

MEMPHIS ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
OPENING WORSHIP  
SUNDAY, JUNE 3, 2018  
7:00 PM

GATHERING

GATHERING MUSIC

+LITANY OF GATHERING

From many lands we come, journeying together toward a new day.

**We are a wilderness wandering people.**

From the corners of the Conference we gather and find ourselves in a “land between.”

**We are a wilderness wandering people.**

The church is changing and we traverse the land between what has been and what shall yet be.

**We are a wilderness wandering people.**

Like the Israelites who traveled the land between from Egypt to Canaan, we are led by our great Redeemer.

**We are a wilderness wandering people.**

Like the disciples who traveled the land between Jerusalem and Emmaus, we discover that Christ walks with us.

**We are a wilderness wandering people.**

Like the early church, we feel the Holy Spirit blowing new life in and through us.

**We are a wilderness wandering people.**

God is calling us from the places of our past to new places of mission and ministry.

**We are a wilderness wandering people.**

We respond in faith, remembering God’s faithfulness from generation to generation.

**We are a wilderness wandering people.**

We trust God to walk with us on the journey and lead us on to our destination, the Promised Land of our future together.

**We are a wilderness wandering people,**

**lifting our voices in praise to the God of all that was and is and is to come.**

+OPENING HYMN

“Guide Us, O Thou Great Redeemer “

Guide us, O Thou great Redeemer,  
pilgrims through this barren land;  
We are weak, but you are mighty;  
hold us with your powerful hand.  
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,  
feed us now and evermore,  
feed us now and evermore.

Open now the crystal fountain,  
where the healing waters flow.

Let the fire and cloudy pillar  
lead us all the journey through.  
Strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer,  
ever be our strength and shield,  
ever be our strength and shield.

When we tread the verge of Jordan,  
bid all anxious fears subside.  
Death of death, and hell's destruction,  
land us safe on Canaan's side.  
Songs of praises, songs of praises  
We will ever sing to you,  
We will ever sing to you.

#### +OPENING PRAYER

Eternal God, the refuge and help of all your children,  
we praise you for all you have given us,  
for all you have done for us,  
for all that you are to us.  
In our weakness, you are strength,  
in our darkness, you are light,  
in our sorrow, you are comfort and peace.  
We cannot number your blessings,  
we cannot declare your love:  
For all your blessings we bless you.  
May we live as in your presence,  
and love the things that you love,  
and serve you in our daily lives;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

#### CELEBRATING THE MINISTRIES OF THE MEMPHIS CONFERENCE

*Leader: As we journey in this "land between," our mission remains the same: to share the saving love of God with a hurting world. Tonight we recognize and celebrate the Memphis Conference ministries we share in our mission to the world in the name of Jesus Christ.*

All sing: **Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah. Hallelujah, hallelujah.**

#### Statements of mission and ministry

- Reelfoot Rural Ministries
- Wesley Housing Corporation
- Lakeshore United Methodist Camp and Conference Center
- Memphis Conference United Methodist Men
- West Kentucky United Methodist Family Services
- Project 20/20

- Memphis Conference Volunteers in Mission
- Hannah's Hope Adoption and Crisis Pregnancy Ministries
- Memphis Conference Youth and Campus Ministries
- Grace Place United Methodist Church
- Project Transformation
- Golden Cross Ministries
- Nashville Area Disaster Response Ministry
- Memphis Conference Lenten Hunger Offering
- Memphis Conference United Methodist Women
- United Methodist Neighborhood Centers

Leader: Lord, you have called us to serve in your name: the young and old, the ill and infirmed, the hungry and poor, the abandoned and imprisoned, the lost and forgotten, and to share the good news of your saving grace in all the world. Continue to bless all these ministries which we offer in your name throughout our Conference. And as you promised, we know that we will not be alone in our journey of faith and mission, for you are always with us. **Amen.**

**Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah. Hallelujah, hallelujah.**

CHOIR ANTHEM

“Down to the River to Pray”

arr. Mary McDonald

*Purchase District Festival Choir, directed by Buckley Walker*

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

In the stillness,  
in the silence,  
we attend to your presence, O God.

And we feel you filling us from within –  
illuminating our minds,  
warming our hearts,  
stirring our spirits,  
strengthening our hands,  
transforming our wills,  
energizing our lives,

Until every fiber of our being  
is filled with your presence.

Blessed are you, our God  
whose name is love  
whose presence is light

whose heart is justice  
whose gift is grace  
whose life is hope.  
**Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 10:1-9

SERMON

Rev. Junius Dotson

“The Game-plan: Simple Instructions for Engaging the Community”

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

+HYMN

“As a Fire Is Meant for Burning”

As a fire is meant for burning with a bright and warming flame,  
So the church is meant for mission, giving glory to God’s name.  
Not to preach our creeds or customs, but to build a bridge of care,  
We join hands across the nations, finding neighbors everywhere.

We are learners; we are teachers; we are pilgrims on the way.  
We are seekers; we are givers; we are vessels made of clay.  
By our gentle, loving actions we would show that Christ is light.  
In a humble, listening Spirit we would live to God’s delight.

As a green bud in the spring-time is a sign of life renewed,  
So may we be signs of oneness ‘mid earth’s peoples, many hued.  
As a rainbow lights the heavens when a storm is past and gone,  
May our lives reflect the radiance of God’s new and glorious dawn.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*Let us pray:*

God,  
like the Israelites in the wilderness,  
we too have known your love,  
and experienced your care and provision.  
You call us to extend your love to the world around us—  
to care for others as deeply as we care for ourselves.  
And so we bring the needs of our world before you now.  
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who do not have what they need in order to survive;  
those without enough food to eat, or shelter to keep them warm;  
those without employment, or enough money to pay their bills;

those without access to medical care, or medicine to keep them healthy.  
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who have more than enough to meet their needs,  
but who continue to feel empty inside;  
who struggle to find meaning and purpose in life,  
who turn to alcohol, drugs, or other destructive behaviors  
to try and hide the pain.  
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who are struggling physically,  
who are battling life-threatening disease or injury,  
who are living with chronic pain,  
who are coping with mental illness or infirmity,  
or who are facing death.  
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the first and the last,  
and all those in between,  
Your grace reaches out to all of us—  
life-long believers or newcomers alike.  
You call us to live as citizens of heaven,  
to work together with one mind and one purpose,  
to reach out in love to those in need.

Strengthen us so that we might live in a manner worthy  
of the Good News we have received,  
offering our lives to the building up of Your upside-down kingdom,  
where the last are first, and the first are last,  
and there is grace enough for all.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord we pray,  
Saying together,

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

OFFERING FOR MAMA LYNN CENTER

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Hallelujah! By and By”  
*Purchase District Festival Choir*

arr. Mary McDonald

+SONG OF RESPONSE

“Know That God Is Good (*Mungu ni mwema*)”

**Know that God is good. Know that God is good. Know that God is good;  
God is good; God is good.**

**Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah. Hallelujah, hallelujah.  
Mungu ni mwema. Mungu ni mwema. Mungu ni mwema, ni mwema, ni mwema.  
Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah. Hallelujah, hallelujah.**

### SENDING FORTH

#### COMMISSIONING PROJECT TRANSFORMATION INTERNS

*Bishop: All who take upon themselves the name of Christ are called into ministries of love and service by the example of Christ. As these interns begin their work among the children of Memphis, we pray the blessings of God and this community upon their endeavors.*

**Congregation: We recognize you as ambassadors of this Annual Conference in ministry with the children and families you will serve through Project Transformation and dedicate you to service in the name of Jesus Christ. Through our prayers we will be united with you in your work. May God richly bless your labors.**

*Bishop: Let us affirm our belief in the responsibilities of Christian service.*

**ALL: We believe in God, Creator of the world; and in Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of creation. We believe in the Holy Spirit, through whom we acknowledge God’s gifts. We commit ourselves to the rights and dignity of all persons and to the improvement of the quality of life. We dedicate ourselves to peace throughout the world and to the rule of justice and law among all nations. We believe in the present and final triumph of God’s Word in human affairs, and gladly accept our commission to manifest the life of the gospel in the world.**

+HYMN

“A Wilderness Wandering People”

CHOIR:

*We are a wilderness wandering people on a journey of the soul.  
May we find our destination in our longing to be whole.  
Our Holy God is calling to us. With Jesus by our side  
May compassion be our compass; may the Spirit be our guide.*

ALL:

We are a wilderness wandering people on a journey of the soul.  
May we find our destination in our longing to be whole.  
Our Holy God is calling to us. With Jesus by our side  
May compassion be our compass; may the Spirit be our guide.

May we cherish all our children, let us heal our family's pain.  
Help us cure our city's madness, let love and justice reign.  
Reconciled with one another in prayer and praise and song,  
We're the body of Christ together and we know that we belong,  
We belong, we belong, we belong.

+DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Bishop McAlilly

+POSTLUDE

Todd Hill

+ + + + +

Leading in Worship

Bishop William T. McAlilly  
Rev. Amy Martin, song leader  
Chris Beal, pianist  
Dr. Todd E. Hill, organist and pianist  
Rev. Cynthia Davis and Jackson Boone, liturgists  
Purchase District Festival Choir, Buckley Walker, director  
Rev. Junius B. Dotson, General Secretary, Discipleship Resources

Resources

Litany of Gathering: Amy Martin, 2018  
"Guide Us, O Thou Great Redeemer" words by William Williams, alt.  
Opening Prayer: St. Boniface, <https://re-worship.blogspot.ca/2014/06/prayer-of-saint-boniface.html>  
Celebrating the Ministries of the Memphis Conference: Amy Martin, 2018  
Anthem "Down to the River to Pray" arranged by Mary McDonald, Lorenz 10/3163M  
Prayer for Illumination: adapted from <https://re-worship.blogspot.ca/2012/10/centering-prayer-in-stillness.html>  
"As a Fire Is Meant for Burning" words by Ruth Duck, *The Faith We Sing* 2237  
Prayers of the People: <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2011/09/prayers-of-people-september-18-2011.html>  
Offertory Anthem "Hallelujah! By and By" arranged by Mary McDonald, Hope Publishing C5969  
Song of Response: "Know That God Is Good" words and music from Democratic Republic of Congo, arr. Edo Bumba, *Glory to God* 659  
Commissioning of Project Transformation Interns: An Order for Commissioning to Short-term Christian Service, *UM Book of Worship* 592  
"A Wilderness Wandering People" words and music by Jim Strathdee, *Worship & Song* 3113