

## RETIREE RECOGNITION SERVICE

*Honoring the Ministry of Faithful Servants*

**PRELUDE** *Be Thou My Vision* UMH 451

Arody Carazzco-Piano

### **GREETING**

Rev. Forrest R. Wells

Welcome and thank you for your prayers and presence as we recognize those who are entering a new phase of life and relationship with the church. This is the first time in three years that we have attempted to gather in person at annual conference for retirement recognition. While the focus is upon the 2022 class of retirees, our thoughts are also with those who retired during the pandemic years without benefit of personal contact and real handshakes or hugs of affirmation.

Clergy of the retiring class, remember that, when entering ministry, you came to us from congregations where the Spirit of the Lord was upon you; and you were charged to preach to the brokenhearted, to visit the captive, to anoint those who were bruised, and to reach out with love and grace beyond the walls of congregations to your communities and the world. These things you have done. We are so thankful and appreciative of you and the many contributions you have made to local congregations, communities, the Wisconsin Annual Conference and the world. Your service in the ministry of Jesus Christ joins with all those clergy before you who have been instrumental in proclaiming and living the Good News of the realm of God.

“Retirement Recognition” is an appropriate description of this gathering since the prospect of retirement brings on a myriad of emotions that cannot be captivated in one word. Celebration, joy, sadness, relief, regret, anticipation, fear, apprehension, anticipation are but a few feelings that may be coursing through all of us this day. The ministry and identity as clergy that has shaped, formed and at times beaten you up is now coming to an end in its current form. We celebrate the positive impact of your lives as you have borne the image of Christ to communities of faith and to the world. Partnering with laity and with God’s grace flowing through them, these retirees have provided leadership, vision, comfort, counsel, support, spiritual guidance and so much more. Those whom we recognize have also endured personal crises, family turmoil, financial challenges and more as they have offered their lives in sacrificial service. Many of the colleagues with whom you were ordained or licensed left this calling and have journeyed other paths. But for the retirement class of 2022 today we proclaim with the apostle Paul, “You have fought the good fight, finished the race and have kept the faith.” It is now time to lay down the burdens and the joys of this particular work!

There is a time for every season under heaven and now the time has come to move on with gratitude and thankfulness for the privilege that God has given you to serve. The opportunity to rest and re-create life awaits. The greater community of faith, the Wisconsin Conference of the United Methodist Church, takes this moment to express gratitude for the ministry that you have brought and to grieve what will be lost from our community as you retire. This is a poignant time as you pass the mantle of ministry to those who follow. Never think lightly of the great good that God has wrought through you. Continue to be true to your calling. You may retire from this active clergy role, but God’s calling does not depart even as life takes on new forms. May the power of God, the love of Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you always.

We give thanks for you and celebrate your gift of ministry to us.

**CALL TO WORSHIP** *based on Psalm 8*

Rev. Mary Anne Conklin & Rev. Craig Conklin

O Sovereign of All Creation, how majestic is your name!

**We behold the moon and stars of heaven!**

**We gaze upon your wondrous works!**

What are we that you are mindful of us?

What are mortals to you that you should care?

**Creator, Healer, and Sustainer of all**

**We lift your glorious praise!**

**RESPONSE** *Alleluia!*

Rev. Jane Sommers

**OPENING PRAYER**

Rev. Susan Leih

**God of Radical Inclusion and Racial Justice, before the foundation of the world, you prepared a way of outstretched love for all. By feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, caring for the sick, visiting the prisoner, your people have shared in the work of your hands here on earth. You have touched our lives, given words of hope and inspiration. You have sent us forth to build and plant where there is discouragement and sadness. You have given us seeds of kindness and mercy for the brokenhearted, the downtrodden, the bruised, the battered, the desolate. The path of Jesus is our path. The suffering of Jesus is our suffering. The life of Jesus is our life. This is your way. So be it.**

**WORD OF HOPE** *based on Isaiah 58:10-14*

English & Spanish - Rev. Jorge Mayorga

If you give food to the hungry and care for the afflicted, your light

shall rise in the darkness. Your bones will strengthen. Your thirst will quench.

Your cherished ancestral dwelling shall be rebuilt as a strong foundation for many generations.

Pour out your Spirit upon all. Amen

**SPECIAL MUSIC** *The Way* by Pat Barrett

Taylor Schreiber

**HONORING RETIREES** *Class of 2022*

Rev. Jane Sommers

**WORD OF LOVE** *based on 1 John 4:7-13* MSG

English & Spanish - Rev. Jorge Mayorga

Beloved, let us love one another. Love is from God.

Whoever loves is born of God. Whoever loves knows the heart of God.

Therefore, let love reign supreme in every word and deed.

Pour out your Spirit on all who gather. Amen.

**CALL FOR THE OFFERING**

Rev. Paul Gregersen

In response to the immediate and ongoing humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, Bishop Jung has asked the Wisconsin Annual Conference to join together in supporting the UMCOR's relief efforts on the ground in Ukraine. Your gifts will support feeding programs, medical care and emergency support services to families desperately in need of assistance. All are invited to place your offerings in the collection trays on your table or go to the Wisconsin Annual Conference 2022 website "Videos and Materials" page "Offerings" link. Thank you for your generous gift on behalf of the people of Ukraine.

**OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Rev. Paul Gregersen

God of Tender Mercy, you hear the cries of mothers and fathers and children in a state of desperate need caused by incomprehensible casualties of war. The unthinkable has happened and we will not stand by unmoved by treachery. Let your mercy flow. Let your compassion spring forth from the bloodied earth. We pray in earnest for the grieving, the suffering, the hungering, the sighing too deep for words. Through these gifts, may the brokenhearted be touched through your people in the way of Jesus. Consecrate these gifts of mercy and extend your loving reach to the ends of the earth. Amen

**SPECIAL MUSIC** *Thank You Jesus for Your Love to Me* by Alison Huntley Revell  
Rev. Hyunwoong Harris Hwang-Vocal & Guitar

**WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT** *based on John 15:1-8* English & Spanish - Rev. Jorge Mayorga  
Abide in me as I abide in you. The branch cannot bear fruit  
by itself unless it abides in the vine. If my word abides in you,  
ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done according to my will.  
Pour out your Spirit on all who gather here. Amen

**SERMON** *A Limp & A Blessing* Rev. Don Greer

**SPECIAL MUSIC** *Come, O Thou Traveler Unknown* UMH 387 Rev. Jane Sommers

**PRAYER OF CONSECRATION** Rev. Susan Leih  
**Our true home abides at the hearth of kindness. Ignite the glowing embers. Kindle your sanctifying fire. In the name of all that is Right and Good, Lovely and Pure, Faithful and True, we lift the holy ground of sacred sanctuary in the name of God. Let your kindness ripple outward in an ever-widening circle of welcome to weary wanderers. Consecrate your dwelling. Commission your people. Heal our body, our community, our world. Amen**

**MOMENT OF REFLECTION** *Woodwind Meditation* Rev. Jane Sommers

**BLESSING & BENEDICTION** Bishop Hee-Soo Jung

**POSTLUDE** *How Can I Keep from Singing* Piano Arrangement by Arody Carazzco



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Thanks to all who generously offered a heart of spiritual worship!*

### WORSHIP DESIGN CREDITS

Liturgy Designed & Authored by Rev. Jane Sommers  
Liturgist & Musician Coordination by Rev. Jane Sommers

### MUSIC CREDITS

*Be Thou My Vision* Piano Arrangement by Arody Carrazco  
*Alleluia* Keyboard Arrangement by Rev. Jane Sommers  
*The Way* Guitar & Vocal Arrangement by Taylor Schreiber  
*Thank You Jesus for Your Love to Me* Guitar & Vocal by Rev. Hyunwoong Harris Hwang  
*Come, Thou, O Traveler Unknown* Music & Video Production by Rev. Jane Sommers  
*Musical Meditation* Clarinet Arrangement by Rev. Jane Sommers  
*How Can I Keep from Singing* Piano Arrangement by Arody Carrazco

### PRODUCTION CREDITS

Video Montages by Rev. Jane Sommers  
Videography by Paul Sommers & Rev. Jane Sommers  
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