



OFFERING TALK

New Heaven and New Earth

Scripture Passage: Isaiah 65:17-25

Today we heard about our Creator's vision for community. God's holy vision is for every single person to experience abundance in an economy that is far different than the one portrayed in our culture.

*Be glad and rejoice forever
in what I'm creating,
because I'm creating
Jerusalem as a joy
and her people as a source
of gladness. Isaiah 18 CEB*

As we prayerfully consider our giving today, I challenge you to invest in the creation of a new heaven and a new earth that reflects the value of God's hope and dreams for this community and our Connection through the

United Methodist Church.

We might be tempted to respond to this immense responsibility with a tip - with what's left over. But God calls us to be all in.

God has entrusted us with abundance so that together we are part of creating a new heaven and new earth where there is economic security, peace among those who were once enemies, and long full remarkable life.

Do we respond to this invitation to be part of the beloved community by showing up on Sunday, enjoying the service, sending the children to Sunday school, praying the prayers, listening to the sermon and then leaving church behind as the doors close behind us?



*Like the days of a tree will be
the days of my people;
my chosen will make full use
of their handiwork
They won't labor in vain,
nor bear children to a world
of horrors, because they will
be people blessed by the Lord.*

Isaiah 65: 22-23 CEB

I encourage you to respond to this invitation by taking what we experience here and bringing into the world. **Envision what this community can be with the limitless possibility of God's desire and invest in that dream.**

As you prayerfully consider your offering, be intentional with the amount. You will be surprised by how God shows up in the process.

Friends, I invite you to step out with hope in the Holy One who creates, reconciles, and sustains us. May our gifts today manifest not only in the transformation of the hearts and minds in this community but in the lives of every one of God's beloved children.

Or do we respond to this invitation with intention? We recognize that **we are not consumers of grace but recipients of Divine grace** and love through Christ.

Each one of us has a role to play as we engage in the life of this congregation and through the United Methodist Church extend into God's world. **Imagine what we can do when we transcend our own immediate needs and join together for a common good.**