

Message for Sunday, April 27, 2025

Scripture: Acts 20: 7-11

Title: Are you Awake?

## **Welcome**

**Announcements:** Giving Options; New offering for May will be Verde Valley Sanctuary. This is the last week for UMCOR. Angels Attic will resume meeting on May 12<sup>th</sup> at 9AM; New Members Class and Lunch after worship in the Mingus room on May 18<sup>th</sup>-please RSVP to the office.

## **Fellowship of Love**

### **Song**

### **Call to Worship**

L: Sing a new song!

**P: A joyful melody of springtime glory and rebirth**

L: Sing praise to our Still-Laughing Easter God

**P: Who has rolled away the bindings of yesterday.**

L: Immerse your anxiety and despair in the foundation of new birth.

**P: We place our visions and hopes on the table of wine and wheat.**

L: For God has taken ordinary things.

**P: And made them extraordinary.**

L: Sing a new song!

## **Unison Prayer**

**O Great Laughing God,**

**we come into your presence with joy and longing to be surprised.**

**We thank you that you have given to us the gift of laughter and delight.**

**These things give hints as to the nature of your purpose for us and for all the earth.**

**May we find that in giving up to laughter there is healing and hope and abundance and blessing.**

**Tickle our souls with the brush of your Spirit to renew our worship and our living. Amen.**

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## **Offering**

## **Special Music**

### **Scripture: Acts 20:7-11**

On the first day of the week, when we met to break bread, Paul was holding a discussion with them; since he intended to leave the next day, he continued speaking until midnight.

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There were many lamps in the room upstairs where we were meeting.

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A young man named Eutychus, who was sitting in the window, began to sink off into a deep sleep while Paul talked still longer. Overcome by sleep, he fell to the ground three floors below and was picked up dead.

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But Paul went down, and bending over him took him in his arms, and said, "Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him."

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Then Paul went upstairs, and after he had broken bread and eaten, he continued to converse with them until dawn; then he left.

## **Meditation: Are you awake?**

(Hymns for Seniors slide)

My dad tells the story of one of the first times he preached in a Methodist church. You see my parents were not Methodist at first, they were Four Square. After they started attending a Methodist church they eventually got involved in the worship services and then preaching. My dad would tell the story, which I later verified from my own experience, of one member of that church who would sit in the very front row. This gentleman was over six feet tall, but he would sit bolt upright leaning neither right nor left. And would fall asleep, mouth hanging open and everything.

Every Sunday I watch as you fall asleep. Every Sunday I place bets in my head, which one of you will fall asleep first? Who is going to snore themselves gently awake? Who is going to do a sudden start and almost fall out of their seats? So far I owe Angie a lot of money!

After I graduated from high school I began working swing shift at a printing plant with my dad and brother. I actually tended to enjoy midnight

shift except on Sunday. You see Sunday morning I still had to go to church. When I went I would do fine, right until prayer time. Sitting in the hard wooden pews my head would slowly sink down till, whap! My forehead would hit the back of the pew in front of me. And it was in my dad's church!

There is even another great example of this. In the Middle Ages people would attend church and the ushers had a very important role. You see the pews were very long and very full so in order to collect the offering they would put baskets on long poles and put them out in the pews. Well, those long polls had to have counterbalances so on the other end was a thick ball of cloth and leather. While this balanced the pole it had another purpose, if you fell asleep the ushers would use it to whack you on the head and wake you up.

For years I wondered if it was that my sermons were boring, or theorizing that perhaps my dad's sermons were boring. I have heard seminars, professors, pastors, and bishops, all talk about the need to be entertaining and engaging to all of our congregations. Holding your attention in the palms of our hands. The underlying assumption being that if people were sleeping they were not listening or paying attention to God. Not only weren't they paying attention to God, but the reality is that meant that you were not a really effective teacher or preacher!

I know most of you have never read this story from Acts, and I did adjust my scripture and everything to match holy humor this year. Arguably Paul, the greatest preacher and church planter of the early church. He preached so well that he killed a guy. The guy fell asleep in the window and fell three stories to his death. Not only that but Paul then performed a resurrection and went back to preaching. So, you know if you fall out of a window while I am preaching I am not bringing you back to life.

There is another aspect to remember about this story. That is if you notice in the last verse what the young man did? He went home. He didn't go back in to hear more preaching and to be honest he sounds like the wisest one of the bunch.

So, you all know, I do not get upset or offended about you falling asleep. I just want you to know that you are no different than even Paul's audience. It certainly seems that God has a sense of humor if his reaction to someone falling asleep and falling to their death as a scenario that needs a resurrection. I guess here is the point. You ain't no different than

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people in Paul's day or people in the Middle Ages, so lighten up and take a nap! Amen.

Pastoral Prayer/ Holy Humor Lord's Prayer

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**(Holy Humor Version)**

Our Father in heaven,

let Your holy name be known,

--

let Your kingdom come,  
and Your will be done  
on earth as in heaven.

--

Give us today  
the bread that we need,

--

and forgive us our wrongs,  
and OK, we'll forgive those who have done wrong to us, too.

--

Do not lead us into trial,  
but save us from evil.

--

For we want for You alone to rule in our hearts.

--

You have power to transform,  
and in the light of Your smile is Your glory. Amen.

**Song**

**Benediction**

**Song**

**Goodbye**