

Interactive lesson



picture screencaptured from
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/olympics/2021/07/28/twisties-gymnastics-simone-biles-tokyo-olympics/>

Do you know who this is? <Let them respond>

What is Simone Biles known for? <Let them respond>

Simone stepped aside rather than get pushed to compete when she was not feeling 100%. Some people called her a quitter. Do you think she is worthy of being celebrated for that as a gymnast? Why (or why not)? <Let them respond>

What makes someone worthy of being called a gymnast? <Let them respond>

What makes someone worthy of being called Christian? <Let them respond>

How do we know we are doing well as a Christian? <Let them respond>

Who are some Christians that you celebrate? <Let them respond>

Jesus loves us and calls us to live as children of God. We may not do as well at it as some of the saints did, but even they had their off days.

God knows each one of us; God knows you. God sees the effort we put in to being a child of God, and makes those who repent of sin capable of heavenly love. May

we learn to show that love to others in ways that makes them celebrate and seek God too.

Gospel lesson

Last week, Jesus fed a crowd of five thousand with five loaves and two fish. We continue in the Gospel of John today with the crowd wanting still more from Jesus.



background picture from
<https://onedishkitchen.com/french-bread-recipe/>

John 6:24-35

(NRSV)

²⁴ So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

²⁵ When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?"

²⁶ Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves.

²⁷ Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal."

²⁸ Then they said to him, "What must we do to perform the works of God?"

²⁹ Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent."

³⁰ So they said to him, "What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing?"

³¹ Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'

³² Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven.

³³ For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

³⁴ They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."

³⁵ Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

The word of God for the people of God

<Hymn "Just As I Am, Without One Plea" UMH #357 vv. 3,4,6>

Message: A Life Worthy



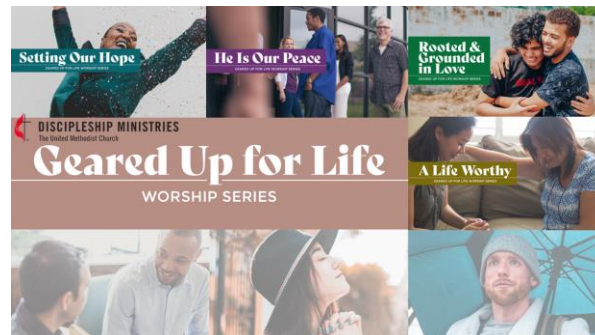
picture from <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/geared-up-for-life/tenth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-b-lectionary-planning-notes/tenth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-b-graphics>

Please pray with me?

Beloved Provider who gives us life,
as we take time now to further consider today's
scriptures, please

- speak Your words through my mouth,
- open our ears to hear Your message, and
- abide in our hearts,

That we may learn to live lives worthy in Your sight.
Amen.



As we are Geared Up for Life today in our worship series, we consider "A Life Worthy". As summarized:

"Now we're moving from preaching to meddling, as the old cliché goes. To declare that there is a life worthy of the gospel is to claim that there is a life that isn't. There are choices to be made in how we live out our faith. And some of those choices

reveal whether we are indeed “rooted and grounded in love” or not.”



picture from <https://plenitudespiritual.wordpress.com/2016/05/31/conciencia-completamente-despierta/>

You would have thought King David would be rooted and grounded in God’s love:

- † chosen because God knew his heart,
- † he trusted God enough to vanquish Goliath;
- † he danced with abandon before the ark of the covenant, celebrating with all the kingdom;
- † and he wanted to build a temple to honor God.

And yet, the sin of lust got the better of him. He committed adultery with Bathsheba, had her husband killed, and married Bathsheba for himself.

God was angry with what David had done, and sent the prophet Nathan to confront David about it. First, he made sure that David understood the divine perspective of the situation.

David was incensed at the injustice! Yet notice that though he felt the unnamed man deserved to die, he decreed that the man had to provide four times what he took instead of decreeing execution. David’s heart was not in revenge, but in restoration.

Then, when David realized he was the guilty party, he repented. Our psalm today was his pleas to God to make his heart clean and his spirit right again before God.

And God heard him. Why? Because David's heart had been rooted and grounded in love of God. He had sinned terribly toward Uriah and toward God, but confronting him about it did not harden his heart. Rather, it caused a fundamental refocusing back toward trying to live a life worthy of what God had given him.

We are blessed with God wanting us to be restored into a healthy relationship with our Creator and with one another, as we were created to be.



picture from <https://taketimeforhim.com/2015/07/31/gospel-meditation-john-624-35-for-sunday-august-2nd/>

Jesus came to help us be restored, addressing the needs distracting us from God and then pointing us back to God. The people in the Gospel today had been fed – the distraction of hunger was addressed – and they were seeking more.

They asked how they could perform the miracles too; Jesus pointed them to seeking God. He gave them more than physical sustenance. He gave them purpose for their lives. He is the bread of life because everyone who accepts Him as Savior accepts God's love.

The only life worth living is one rooted and grounded in the love of God, the source of all life.



picture from <https://www.sporcle.com/games/JoeBeta/awards>

Competitions look at who is worthy of the prize. But God did not create a competition. God created life and the only prize worth seeking is life in God.

People may ask, "Are you living a life worthy of God?" My answer: "No. There is no way that I can. God is worth far more than I can ever do or be."

But what I am trying to do is to live the life God created me to have - a life filled with love of and for God, and love of and for other people. It is the only life worthy of living.

Am I good at it? Sometimes, but only by the grace of God. Far too often I blow it, fall short, fail to show love where it is needed. Apparently I am not the only one to do that, either.

Paul begged the Ephesians to “lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called.” I asked earlier what makes someone worthy of being called “Christian” and how we can know we are doing well as a Christian.

Paul speaks of humility and gentleness, patience, bearing with one another in love, and the unity of the Spirit. All of those are characteristics of a life worthy of living.

Paul went on to talk about how everybody has different roles to play – no one can be everything – and we need to use our gifts for mutual benefit in Christ’s love. As Paul described, Christ is the head “from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.”

picture from personal design

Vacation Bible School



August 2-6, 2021

Noon - 3:30 pm

Camp Discovery

South Otselic United Methodist Church

Lunch provided

To preregister, contact Chris Kalin (315-653-7701 or ckalin@ovcs.org)
or Melanie Simmons (315-653-7728 or melanie@simmonsasylum.com)
On site registration will be available as well.

This week we will be holding Vacation Bible School in South Otselic. Chris has lined up everyone who is helping in different roles. Now we each need to do our part for a successful VBS – one that shows the

participants that they too are worthy of a life in the love of Christ.

As you go forward this week, remember to live the only life worth living – one focused on the love of God, sharing that love in humility, gentleness, and patience with others.

<Prayer of Dedication and Pastoral Prayer>

Let us pray:

Almighty Giver of All Good Gifts:

Grow in us the wisdom to know that all we have to give is in our hands only because you have given to us first.

Remind us that you have called us in Christ to be gentle, patient, and loving – and at one with your children everywhere.

May the gifts we have been given and the gifts we share reflect the debt of our gratitude for your many blessings.

Use our gifts and guide us with Your wisdom in our daily lives.

- Help us, Lord, with healing touch and comfort for:
 - Gary Sweet – hospice care
 - Mitch Mullenax – recovery from colon cancer surgery
 - Bruce Hakes – illness
 - Paul Carson – chemo & radiation for cancer
 - –
 - –

- Covid - delta outbreaks, vaccine issues worldwide
- Places devastated by severe weather - storms, flooding (Europe), heat (NW US), drought (Mideast)
- Thanks for
 - -
 - -
- Hold those who cannot be with us in Your loving embrace until we see them again.
 - Family far off
 - Travelers
- Send Your Spirit to address world/social problems
 - end bigotry, dismantle racism, reform systems persist
 - bring world peace
- Guide our Leaders - local, state, federal, international, and especially of Your church.

All these things we pray in Your holy name, Amen.

<Communion - UNCOVER elements>

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.

When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.

You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke through your prophets, who looked for that day

when justice shall roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream,

when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

<slide change>

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. Your Spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to announce that the time had come when you would save your people. He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners.

By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

<hold hands out over bread/elements>

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

<hold hands out over juice/elements>

When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,

<slide change>

we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.
Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

<hold hands out over elements>

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on
on these gifts of bread and juice.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ,
redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each
other, and one in ministry to all the world, until
Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his
heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit
in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours,
almighty God, now and forever.

Amen.

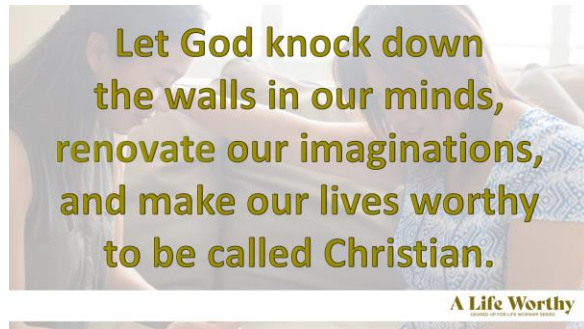
And now, with the confidence of the children of God,
let us pray: *<Lord's Prayer>*

<Breaking of the bread and lifting of the cup>

<Serving of the elements>

<Hymn "Grace Alone" TFWS #2162>

<Benediction>



background from <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/geared-up-for-life/tenth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-b-lectionary-planning-notes/tenth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-b-graphics>

Gearing up for **life** in the Spirit,
Let God knock down the walls in our minds,
renovate our imaginations,
and make our lives worthy to be called Christian.
In God's grace, go forth to show the world
the love of Jesus. Amen.