



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

A Devotion During This Time of the Coronavirus Pandemic Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost, August 15, 2021

Melody of Unity

By Daniel H. Wilcox

Ephesians 5:15-20

5:15 Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise,

5:16 making the most of the time, because the days are evil.

5:17 So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

5:18 Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit,

5:19 as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts.

5:20 giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Singing functions as a foundational element along with preaching and praying in Christian worship. Methodists are known as singing people because they celebrate God with many hymns and anthems of John and Charles Wesley. The essence of music emanates from the melody, harmonic arrangement, and sequencing of individual notes, instilling influential impression and aesthetic beauty. Melody testifies that diversity, difference, and dissonance in unity render the satisfying, pleasing sensation, music.

Apostle Paul encourages the Ephesian church to strive for unity through a poignant discussion on behavior leading to appropriate adoration of God. Believers are challenged to be wise by making good use of time and to understand God's intent for them and their lives. Believers seek God's promise and passion by being filled with the Spirit. In using these means, folly, foolishness, and debauchery can be avoided. Furthermore, believers exhibit their commitment and praise when their hearts sing with many expressions of musical relevancies, psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, conveying sincere thanksgiving to God. Each culturally appropriate mode contributes to communal melodies of admiration. Although dissonance and diversity can

challenge the symphonic enterprise, focus on melody engenders corporate, united celebration of God.

Let us live wisely, understanding God's will that we unify as a committed, corporate creation melodiously praising the Creator.

TALK: Take a moment to be silent, reflect, and share (write down)— Reflecting on the scripture, share a time/instance when you have experienced unity in the midst of difference and dissonance? How did this experience make you feel or direct you?

PRAY: Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be for us a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life: Give us grace to receive thankfully the fruits of his redeeming work, and to follow daily in the blessed steps of his most holy life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Ghost, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Adaption from The Book of Common Prayer

ACT:

1. During the Kingdombtime season, host a sing song where you sing music from varying genres. Journal your experience and reflect on your spiritual journey. Do what you can to protect the health of others and yourself by practicing social distancing as much as possible, washing your hands often, wearing face covering to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, and prayerfully considering getting the vaccine when it is available—See: <http://www.amehealth.org>.

2. See also the activity that accompanies this devotion.

Song:

Sing the Wondrous Love of Jesus
AMEC Hymnal, #511

1. Sing the wondrous love of Jesus,
Sing His mercy and His grace.
In the mansions bright and blessed
He'll prepare for us a place.

Refrain

*When we all get to heaven,
What a day of rejoicing that will be!
When we all see Jesus,
We'll sing and shout the victory!*

2. While we walk the pilgrim pathway,
Clouds will overspread the sky;
But when traveling days are over,
Not a shadow, not a sigh.

3. Let us then be true and faithful,
Trusting, serving every day;
Just one glimpse of Him in glory
Will the toils of life repay.

4. Onward to the prize before us!
Soon His beauty we'll behold;
Soon the pearly gates will open;
We shall tread the streets of gold.

Physical space—You may wish to create a dedicated space for your time of devotion. You may choose to place a candle, bible, and special symbols or material/fabric to help you focus and center during this time of reflection and prayer.

If you use this meditation and exercise in a time of family or group devotion, share in the leadership; allow different persons to read or lead different parts of this meditation.



The Christian Education Department will continue to develop resources that can be used as times of personal and collective devotion and study during this pandemic to help us all sustain and strengthen our faith and resolve.