

Laurel Street Mennonite Church

August 21, 2022

Worship Leader: Karyn Nancarvis

Music Leader: Laura Metzler

Discussion facilitator: Linda Witmer

Order of Worship

Welcome, Announcements & Celebrations

Opening Prayer

Singing

Offering Prayer & My Coins Count

Back to School Blessing

Dismissal of Nursery (ages 0-3)
& Children's Church (ages 4-7)

Led by Beth & Mike

Scripture: Luke 13:10-17

Table Group discussion (see below)

Song of response

Sharing & Prayer Time

Prayer time for each other, our community, and the world:

- Pray for the bent over places in each other, our community and country.
- Pray for God's grace, mercy, and healing in the bent or broken areas of your lives, even if you aren't ready to share them.
- Pray for patience and the desire for change and healing, however slowly or rapidly it happens.

Benediction

Luke 13:10-17

Jesus Heals a Bent Over Woman on the Sabbath (The Message)

10-13 He was teaching in one of the meeting places on the Sabbath. There was a woman present, so twisted and bent over that she couldn't even look up. She had been afflicted with this for eighteen years. When Jesus saw her, he called her over. "Woman, you're free!" He laid hands on her and suddenly she was standing straight and tall, giving glory to God.

14 The meeting-place president, furious because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the congregation, "Six days have been defined as work days. Come on one of the six if you want to be healed, but not on the seventh, the Sabbath."

15-16 But Jesus shot back, "You frauds! Each Sabbath every one of you regularly unties your cow or donkey from its stall, leads it out for water, and thinks nothing of it. So why isn't it all right for me to untie this daughter of Abraham and lead her from the stall where Satan has had her tied these eighteen years?"

17 When he put it that way, his critics were left looking quite silly and red-faced. The congregation was delighted and cheered him on.

Unfolding Light, by Steve Garnaas-Holmes

Bowing, in a posture of subservience,
as if unequal, inferior.

Unable to embrace, to dance,
to work, to contribute.

Facing the floor, not the horizon,
the dirt, not the future.

Yet worthy, beloved,
gifted, wise and strong.

Unable to look eye to eye,
intimately, on the level.

Not helpless, but patient,
trusting, accepting, and at peace.

Familiar with pain,
her constant companion.

Grace reshaped her spine
to match her heart.

Unable to stand tall, take a stand,
look up, raise a hand.

A few questions to ponder:

Many ideas and questions were gathered from Steve Garnaas-Holmes, Unfolding Light. You will probably not have time to reflect on all of them. Choose two or three that you are most drawn to for discussion.

1. What is bent over in you? What is pushed over, put down, made weak, or silenced?
What is the constant pain that is your companion? (social, emotional, physical, spiritual)
In what areas do you feel unequal to others, inferior, unable to stand tall? What in you is bound up, distorted, facing downward?
2. The bent over woman could not look another human being in the face. Grace empowers us to see Christ or someone who has hurt us face-to-face. Do we cling to unhealthy aspects of ourselves because we fear the moment of being straightened and obliged to look Christ in the face or to look the person who hurt us in the face?
3. In this passage, the leaders said it was not the right time for healing. Talk about a time when you experienced power, laws or structures as more important than the time for healing?
4. Jesus values people over principles. He opposes a status quo that justifies suffering. He confronts those in power who use it for harm. He doesn't break God's law: he interprets it more deeply: as a law of liberation, not requirement or prohibition. He invites us to see God's laws and all of life in a new way. He gives us permission to live lives of love regardless of rigid systems and despite resistance. What are some issues today where we (you) are called to show others this same type of mercy and love?
5. Reflect on this phrase by Steve Garnaas-Holmes:

Let the bent over woman in you come forward.

Let Jesus lay a healing hand on her.

Don't expect instant change, but know this:

the spirit that distorts you

is not as strong as love.