

Wesley Church - People Blessing People

A Service of Celebration
for 25 Years of Ministry at 2540 Center Street
June 25, 2020 7:00 PM

Welcome & Greeting *Pastor Candy LaBar*

Words from Our Bishop *District Superintendent Steve Morton*

Give Thanks for the Past, for Those Who Had Vision

Remember When?: 1995 *Pastor Candy LaBar*

The Story of This Place *Pastor Candy LaBar*

“What Gift Can We Bring” (UMH 87 vss. 1, 2) *Brian & Becky Graybeal*

1. What gift can we bring, what present, what token?
What words can convey it, the joy of this day?
When grateful we come, remembering, rejoicing,
what song can we offer in honor and praise?
2. Give thanks for the past, for those who had vision,
who planted and watered so dreams could come true.
Give thanks for the now, for study, for worship,
for mission that bids us turn prayer into deed.

Pastoral Prayer of Thanksgiving *Pastor Debbie Kauffman*
& The Lord's Prayer

Give Thanks for Tomorrow, Full of Surprises

Scripture: Isaiah 43:16, 19 (NRSV)

Pastor Candy LaBar

¹⁶ Thus says the LORD,
who makes a way in the sea,
a path in the mighty waters: ...
¹⁹ I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.

Meditation

Pastor Candy LaBar

“What Gift Can We Bring” (UMH 87 vs. 3)

Brian & Becky Graybeal

3. Give thanks for tomorrow, full of surprises,
for knowing whatever tomorrow may bring,
the Word is our promise always, forever;
we rest in God’s keeping and live in God’s love.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Pastor Candy LaBar &
DS Steve Morton

“What Gift Can We Bring” (UMH 87 vs. 4)

Brian & Becky Graybeal

4. This gift we now bring, this present, this token,
these words can convey it, the joy of this day!
When grateful we come, remembering, rejoicing,
this song we now offer in honor and praise!

Benediction

Pastor Candy LaBar

Liturgy for the Sacrament of Holy Communion

(written by Rev. Michael Johnson, adapted for Wesley Church)

I know that the Lord is still with you.

I long to hear you once again affirm that the Lord is also with me.

Still, we lift up our hearts.

Still, while “distanced,” we lift them together before our Lord.

Still, in the midst of a pandemic, we give thanks to the Lord our God.

For still, it is right to give our thanks and praise.

How our hearts yearn to come before You together in Your sanctuary.

Our choir desires to sing Your praises,

our ensemble, to lead Your people in songs of praise,

our bells, to ring out songs of joy,

our people, to sing of your great love.

We long for the day when we might once again gather in Your sanctuary,

embrace Your people, and pass Your peace.

Our time away from Your sanctuary feels like a great sacrifice --

sometimes it feels too great to bear --

yet we offer it up to You as an act of holy worship.

Sanctify our separation, as we seek the end of this pandemic our community.

Use this act of love and grace that we extend to each other for safety.

May it be to You as a song of praise and gratitude for the community of souls we hold so dear.

In this silence, let us hear more clearly Your intimate voice.

In this solitude, let us feel the assurance that we are always held in Your strong embrace.

May we remember with gratitude our baptisms

each time we wash our hands.

May we remember with thanksgiving Your breath of life
each time we wear our masks.

May we remember with faith this truth:
during this pandemic, Your praises have not been silenced.
They are still heard on earth and in heaven
as those around Your throne continually sing:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Even while we are apart, we still remember that in the fullness of time You
sent Jesus.

The fullness of time was not a peaceful sweet idyllic time.

The fullness of time was a time of danger, of exile, of grief and sorrow.

The fullness of time was filled with the unknown, with a heartfelt longing
for a better day.

The fullness of time was filled with hope and a trust in Your great promises
to be fulfilled in the life of a baby.

These promises took time to develop, but would mature, grow and become
the savior of the world in due time.

We do not always understand what You are doing.

You try to wash our feet, but we feel unworthy.

You try to explain that the servant of all is the person we are to
emulate.

You try to help us understand what it means to love.

But we still struggle to understand.

Even now during this time of social isolation,
we remember that during his last Passover celebration,

Jesus took the matzah used to remind us all
of those who are still struggling under oppression.
We remember Christ's joyful prayer of thanksgiving.
We remember how Jesus broke the bread, and shared it to include
everyone.
We remember it being said: "Take and eat, this is my body broken for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."
And we are grateful.

Even now during this time of social isolation,
we remember that after his last Passover meal,
Jesus took the cup of wine, used to remember
the hope we hold in our hearts for deliverance.
We remember Christ's joyful prayer of thanksgiving.
We remember how Jesus passed the cup and shared it to include
everyone.
We remember it being said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of
God's covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of
sins. Do this in remembrance of me."
And we are grateful.

Even now during this time of social isolation,
we remember the holy mystery that makes all the difference:
Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Indelible Memory, Present Reality
Pour out Your Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these varied gifts of bread and the fruit of the vine.
Pour out Your Spirit on all the people of Wesley Church,
especially in this season of separation,
that we may be your people, blessing people.
By Your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,

and one in ministry to all the world.
Use our prayers to bring healing in the world.
Use our social distancing to bring healing to our community.
Use our new habits to bring healing to our lives and homes.
Be present with those who are battling this virus.
Forgive our impatience and show us how to be a blessing,
just as You have continued to bless us,
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast at his heavenly banquet.
Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God,
now and for ever. **Amen.**

Friends, the body and blood of Christ have been given for you.
Take, and eat, and drink,
and be grateful.