



Heart Havens Month 2020

Worship Resources

The theme for Heart Havens Month 2020 is “Better Together,” after Matthew 18:19-20, 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, Acts 10:34-35, Galatians 3:26-28 and John 13:35. Diversity makes our church community stronger, kinder and more beautiful. Truly, we are better when people of all types and abilities come together in unity. You are welcome to use these resources as you plan your observance of Heart Havens Month. If you have any questions, or if you’d like to schedule a speaker to visit your congregation, please call our office toll-free at (877) 442-8368.

HYMN SUGGESTIONS

One Bread, One Body, 620
All Things Bright and Beautiful, 147
God of Grace and God of Glory, 577
Many Gifts, One Spirit, 114
The Servant Song, TFWS 2222
They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love, TFWS 2223
Bind Us Together, TFWS 2226
Together We Serve, TFWS 2175
In Unity We Lift Our Song, TFWS 2221
Jesu, Jesu, UMH 432
Jesus, We Are Here, TFWS 2273
Gather Us In, TFWS 2236

MEDITATIONS

“Yet, we have our ways of distinguishing one from another, in order to structure our contemporary world. Oftentimes, these distinctions among us hinder us from true fellowship with one another. Jesus’ story is a reminder to us about the company we keep.” —Emerson Powery, WorkingPreacher.Org

“We often confuse unity with uniformity, because it is much easier to gather with people who are like ourselves than it is to reach across the divisions which mark our culture.”—Brian Peterson, WorkingPreacher.org

“Paul reminds us that whatever human categories may describe us, they do not define us, “for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” All human categories are subordinate and ultimately irrelevant to our primary identity as members of the body of Christ.” —Elisabeth Johnson, WorkingPreacher.Org



THE BISHOP'S PRAYER FOR HEART HAVENS

Almighty and Gracious God, you are known to us as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. You know that we all do our best when we are in relationship with you and others. Give us the wisdom, grace, love and knowledge to trust you and your ways and to realize that it is better together.

We pray for the ministry of Heart Havens. We lift up the residents; the staff in the homes, as well as, the staff in Richmond. We pray for all the churches and individuals who faithfully support this ministry in a variety of ways. Together, we are better as individuals; as the Body of Christ and in ministry to all of God's Children. Amen.

Sharma D. Lewis, Resident Bishop
Virginia Conference, The United Methodist Church

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Christ's table is open to all!

People: So too should ours be!

Leader: When we sit down together, we are called to look around:

People: Who isn't included? Who have we left out?

Leader: When we welcome everyone to our table,

People: Our churches are stronger, our neighborhoods are stronger, and God rejoices!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Loving God, thank you for the gifts and talents you have granted each one of us. Thank you for the mystery of your creation, and for your call for us to share your love with our brothers and sisters throughout our community. Help us to empower those with a developmental disability to be full participants in our churches, in your Kingdom, and at your Table. This we ask in the name of the One who came teaching us to pray: [The Lord's Prayer]



CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

[Empties a bag of M&Ms]

Do you see all these delicious candies? They come in many colors.

Just like each M&M is a different color, all of us are different. We may look different on the outside because of our hair or eye color. Your friends may be taller or shorter than you. You may even have friends who do things differently. They may use a wheelchair or learn differently from you. Just like these candies, our differences are beautiful together. One color of candy would not be as lovely to look at as this rainbow of M&Ms.

Now let's try cutting open the candies. Do you think that they will be different inside?

God made us all special and different but, just like these candies, on the inside we are all the same. God loves each of us the same. Being around people different than us can help us see the world in new and exciting ways. God made each of us special but at our hearts, we are all the same.

Let's Pray:

Dear God, thank you for making each of us unique. Help us to remember that we are better when we are together in unity and love. In Jesus name, Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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, God Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.



From the dust you created us,
each one individually, and granted us each
different gifts and abilities to use to glorify you
and to bless those around us.
Even when we fail to recognize and celebrate
the gifts of others, your love for each and every one
of your children remains strong and unchanging.

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 the One who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.
You sent him to earth as a living example of how
to truly love our neighbors, and now he
sends us into the world to spread justice,
to speak kindness, and to share friendship and love
with people of all abilities. Just as he opened the Kingdom
to everyone, he still calls us to open our hearts, and our churches,
to everyone, regardless of ability.

On the night in which he gave all of himself for us,

[officiant recounts the events of the Last Supper]

So, in remembrance of your perfect love embodied in Jesus Christ,
We offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
As we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
And on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make Christ known to us in the sharing
Of this heavenly meal, that the light of Christ
Might shine out of us and into the world,
That all people will know that they, too,
Have a place in this Body.

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.**