

Message for Sunday, September 6, 2026

Meditation title: What Now?

Scripture: Romans 13: 8-14

## **Welcome**

## **Announcements**

Giving Options; Special Offering for September is Jerome Food Pantry; All Church Retreat

and Potluck maps and details are out in the foyer; Knit/Crochet group is 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>

Wednesdays at 9:30AM in the atrium of the Verde Hall; Food bank needs for September

are shelf stable fruit, cereal, milk, peanut butter, chili, baked beans, ramen.

## **Fellowship of Love**

## **Song**

## **Call to Worship**

L: The night is nearly over; the day is almost here.

**P: We lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.**

L: We own no one anything, except to love one another, for love is the fulfillment of the law.

**P: We come to worship with hearts awakened, ready to cast off the old and embrace the new.**

L: Let us awaken to the call of God, to live as people of the day, and to shine God's love in all we do.

Message for Sunday, September 6, 2026

Meditation title: What Now?

Scripture: Romans 13: 8-14

**P: We worship the One who calls us into the light, to love one another as God has loved us.**

**Amen.**

### **Unison Prayer**

**Loving God, as we gather in your presence, we seek to put on the armor of light, and to live as your children.**

--

**Help us cast aside the darkness and embrace the love that fulfills our law.**

--

**Awaken us to your call, that we may walk in the light of Christ each day. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.**

L: As we come to this time of offering, let us remember that giving is an opportunity to respond to God's generosity with our own.

### **Offering-Song**

### **Scripture: Romans 13:8-14 NRSV**

8 Owe no one anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.

Message for Sunday, September 6, 2026

Meditation title: What Now?

Scripture: Romans 13: 8-14

9 The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; you shall not murder; you shall not steal; you shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

11 Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is already the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers;

12 the night is far gone; the day is near. Let us then throw off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light;

13 let us walk decently as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in illicit sex and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy.

14 Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

### **Meditation: What Now?**

Don't tell the school this, but I led the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders over the past few weeks through a covenant making process. For years the school has used a program that requires the teachers to build a social contract with their homerooms. If you ask the kids what should be on the list, words such as respect and listening make their way around,

Message for Sunday, September 6, 2026

Meditation title: What Now?

Scripture: Romans 13: 8-14

you write them down and then they sign the contract. You can imagine how well this works. Not so much....

This past year the school has decided to move onto another program, but they asked us teachers to build a social contract so that the students will have something that they are basing their behavior on that is not just in the rules. Here's where I stepped in. Without using the language of a covenant I led all the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students through the process of making a covenant. Three words, with two items under each word, one that the student would do and one that the teacher would do. The foundation of this process is a relationship not rules. One of the words the kids came up with is confidence. I asked them how was I going to enforce confidence? Obviously I can't. Instead this is a relationship for how we are going to treat one another. It remains to be seen how this will work out.

Over the past few weeks that we have been in Romans we have worked on all sorts of different avenues and understandings. One central core has been that God works in love. Remember...Nothing separates? Today's passage may not seem like this, but it falls in the same vein. It is that if we are living and operating in love of others, one of the two commandments Jesus gave us, than we will be fulfilling the law.

This is not an attempt by Paul to run back to instituting the law. He's not suddenly saying the law applies. Instead, he is saying that if you are living in love, in that loving

Message for Sunday, September 6, 2026

Meditation title: What Now?

Scripture: Romans 13: 8-14

relationship, then you will fulfill the essence of the law, you will be living that law. So let's go back to the example I was working with the kids on. I shared with them that I've been married for 24 years. Can I make Katie, (though I said Mrs. Hall,) love me?

The obvious answer here is no. Instead but I can create an environment where loving her is the natural result.

You cannot love your neighbor if you are more concerned with how your neighbor follows every letter of the law. You cannot love your neighbor if you value decorum and legality more than charity and kindness. You see, if you are living out those things then you are living out the love of the gospel. That is what we are called to do today. We are called to a loving relationship with others because God has a loving relationship with us. We can't say that God loves everyone, then turn around and make people do what we want because of the "rules." Rules can often separate our love rather than build it.

This week I invite you to tell a love story. A love story that God has written for you and calls you to write and live for others. Amen.

### **The Great Thanksgiving Communion Litany UMH pp. 13-16**

**L:** The Lord be with you.

**P:** And also with you.

Message for Sunday, September 6, 2026

Meditation title: What Now?

Scripture: Romans 13: 8-14

L: Lift up your hearts.

**P: We lift them up to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**P: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

L: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

--

**P: Holy, holy, holy Lord,**

**God of power and might,**

**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Message for Sunday, September 6, 2026

Meditation title: What Now?

Scripture: Romans 13: 8-14

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

--

L: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

--

L: On the night in which he gave himself up for us he took bread gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

--

L: When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

--

Message for Sunday, September 6, 2026

Meditation title: What Now?

Scripture: Romans 13: 8-14

L: And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**P: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

--

L: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

--

L: By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

--

**P: Amen.**

**Communion**



Message for Sunday, September 6, 2026

Meditation title: What Now?

Scripture: Romans 13: 8-14

**Benediction**

**Goodbye.**