

"Refined by Fire and Grace"

Genesis 37:27-28; Matthew 26:15; 27:3,4,6

Pastor Cathy L Hamblin

Proverbs 25:4-5; 26:23; I Corinthians 3:11-13; James 5:1-3

9<sup>th</sup> week of Summer July 28, 2019

Hayward United Methodist Church

Call to Worship

**Ezekiel 34:11-12, 16**

For thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. **As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep.**

I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. **I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak.**

Prayer of Invocation

Seeking God, with relentless persistence you look until you find where we are in our lost-ness.

**In unconditional love you move to save us from the darkness of the world into which we have wandered, following our own will and way.**

**You show us that nothing can deter you from your intention to bring us back to you and your love. As your refined and rescued people, we rejoice in worshiping you this day. Amen.**

Scavenger Hunt

Pins and Needles; Pots & Pans – 2; Keys; Coins "In God We Trust"; Dime found in the Washing Machine; Jewelry; Silverware; Flag Poles; Chain Link Fence; the Gunwales of my yellow canoe; A silver shawl on fancy dancer at the powwow; My Hair; Olympic Silver Metals; The beautiful work of native artists in the southwest;

Girl Scout Campfire Song: Make new friends and keep the old, one is silver and the other gold.

The glistening of the sun on the waves; dark clouds with silver linings; Silver sheets of rain; Silver Maple Trees; fish scales; Christmas Song Silver Bells – 2; Silver Chalice; Silver wings; The Lone Ranger's cry "Hi Ho Silver!"

The Word

Scripture Litany: Genesis 37:27-28; Matthew 26:15; 27:3,4,6;

Proverbs 25:4-5; 26:23; I Corinthians 3:11-13; James 5:1-3

Joseph's Brother Judah said: "Come on, let's sell him to the Ishmaelites. Let's not harm him because he's our brother; he's family." His brothers agreed. When some Midianite traders passed by, they pulled Joseph up out of the cistern. They sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver, and they brought Joseph to Egypt.

**...and Judas said, "What will you give me if I turn Jesus over to you?" They paid him thirty pieces of silver. When Judas, who betrayed Jesus, saw that Jesus was condemned to die, he felt deep regret. He returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, and said, "I did wrong because I betrayed an innocent man." The chief priests picked up the silver pieces and said, "According to the Law it's not right to put this money in the treasury. Since it was used to pay for someone's life, it's unclean."**

Remove the dross from the silver, and a vessel will come out for the refiner. Remove the wicked from the king's presence, and his throne will be established in righteousness. Smooth lips and an evil heart are like silver coating on clay.

**No one can lay any other foundation besides the one that is already laid, which is Jesus Christ. So, whether someone builds on top of the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, or hay, each one's work will be clearly shown. The day will make it clear, because it will be revealed with fire—the fire will test the quality of each one's work.**

Pay attention, you wealthy people! Your riches have rotted. Your gold and silver have rusted, and their rust will be evidence against you. Consider the treasure you have hoarded in the last days.

Living the Word

July 2013 - The headlines read: Odyssey Marine Exploration, a U.S.-based underwater archaeology and salvage company has recovered 61 tons of silver, worth about 36 million dollars, from nearly 3 miles down in the ocean.

- The treasure, consisting of 1,574 silver ingots, weighing 78 pounds each and weighing a total of about 1.8 million ounces, was retrieved from the *SS Gairsoppa*, a 412-foot steel-hulled British cargo ship that sank on Feb. 17, 1941, after being torpedoed by a Nazi U-boat.

20% of the find will go to the British Government, and the exploration team will receive 80%.

Idols – Psalm 115:1-11

Not to us, LORD, not to us— no, but to your own name give glory because of your loyal love and faithfulness! Why do the nations say, “Where’s their God now?” Our God is in heaven— he can do whatever he wants! Their idols are just silver and gold— things made by human hands. They have mouths, but they can’t speak.

They have eyes, but they can’t see. They have ears, but they can’t hear. They have noses, but they can’t smell. They have hands, but they can’t feel. They have feet, but they can’t walk. They can’t even make a noise in their throats!

Let the people who made these idols and all who trust in them become just like them! But you, Israel, trust in the LORD! God is their help and shield. Trust in the LORD, house of Aaron! God is their help and shield. You who honor the LORD, trust in the LORD! God is their help and shield.

Refining Silver - **Cupellation Method**

Silver ore and scrap silver have to go through a refining process in order for the pure silver to be separated from the dross. Cupellation is when it is heated to 1,200 degrees Celsius in a special furnace. First though, the silver scrap or ore is placed in a solution which produces a white powder, silver chloride. When sodium carbonate is mixed with the silver chloride and placed in a cupellation furnace, the heat causes a chemical reaction and makes table salt and silver. The process works without the addition of sodium carbonate as well but then the heat releases poisonous chlorine gas as it produces the pure silver.

Like silver, we are refined in life...we go through heated times, Experiences are added and later define us. The wrong experiences can destroy us... The right experiences can refine us to a purer state.

God’s Holy Spirit is always ready to refine us into something new, something better, but we have to be willing to surrender our self to what is to come. It is there waiting for us , but it is our choice if we are ready to change and become purer through the process.

Psalm 66:8-12 CEB

*All you nations, bless our God! Let the sound of his praise be heard!*

*God preserved us among the living; he didn't let our feet slip a bit.*

*But you, God, have tested us—you've refined us like silver, trapped us in a net, laid burdens on our backs, let other people run right over our heads— we've been through fire and water.*

*But you brought us out to freedom!*

Tarnished Silver – Tarnishing is a natural process

The presence of Hydrogen Sulfide in any material that silver comes into contact with, is one of the prime reasons for silver tarnish.

Materials like wool, rubber bands, and rubber (latex) gloves are some of the common materials that cause tarnishing of silver. Certain foods like eggs and onions also hasten the silver tarnish process. You can therefore realize that, touching silver jewelry after a meal could also stain your silver jewelry with tarnish. The extent and speed with which your silver jewelry tarnishes is also related to the climate and in general, high humidity would result in silver tarnishing much faster.

We also come into contact with things that can tarnish us. We choose to be tarnished by the ways that we separate ourselves from God. It is called sin. We don't like that word, but our lives are tarnished by it. There are also many unavoidable things that can change who we are.

- Evils of Silver - 20 pieces of silver – Joseph sold as a slave by his brothers. Slavery is still an issue, not only in foreign countries, but also in ours. We who are refined have to see this tarnish and work to purify life for others as well as ourselves.

30 pieces of silver – Jesus was sold to save a corrupt system, by one of his close friends – Judas.

To be sold off by your brothers or your friends – what betrayal, what pain.

Silver not all evil...*Isaiah 2:4*

*God will judge between the nations, and settle disputes of mighty nations.*

*Then they will beat their swords into iron plows and their spears into pruning tools.*

*Nation will not take up sword against nation; they will no longer learn how to make war.*

- Bridges – Hudson Bridge – largest structure I knew as a child  
Stillwater Bridge – in time of floods – the sandbagging – people coming together
  - Two sides needed to make a bridge and keep a bridge.
  - New Stillwater bridge – concrete - away to cross the river, but a social walking bridge where people gather.

The New Testament summed up in one word – Love = relationship

- I Peter 1:18-19 *Live in this way, knowing that you were not liberated by perishable things like silver or gold. Instead, you were liberated by the precious blood of Christ...*

Worship & Prayer: opportunities to purify and strengthen who you are.

- Shine it up – work on the silver in your life and build bridges.