our church is doing in the community and the world. Without givers like you, our church can’t have an impact or influence in our community and global ministries. Thank you for supporting 5th Ave. UMC!

*OFFERTORY PRAYERS FOR TITHES AND OFFERINGS:

Compassionate Father, thank you that you are our strength and our song, you fill our hearts with joy. May we give our offerings to you with gladness and joy. Everything we have belongs to you and we rejoice to give some of your abundant gifts back to you. Bless the tithes and offerings we give today. Let the majesty of the Father be the light that guides us, the compassion of the Son be the love that inspires us and the presence of the Spirit be the power that empowers us. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

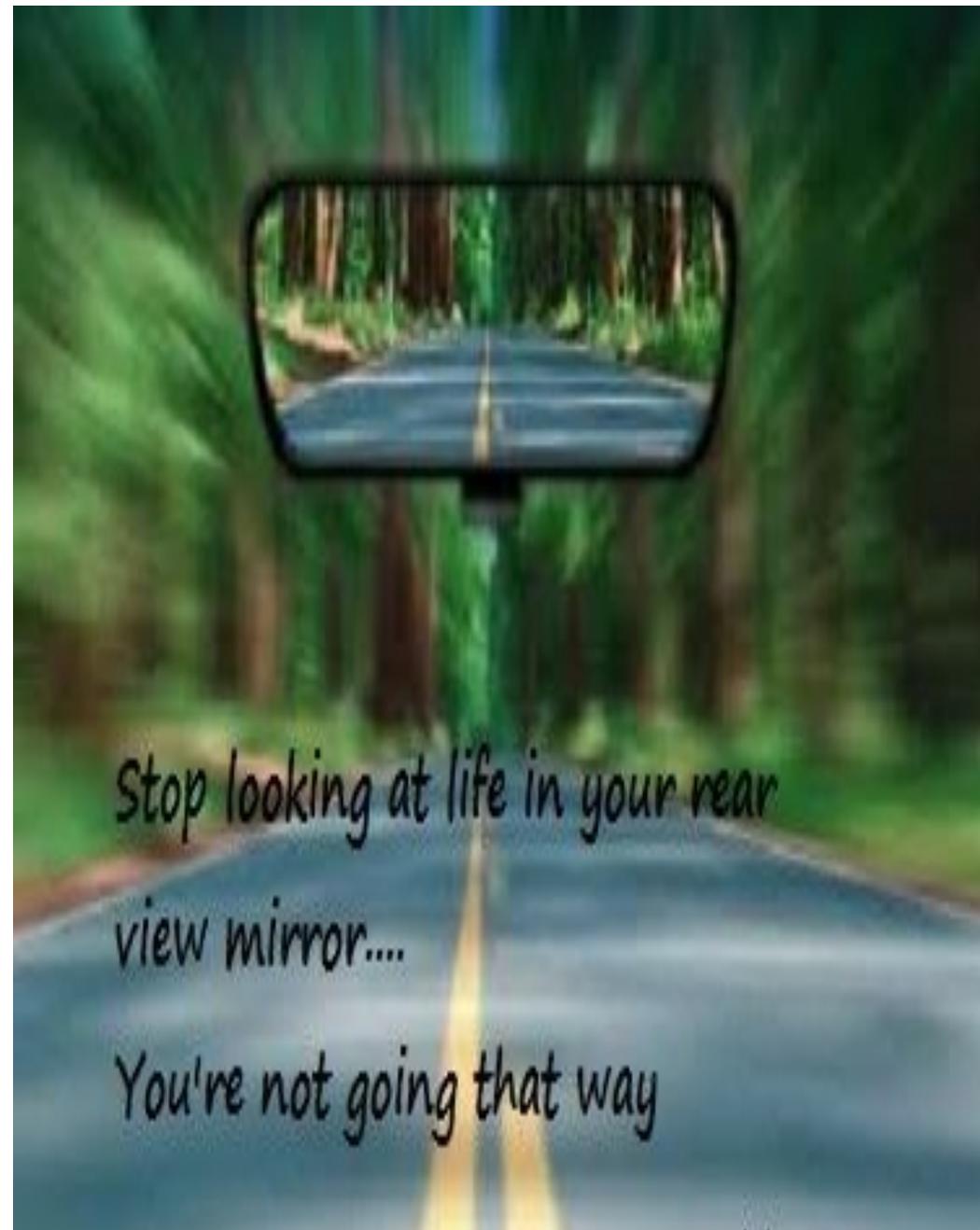
*HYMN: “Gather Us In” TFW5 2236

*SENDING FORTH: (Responsively)

Let us go from this time of silence and song, to be God's voice,
to speak out for the oppressed of our communities and world.
Let us go from this time of community, to be Jesus' faithful,
to feed the hungry, to visit the sick, to be a friend to the prisoner.
Let us go from this sacred space, to share the peace of the Spirit,
to work for reconciliation in our neighborhoods, to put an end to violence and death as solutions for fear.

BENEDICTION: Pastor Clarissa

You are the people of Christ, the people of the New Jerusalem. You have been claimed by God. Look bravely into the future and see the promise of the New Year. See the abundance of God’s gifts in the world. Feel the presence of God in the world with you and go forward in God’s strength, love and grace. Amen.



5th Ave. UMC

2nd Sunday After Christmas

January 3, 2021 @ 9:30 a.m.

PRELUDE:

WELCOME:

It's a New Year, which means that it's also time to imagine new beginnings and better futures. It's tempting to go through life looking in the rearview mirror. When you are always looking back, you become focused on what didn't work out, on who hurt you, and on the mistakes you've made. As long as you're living in regret, focused on the negative things of the past, you won't move ahead to the bright future God has in store. Where you're going is a lot more important than where you've been. In this big windshield New Year, abide among us loving God with Your Holy Spirit that we may always trust in the saving name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

CENTERING MUSIC:

***CALL TO WORSHIP: (Unison)** (Adapted Sisters of Saint Martha of Antigonish)

A New Year stands on my doorstep ready to enter my life's journey. Something in me welcomes this visitor: the hope of bountiful blessings, the joy of a new beginning, the freshness of unclaimed surprises. Something in me rebuffs this visitor: the swiftness of the coming, the boldness of the entrance, the challenge of a year's good-bye. Something in me fears this visitor: the unnamed events of future days, the wisdom needed to walk love well, the demands of giving away and growing. A New Year stands on my doorstep. With fragile caution I move to open the door for its entrance. My heart leaps with surprise, joy jumps in my eyes for there beside this brand New Year stands my God with outstretched hand! God smiles and gently asks of me: can we walk this year together? And I, so overwhelmed with goodness can barely whisper my reply: "Welcome in!"

***MORNING PRAYER: (Unison)**

Eternal God, you call us to ventures, of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. We look back at this past year, we see that you have been with us, provided for us and lead us in your ways. Give us faith to go out with courage, not knowing where we go but only that your hand is leading us, and your love supporting us. Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON:**

It's over - last year is gone. Our words, our thoughts, our deeds are in the past. Today, we begin anew. Today, and every day, God offers us life and hope. With calming words, with a peaceful Spirit, with overflowing love and hope, our God forgives us and fills us with faith. Our God affirms us for who we are—those whose brokenness is made whole, whose sin is forgiven, whose lives overflow with faith. Here, now, forever - we are forgiven and healed. This year, let us live as such people. **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

HYMN: "His Eye Is on the Sparrow" TFWS 2146

NEW TESTAMENT READING: 1 Peter 1:3-9 (CEV)

Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is so good, and by raising Jesus from death, he has given us new life and a hope that lives on. God has something stored up for you in heaven, where it will never decay or be ruined or disappear. You have faith in God, whose power will protect you until the last day. Then he will save you, just as he has always planned to do. On that day you will be glad, even if you have to go through many hard trials for a while. Your faith will be like gold that has been tested in a fire. And these trials will prove that your faith is worth much more than gold that can be destroyed. They will show that you will be given praise and honor and glory when Jesus Christ returns. You have never seen Jesus, and you don't see him now. But still you love him and have faith in him, and no words can tell how glad and happy you are to be saved. That's why you have faith.

Liturgist: This is the Word of the Lord. **People: Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON: "Open the Door to 2021 & Put 2020
in the Rear View Mirror"**

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Lord's Prayer -- (Adapted Stephen Best)

Great Love; the root and sap of our evolving fullness, nudge us forward in our creative potential so we may flourish for the common good. In each mindful moment, help us recognize that we free ourselves from the ghosts of our past and in that release we grant those who have harmed us forgiveness. Keep us focused on what is right make us thirsty for what is just. For it is love, that knows the way, shows the way, becomes the way, to the fulfilment of our eternal call. **Amen**