Sermon Title: When Worship Becomes Routine
Sermon Scripture: Malachi 1:6-14; 2:1-9

CANTON
FIRST METHODIST CHURCH

Sermon Discussion Guide (11/15)

Begin the discussion by checking in with each person present and share prayer requests/praises with the group. Then, have one person offer a prayer for the group making sure to include any prayer requests that were mentioned earlier.

Scripture
Read Malachi 1:6-14; 2:1-9 out loud. Discuss any initial thoughts you have about these verses.

Observation

In Malachi 1:6-8, what were the Israelites doing that demonstrated a lack of honor and respect toward God? Why were their offerings unacceptable? Where have you seen a similar lack of honor and respect towards God in the modern church?

According to the sermon, what is the difference between worship that is an expression of reverence and worship that has become an expression of convenience? How do you recognize when your worship is more authentic versus just going through the motions?

What does Malachi's message reveal about the relationship between the condition of our hearts and the way we worship God? How do you evaluate the condition of your heart? Why does God desire more than outward religious activities?

In Malachi 2:1-9, why does God hold the priests more accountable for the spiritual condition of the people? How does this reflect James' words in James 3:1? What responsibilities lie with spiritual leaders and what responsibilities are nonnegotiable for all believers?

Application

Have you ever found yourself going through the motions of worship, prayer, Bible reading, leading, teaching, or other spiritual practices without truly engaging with God? What do you think contributed to that, and how can you or did you renew your heart and relationship with God?

What are some things in your life that regularly receive your best time, energy, and attention while God receives what is left over? Proverbs 3:9-10 speaks of giving God the physical first fruits of the harvest, what are the spiritual first fruits that you should be giving to God? What are some practical changes that can help you give God your first fruits?

How can you make worship more than something you do on Sunday mornings? What would it look like for your everyday activities, routines, relationships, work, and decisions to become expressions of worship to God?

Who has God placed in your life that you have a responsibility to encourage to help grow spiritually? How can you be more intentional about representing Christ and helping that person become a more faithful disciple?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you for giving us the gift of worship. Lord, we pray that we worship You the way that You deserve to be worshiped. Jesus, we thank you that you accept our first fruits and we thank you for your grace when we fail to worship you fully. Lord, be with us as our attention is pulled towards worldly things. I pray that our attention returns to you. Lord, we lift up those who don't know you yet and we pray that we can model the love you give us to the lost.