



August 25, 2024 9:30 a.m.

**FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)**



11 W. Pine St.  
Butler, MO 64730  
660.679.3066

**Email:** [admin@fccbutler.org](mailto:admin@fccbutler.org)  
**Website:** [fccbutler.org](http://fccbutler.org)  
**Facebook:** [@FCCButlerMO](https://www.facebook.com/FCCButlerMO)

# SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

Sunday, August 25, 2024

## Joys and Concerns

Sharla Hulsey

*In order to respect privacy, joys and concerns will be discussed before the public livestream. If you need to add someone, please fill out a prayer request form and place in the offering tray as it is passed.*

## Welcome and Announcements

Don Malan, Elder

*If you are joining Sunday worship via Facebook Live, let us know you are tuning in by leaving a comment on the live stream video or visit [fccbutler.org](http://fccbutler.org) and click the Register Attendance button.*

## WE GATHER TO PRAISE GOD

### Prelude

Mary Coffman

*Bringing the Light of Christ into the Sanctuary*

### Special Music

Zach Craft

### \*Call to worship (please rise as able)

Don Malan & Congregation

L: Grace to you and peace  
from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**P: Through God we are filled with grace  
sufficient for all our needs.**

L: In Christ we are a new creation,  
made pure and spotless through his faithfulness.

**P: We renew our own faith in worship,  
so our newness of life will be evident to others.**

### \*Opening Hymn

Chalice Hymnal #622 (all)

*"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"*

### \*Invocation

Don Malan & Congregation

**God of Love, you call us your children and love us without condition;  
and set us free to love one another similarly and to call one another  
"brother" and "sister." Renew us in this time of worship; breathe  
your loving Spirit into our hearts. Help us to love as we are loved,  
through Christ Jesus, in whom we lay aside our old lives and rise in  
newness of life. Amen.**

### Prayer Hymn

CH #545 (all)

*"He Leadeth Me: O Blessed Thought!"*

### Silent Meditation

## Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

Sharla Hulsey

**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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for Thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

## Musical Interlude

Mary Coffman

## Responsive Reading

Don Malan & Congregation

Psalm 23 (*Chalice Hymnal*)

L: The LORD is my shepherd,  
I shall not want.

**P: He makes me lie down in green pastures;**

L: he leads me beside still waters;  
he restores my soul.

**P: He leads me in right paths  
for his name's sake.**

L: Even though I walk through the darkest valley,  
I fear no evil;

**P: for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff—  
they comfort me.**

L: You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;

**P: you anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.**

L: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life,

**P: and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.**

## Scripture

Chuck Lewis

*Philemon*

## Message

Sharla Hulsey

*"Show Me the Way"*

## Invitation to Discipleship

Sharla Hulsey

## \*Invitation Hymn

CH #628 (all)

*"Precious Lord, Take My Hand"*

## Musical Interlude

Mary Coffman

## Offering Meditation

Diana Rich



## THE CLEARNESS COMMITTEE

*In the Friends (Quaker) tradition, people facing important decisions sometimes call together a “clearness committee” to help them discern God’s will. Parker Palmer offers some instructions for how such a committee might function.*

“Behind the Clearness Committee is a simple but crucial conviction: *each of us has an inner teacher, a voice of truth, that offers the guidance and power we need to deal with our problems.* But that inner voice is often garbled by various kinds of inward and outward interference. The function of the Clearness Committee is not to give advice or “fix” people from the outside in but rather to help people remove the interference so that they can discover their own wisdom from the inside out...

“The Clearness Committee’s work is guided by some simple but crucial rules and understandings. Among them, of course, is the rule that the process is confidential. When it is over, committee members will not speak with others about what is said and, equally important, will not speak with the focus person [the person seeking guidance from the committee] about the problem unless he or she requests a conversation.”

A Clearness Committee meets for a set period of time (perhaps two hours). The group waits in prayerful silence, broken when the focus person begins by presenting their dilemma in a “concise but helpful” way, taking around 10-15 minutes. Following that description, committee members may ask questions, but *not offer advice or describe similar situations they have faced in their own lives.* Palmer explains: “Nothing is allowed except real questions, honest and open questions, questions that will help the focus person remove the blocks to his or her inner truth without becoming burdened by the personal agendas of committee members.”

An honest, open question is not a leading question, but one in which the asker does not already have the answer in mind: “Did you ever feel like this before?” rather than “Didn’t that make you angry?” Questions should be brief and to the point, and “go to the person as well as the problem—for example, questions about feelings as well as about facts.”

The focus person responds to the questions as they are asked, and those responses will likely generate additional questions. Their responses should be full, but not overly long; as Palmer says, “Resist the temptation to tell your life story in response to every question!”

A Clearness Committee meeting should not become a grilling or cross-examination; it should be relaxed and gentle. Participants need not be afraid of silence; it doesn’t mean the conversation has petered out but could mean that important inner work is taking place. If silence falls, spend it in prayer. The meeting is also not a social gathering; participants must resist the temptation to chitchat or cracking jokes to break tension.

The committee should “surround the focus person with quiet, loving space, resisting even the temptation to comfort or reassure or encourage, but simply being present with our attention and our questions and our care.”

About fifteen minutes before the allotted time ends, the focus person may choose to ask committee members to mirror back what has been said—but as during the question period, mirroring does not permit participants to offer advice or fix the person. Instead, a participant reflects back to the focus person what they believe was said, notices their use of language and body language, and then asks whether their reflection is correct, whereupon the focus person may say, “Yes, that’s me,” or “No, that’s not.” More questions may be asked after or instead of this mirroring if the focus person prefers.

To close the meeting, Palmer says, participants should take five minutes or so to “celebrate and affirm the focus person and his or her strengths. This is an important time, since the focus person has just spent a couple of hours being very vulnerable.”

There should not be disappointment or letdown if the focus person’s problem is not “solved” at the end of the meeting. The process, and the Holy Spirit, continue working in the person long after the meeting ends. Committee members are called to continue to hold the focus person in prayer.

A caveat: Not every problem and not every person benefits from this process. A Clearness Committee might not, for instance, be appropriate for a person who is mentally, emotionally, or spiritually fragile. Prayerful discernment is required.