GOOD SHEPHERD
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Service for the Lord's Day

November 15th, 2020 10:00 am

28th Sunday of Ordinary Time

To listen to the service on your phone, call 720-647-9623 any time between 10 am this Sunday and 10 am the following Sunday.

Gathering Music

(Parts of the service in **bold** are for everyone to speak in unison.)

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship

Liturgist: You have called up to this place, O Lord.
People: **Each one of us is unique, with differing gifts and talents.**
Liturgist: Yet each talent represented here is valuable in God's realm.
People: **Lord, help us find ways in which to use our talents for healing and hope.**
Liturgist: Come; let us praise the Lord who has called us here.
People: **Let us open our hearts and spirits to God's word for us. Amen.**

Lighting of the Candle

We light this candle as a sign of God's Spirit at work in the world,
may its light brighten our spirits, and may the light of God shining through us brighten the world.

Prayer of Invocation

Kind and ever loving God, Giver of Life and all that is good. You have trusted us with so much: your creation, your peace, and your promise. Give us the grace to see your goodness unfold in the world around us, right here in the land of the living. Let us be united in love and seek you with our whole hearts, as we see your salvation at work in us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn 611 *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee* (next page)

Prayer for Illumination

Lord, your Word is set before us. Give us the grace to receive with faith and love that it might illuminate our path of understanding and grant us wisdom for our journey; through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Scripture Reading Matthew 25:14-30

"It's also like a man going off on an extended trip. He called his servants together and delegated responsibilities. To one he gave five thousand dollars, to another two thousand, to a third one thousand, depending on their abilities. Then he left. Right off, the first servant went to work and doubled his master's investment. The second did the same. But the man with the single thousand dug a hole and carefully buried his master's money.

"After a long absence, the master of those three servants came back and settled up with them. The one given five thousand dollars showed him how he had doubled his investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.'

"The servant with the two thousand showed how he also had doubled his master's investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.'

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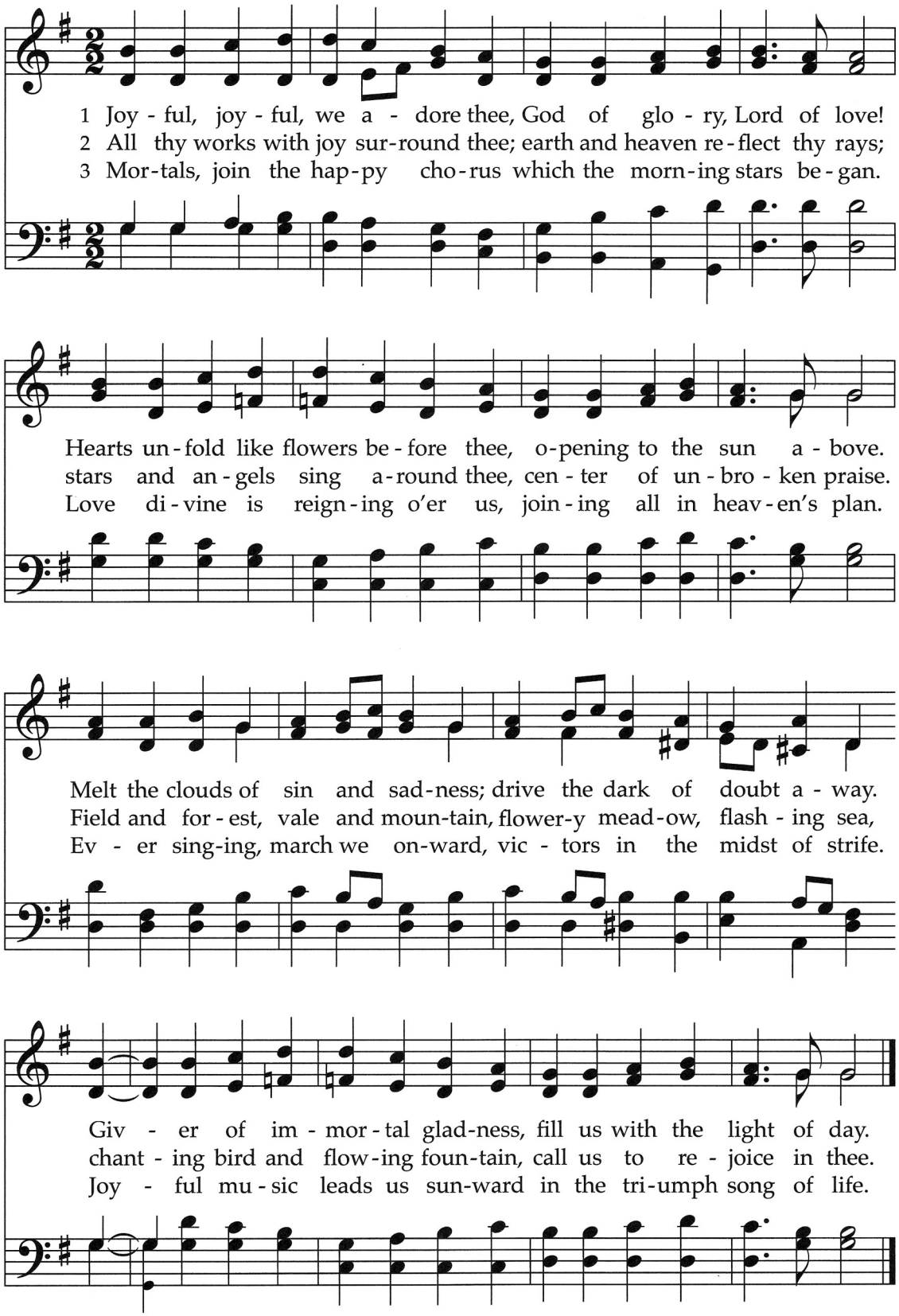
611 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee



This well-known melody was created to provide a choral setting for J. C. F. von Schiller's poem, "An die Freude" (To Joy), as the final movement of the composer's *Ninth Symphony*. The author, a prominent Presbyterian pastor and author, wrote the words with this tune in mind.

TEXT: Henry van Dyke, 1907, alt.
MUSIC: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824; adapt. Edward Hodges, 1842, alt.

HYMN TO JOY
8.7.8.7.D

"The servant given one thousand said, 'Master, I know you have high standards and hate careless ways, that you demand the best and make no allowances for error. I was afraid I might disappoint you, so I found a good hiding place and secured your money. Here it is, safe and sound down to the last cent.'

"The master was furious. 'That's a terrible way to live! It's criminal to live cautiously like that! If you knew I was after the best, why did you do less than the least? The least you could have done would have been to invest the sum with the bankers, where at least I would have gotten a little interest.

"'Take the thousand and give it to the one who risked the most. And get rid of this "play-it-safe" who won't go out on a limb. Throw him out into utter darkness.'

Sermon — *The Adventure of Faith* — Rev. Sheri Fry

Special Music — *Tis a Gift to be Simple* — Shaker tune arr. Mark Hayes

Affirmation of Faith — The Iona Community

We affirm that we are made in God's image, befriended by Christ, empowered by the Spirit. With people everywhere we affirm God's goodness at the heart of humanity, planted more deeply than all that is wrong. With all creation we celebrate the miracle and wonder of life, the unfolding purposes of God, forever at work in the world and ourselves.

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Offering Ourselves and Our Gifts

Hymn 714 — *God of the Fertile Fields* — (next page)

Charge and Benediction — (Iona Worship Book)

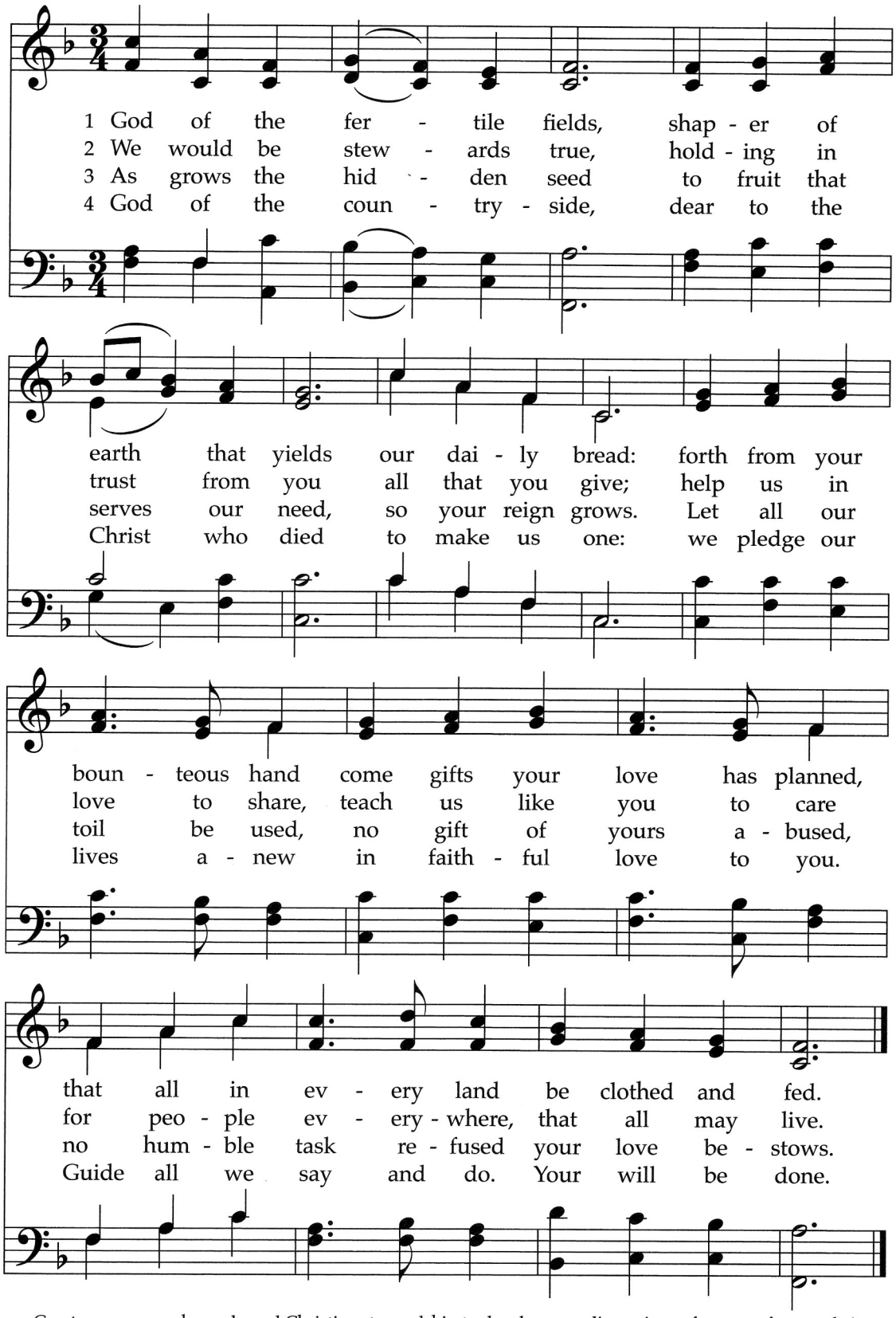
Leader: Let us be for a moment in silence and value our souls,
Our minds and our bodies
On which we will ask God's blessing.
People: **May God bless us in our bodies with health, in our minds with understanding, in our souls with the company of the Holy Spirit, that together we may produce a harvest of light to the glory of Christ whose flesh we are, whose name we bear, whose love is all. Amen.**

Sung Benediction — *Benediction*

Good Shepherd Staff

Interim Pastor: Rev. Sheri Fry
Office Admin: Teddie McConnell
Choir Director: Sara Tyburczy
Accompanist: Dr. Jonathan Morris

God of the Fertile Fields 714



Greater awareness has enlarged Christian stewardship to develop new dimensions of concern for people in all parts of the world. Because we believe that it is God's will that the gifts we have received should be shared, this hymn concludes with that phrase from the Lord's Prayer.

TEXT: Georgia Harkness, 1955, alt.
MUSIC: Felice de Giardini, 1769, alt.
Text © 1955, ren. 1983 The Hymn Society (admin. Hope Publishing Company)

ITALIAN HYMN
6.6.4.6.6.6.4

Good Stuff @ Good Shepherd

WHEN...

"I must be thankful for what is and stop thinking about what is not." ~ Nancy Wood

In one of his journal notations, Thomas Merton writes that we are always thinking that our life will truly be happy "when." We are not satisfied with what is currently our situation because we have it in our mind that our life won't be happy until something else occurs: when I have one more thing I want, when I get rid of that personality flaw of mine, when I can finally have life as I have always dreamed it to be, when I am truly successful, when I learn to pray better, when I find the right person in my life...when...when...when...

Waiting for the "when" keeps me from appreciating what I have now. Longing for promises and dreaming dreams is not a harmful thing as long as the present moment is not overlooked, as long as gratitude rises for what is already here, as long as I do not base my happiness on what is still wanting. Thankfulness for what has already been given is the foundation for hoping for what is not yet.

Today I am going to put aside my "when this happens" and my "if only this could be" and my "when things get better" and my as soon as I have this."

I am going to harvest what I now have, gather all the many gifts that are already mine. I'm going to observe what has been placed in the warehouse of my heart and marvel at the abundance.

I will stand before this heap of blessing and take a long, grateful look. I will say farewell to my "when" and be thankful for what is.

-Pastor Sheri

Beyond the Offering Plate

Everyone knows that stewardship is more than money and finances AND seldom do we take time to explore its many other dimensions, including stewardship of time, work, body, mind, spirit, community, technology, and more. I have read a book called...you guessed it...*Beyond the Offering Plate: A Holistic Approach to Stewardship* that offers a diverse and holistic approach to stewardship and I hope some of the reflections I am going to share with you over the next few weeks might entice you to think differently about this word. Let's begin with the stewardship of time.

Genesis 1-2: God deems rest a holy and necessary act when God rests on the seventh day. As we seek to be good stewards of our time, we must strive to include both times of creation (work) and holy rest.
Psalm 90: The psalm invites us to consider distinctions between kairos and chronos. Consider also God's vastness and our smallness in a way that frees us from inflated self-perceptions and addiction to overwork.

How do we live in time? Do we move with a savoring pace, or not? How do we discern what is ours to do in a world crammed with options for our time? It seems many people are overwhelmed and stressed, torn by family responsibilities, careers, information overload, and more; and such overwork takes its toll. Stewardship of time feels like a tricky needle to thread. At its worst, stewardship of time can devolve into another term for self-improvement. We want to use our time well, and there are many tools to help us manage our time and our lives. My mind is clearer for having a system in place but I'm kidding myself if I think the tools will guide me into a faithful integrated life.

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It's absolutely essential, I believe, to be intentional about how we live our days…how much activity we're willing to pack into our lives; whether we are attentive to the people around us, or distracted by buzzes and dings and our own monkey-mind. The Bible describes this reality using two Greek words for time, chronos and kairos. Chronos is clock time and Kairos is holy time – God's time, God's appointed season.

The writers of scripture acknowledge that not all chronos is kairos. Kairos is God's decisive action, the in-breaking of Christ that transforms our lives. Kairos can happen in the big moments and turning points. But sometimes the holiness sneaks up on us too. It's not only the life changing events, but also the unexpected conversation that happens on the fly. Can we learn together to be attentive for moments of kairos without expecting that holiness will show up whenever it suits us?

I have heard church leaders argue that our checkbooks are actually theological documents. What we give our money to communicate something about who we are and what we believe. Do we give generously from our financial resources? Do we give only if there's money left over, or is giving to the church a priority we make room for? Our time can be as much a treasure as our finances. I'd like to see the church talk about our calendars as theological documents as well:

- What do we give our time to? Do we make time for spiritual practices, or simply hope they will happen? Are we setting aside time for exercise, time with family and friends and rest? Do we understand church as time with God – an investment in our discipleship or just another activity?
- Do we pack our calendars full, or do we provide adequate space in our schedule for the holy interruptions that occur?
- Are we attentive to the seasons? The liturgical year is a fabulous resource to a culture addicted to excitement and novelty. In a world dominated by 24/7 media and the scandal du jour, we dare preach the importance of quiet waiting and patient expectation, of letting a moment ripen.

So I invite you to examine your personal calendar as if it were a theological document. Where do you spend most of your time? What do you prioritize? What are your experiences of Sabbath? How might your life shift to embrace stewardship of time more fully? In addition, examine this congregation's calendar as a theological document…even in this COVID time. What are our priorities and commitments? Who is involved and invited?

Blessings to you all,

Pastor Sheri

Sermon Musings

Matthew 25: 14-30 contains Jesus' Parable of the Talents. How do we use our resources and gifts…do we share them with others, using what God has given us to share or do we believe there is only enough for ourselves, so we don't share it? Do we believe in God's abundance or the myth of scarcity? The first two men know what to do once their master leaves…they multiply the wealth for their own delight and blessing, as well as the master's. The third man neglects the opportunity and does nothing other than bury the talent in the ground. He is punished for his inactivity. Faithful living is not static; yet, like this third man, we are good at knowing without doing. We are adept at holding on to a talent, knowing what we should do with it, but not doing so. We know what faithful living looks like, but we hesitate to live it. We bury too much goodness, time, love, treasure, and talent in the ground. Why?

GOOD SHEPHERD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Food Bank

The Food Bank needs donations of pet food, laundry detergent, large-size diapers, macaroni and cheese and holiday food items.

Joys and Concerns

Please pray for Norm R.'s family on the sudden death of his granddaughter's husband; Bill and Gayle H., Sue H, Tim S's father-in-law, Michelle W and Paul C.'s friend Ava Bailey who have health concerns; and for David W.' sister-in-law Alice who just came through surgery; for communities affected by COVID-19 or by human rights violations here in the United States and throughout the world, and for our church, that it may thrive as it brings the good news to our area.

GOOD SHEPHERD
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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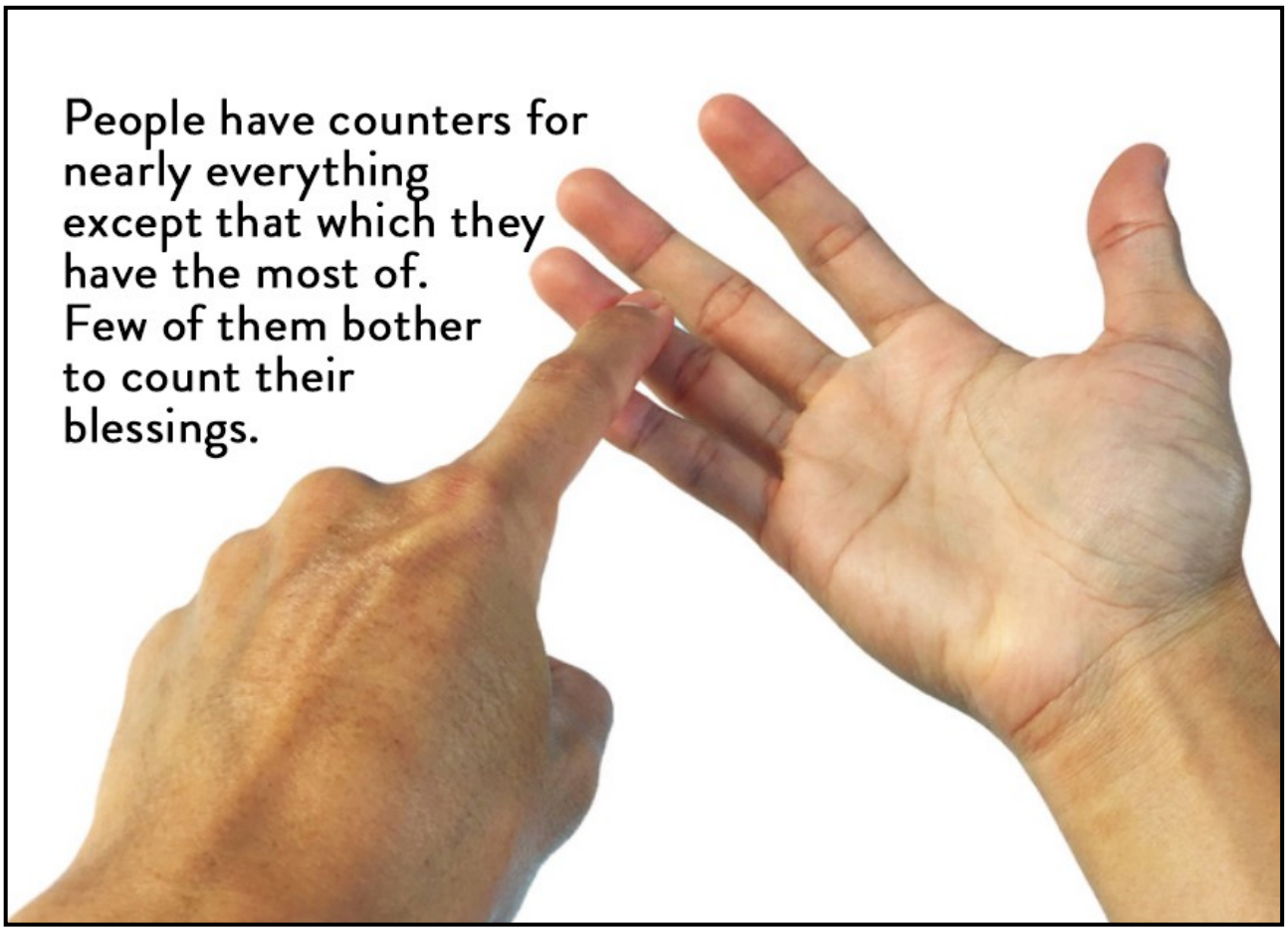
This week's bulletin.