Westminster Presbyterian Church

LITURGY FOR JULY 26, 2020
8TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Gathering Words **Sherry and Eric Miller**

When your word is opened, O God, it brings hope.
Turn to us and be gracious, as you always do to those who hope in you.

When your word is opened, O God, it brings love.
Turn to us and be gracious, as you always do to those who love you.

When your word is opened, O God, it brings good trouble.
Turn to us and be gracious, as you always do to those who prize your ways.

Opening Prayer **Sherry and Eric Miller**

God of the universe,
We thank you that you meet us here,
That you look on us with love and lift our humanity;
That you look on the ways we fail you and one another
In grace and forgiveness.

As those who know ourselves forgiven, loved and called to serve,
May we claim our place in your divine economy more fully.
May our worship here enable us to fix our eyes on you,
Equipping us to give our all for what is of ultimate value
For us and for our neighbors.
In your name we pray.
Amen.

Opening Hymn God the Sculptor of the Mountains GTG5

Scripture Reading Matthew 13:44-50 Dr. Enikő Ferenczy

33He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

44"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

45"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; 46on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; 48 when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. 49 So it will

be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous 50 and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Sermon The Pearl of Great Price Dr. Enikő Ferenczy

Invitation to Offering

Hymn What Is the World Like GTG771

Prayer of the People **Sherry and Eric Miller**

Help us, Spirit of Life.
We are tired, weak, worn.
Unsure of how to pray in these upside-down times,
when the needs so far outstrip the seemingly paltry collection
of words we have with which to articulate them.

What we think we know gets upended daily –
often from one moment to the next –
each conversation and headline contradicting the last,
each new piece of information increasing our angst exponentially.
When we can't see anything good,
when nothing is working,
when we feel conquered, separated, troubled,
alone and in peril, starved for connection,
naked and vulnerable,
remind us, Holy One,
that nothing separates us from your love.

In the midst of chaos and fear,
may we discover you at work in surprising ways,
calling us to give our all and follow.

Help us to see the places where this chaos is opening space for a better way of life together. Grant us the courage to not only see the cracks in the structures of our society, but the faith to repair them so as to build better communities for all your children.

As you hold each one of us close, nurturing and blessing us,
May we be the neighbors you invite us to be
Connecting, listening, sharing one another's grief,
bearing one another's burden, rejoicing together in your love.

Guide those in leadership positions making difficult decisions that will impact our children and parents, our neighbors and friends, our schools and communities. Give humility and insight to those in power. Give voice and strength to those who speak truth to power. Give relief and support to those with no power.

We may not know the way ahead, but we know that you are with us and will never leave us.
May that assurance help us to face all that we must,

And strengthen us to continue step out in faith,
To give our all for things that really matter,
That build up your Beloved Community. In your name we pray. Amen.

Closing Hymn Go with Us, Lord GTG748

Benediction Dr. Enikő Ferenczy

*Note: Gathering Words adapted from Julia Seymour. Prayer of the people adapted from Kathy Swaar.