

Straight from the "Hart"

Worship Service from October 3, 2021

World Communion



Announcements

Good morning. Welcome to World Communion Sunday, which has been a part of Methodism's worship calendar since the early 1940s. We are participating with Christians all over the world who will observe the Lord's Supper on this day. This day is designed to remind us that we are not alone in our faith, but it stretches beyond denominational and geographical boundaries and that we are united in God's gracious love demonstrated in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit's life dwelling within each who receive him, and that all Christians are welcome to remember the covenant Jesus established and directed us to repeat until he comes again. So as we worship today, let's be especially aware of our brothers and sisters across denominations in our global connection. In honor of the day we will be following a traditional order of worship for A Service of Word and Table (though some of the terminology and content may vary or be expanded)... We'll return to our normal service next week.

Responsive Greeting (P Pastor C Congregation)

P: God pours out his spirit of grace and love. He delivers his people from cold hearts and wandering thoughts and inspires a burning zeal and steady minds that we may worship in spirit and truth. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: The risen Christ is with us.

C: Praise the Lord!

P: Let's sing our way in this World Communion Service.

Music (vv 1,2,3) I Come with Joy

Opening Prayer

Lord of all nations, you hold this fragile world securely in your hands. At the same time you are so personal as to live within each believer through your Spirit. Meet with us this day. Help us to see you in the faces of our sisters and brothers, to hear you in the words of Holy Scripture and to be nourished by you at your table.

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hidden. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name. Convince us of your presence as we worship so that we may be inspired to live our lives for your glory and offer your love to all. Through Christ, our Lord and Savior, we pray. Amen.

All of this requires us to lean on him. -- but that is not a mournful thing, but a joyful thing that leads to blessedness and peace. Let's sing...

Music (vv 1,3) Leaning on the Everlasting Arms

Prayer for Illumination

Lord, we come broken, fearful, cynical, empty. Open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit, that, as the Scriptures are read and your word proclaimed, we may hear what you say with joy -- your story of hope, peace, freedom, and life. Amen.

Theme

Once upon a time, Morlan was the cruelest and fiercest of all the warriors. Unfortunately, (for others) he was extremely skilled with spears and could easily finish off his enemies from great distances. One day, Morlan and his warrior friends were stealing from the castle of a gentle, peaceful prince. Morlan found some slick, fast flying spears. He took them to add to his collection and save them for a special battle..

Now these spears had been used in the kindly prince's friendly games and tournaments. But it didn't take long to hear about their new unrightful owner Morlan and his cruel exploits, and that this mean warrior was sad, angry, and desperate. It was the only way he knew how to live. The new spears were saddened by this, but also disturbed by his behavior and didn't want anything to do with hurting or killing anyone or anything.

Morlan's older weapons argued, "There isn't really anything you can do, is there?" The new spears talked quietly among themselves and came up with a plan - they just had to wait for the right opportunity.

One day someone paid Morlan to kill the kindly prince. He thought this would be the perfect time to use his fancy new spears against the man from whom he had stolen them. He traveled and then prepared for battle as always. He hid in the bushes, fixed his eyes on his target, spear in hand, patiently waiting for just the right moment, and... FIRE!

In spite of experienced aim and perfect form, the spear took a strange, slow, majestic flightpath, and it ended up in a flowerbed. Morlan was shocked! He never missed! He went to collect the errant spear. As he did, he couldn't help but notice beautiful irises in the garden.

Morlan went back to his hiding space, grabbed a different spear and waited for another opportunity. A few minutes later it came and again with perfect precision he lofted the spear toward its target. But the spear sliced right and into a tree. The frustrated Morlan began thinking this set of new fancy spears must have a design flaw in them. As he went to retrieve this spear, he heard the most joyful singing of a flock of birds perched there.

This continued spear after spear. Rather than obeying the warrior's skill, each spear veered away from the prince and landed in places that allowed the warrior to see close up a world that is filled with beauty and peace. The final spear landed only a few yards from the prince, and for the first time Morlan saw his target up close and realized that this was not just a target, but as person of value that he was trying to hurt for no good reason.

He decided he was going to exchange his life's nightmare of death and destruction for a life of beauty and harmony. He abandoned his job as a killer and dedicated all his efforts to protecting life. The only weapons he kept, with the prince's blessing; were the spears that knew best where to direct his attention. The outer peace exposed him to the potential for inner peace, and the inner peace changed him for a desire for outer peace.

(Adapted from *The Warrior's Arrows* by Pedro Pablo Sacristán)

Jesus went into the heart of an aggressive, powerful people and gave a message of creation's beauty and a life that pointed people to God's love, showing all of us that beauty and grace and love and forgiveness is a better way to live than with hate and violence. Those who understand this call Jesus the Prince of Peace, for he brought God's peace to us, and shows us how to be at peace with each other too. Micah predicted it long before Jesus arrived on the scene, and Jesus said the Holy Spirit would carry on his work of peace.

with Responsive Reading - (L - Lay Reader C - Congregation)

LR: In the last days, there will be a steady stream of people from many nations who will go up to the Lord's Mountain in order to follow him. God will teach them about his way of living and they will walk in his paths.

C: From there, the Lord's teaching will go out into all the world.

LR: Then God will act as an [arbiter]. He will render decisions and end arguments between many strong nations both near and far. They will stop using their weapons of war. They will hammer their swords into plows and spears into pruning hooks.

C: Instruments of destructive war will be transformed into tools of constructive productivity.

LR: Fighting between nations will end. None will need to train for war again. People will sit in security in peace and none will be afraid. The All-Powerful Lord of hosts said it will happen.

C: We will walk securely and follow the Lord our God forever.

LR: Jesus says, “My perfect peace is different from the peace the world gives. My peace will calm you in every circumstance and give you courage and strength for every challenge.”

C: We will not be troubled or afraid.

LR: “If anyone really loves Me, they will keep My teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come and live with them. The Father will send the Holy Spirit to represent me and act on My behalf.”

C: He will teach us all things and help us remember everything that Jesus taught.

LR: Since it is through the Spirit that we have Life, let it also be through the Spirit that we order our lives day by day.

C: The fruit of the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace... (Inspired by Micah 4:1-5, John 14:27,23,26, (AMP, ERV) and quoting Galatians 5:25 (CJB) 5:22 (NLT)

Music (vv 1,2) Now Thank We All Our God

Introduction to Bible Reading

The hymn writer asks that our bountiful God is always with us to cheer us with joyful hearts and blessed peace. Paul is writing to a group of Christians who are his treasured friends. He heard a disagreement had arisen between two of his dear friends who had diligently helped him spread the news of Christ in their community. He is careful not to take sides, but he is also concerned that this disruption of peace may hinder the church’s growth and progress. Therefore, he does urge them, with the help of mutual friend, to resolve the issue so they can be at peace again, and he gives them some hints on how to overcome the negative thoughts they were having toward each other.

Bible Reading Philippians 4:1-9

My dear, dear friends! I love you so much. I do want the very best for you. You make me feel such joy and fill me with such pride. Don't waver. Stay on track, steady in God; for you are my pride and joy, and the crown (the reward) I receive for my work. I plead with Euodia and Syntyche to settle their disagreement and be restored with one mind in our Lord. I would like my dear friend and my true partner to help these two women resolve this issue, for both women have worked hard for the Message, hand in hand with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are [all] written in the Book of Life.

Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again — rejoice! Let your joy overflow! Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Make it as clear as you can to all you meet that you're on their side, working with them and not against them. Remember, the Lord is coming soon. Don't be pulled in different directions or worried about anything. Instead, let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers. Be saturated in prayer throughout each day, offering your faith-filled requests before God with overflowing gratitude. Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, of everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life. God's wonderful peace, that transcends human understanding, will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

And now, dear friends, you'll do best by filling your minds and meditating -- by continually fixing your thoughts on what is true and honorable, and right and pure, and lovely and admirable, and merciful and kind, and excellent and worthy of praise -- on the best and not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; on things to praise, not things to curse.

Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me -- everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace who makes everything work together, will be with you in all things and will work you into his most excellent harmonies.

(Blending of MSG, NLT, TPT)

A God of peace who brings harmony to everything and everyone who follows him, and because he is consistently faithful, he gives a peace that both endures and is freshly given each day...

Music (vv 1,3) Great is Thy Faithfulness

Sermon “*Releasing the Power of Peace*”

In 1981, a retired couple worried about the threat of nuclear war. They studied and they traveled to find the place in the world that would be least likely affected by this violence. They moved and sent their pastor a Christmas card from their new home in the Falkland Islands. A few months later, their "peaceful paradise" turned into a war zone between Great Britain and Argentina. You just never know...

When machines and technology were entering society assisting and replacing human labor; some predicted the full-time work week would be reduced to as little as 20 hours/week. [you are already laughing] Housework would be done in no time, and all would enjoy lives filled of easy leisure. Now that we've been living in this mechanized, technological utopia for a while, we've discovered that it hasn't quite worked out that way, has it?

Stephen Covey wrote that the philosophy of traditional time management is that by doing things more efficiently you'll eventually gain control of your life, and that control will bring peace and fulfillment. But what he hears from those who excel in time management is, “We get more done in less time, but where are the rich relationships, the balance, the confidence that we're doing well what matters most?” Something was still missing. A gap remained between how they spent their time and what was important. (*First Things First*)

Be it global geographical location or personal accomplishment, basing happiness and peace on our ability to control everything is a futile game. We control our choices, but we cannot control the choices of others, nor the consequences that may flow from our choices and their choices. The Prince of Peace says the peace he gives is not elusive and temporary like the world's. Therefore he tells us, Do not be troubled or afraid. (John 14:27)

The Source of Peace

Peace doesn't come by the illusion of control, but by calmly trusting in the source of peace, the One who created harmony in creation and the One who sustains it all. He teaches that there is a connection between inner peace and peace with others. Receiving peace with God through Christ is a pre-requisite to finding true peace within, (Romans 4:25-5:11) and true peace within is required for the *possibility* to having true peace (a heart-to-heart harmonious connection) with others. Like our soldier in our theme story, when his heart was disturbed within, it came out in negative behaviors. Once he discovered some sort of inner peace by seeing the value of creation, his attitude toward others changed as well. But even

then, it is no guarantee. Paul reminds us in Romans: *If it is possible*, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone, (Romans 12:18) implying that peace with others, even when both are in Christ, is not automatic. That is certainly the case in today's text. Two devoted Christians were not seeing eye to eye. Paul urges them to work it out with help of a friend. Then Paul immediately launches into practical strategies for inner peace. It is not coincidental that these two topics (peace with each other and inner peace) lay side by side. They can't be separated.

And now I am going to separate them ☺. Because we are dealing with peace as an outgrowth of the Spirit's personality within us -- we will focus on the pre-requisite inner peace today. The promise is -- that our hearts and minds are guarded by God's peace, and that his peace will be with us if we cooperate with the Holy Spirit's instructions and leadership in every part of our lives. On a practical level then, how do we release peace in our life?

Rejoice. We talked about joy last time. Joy is a great detriment to strife and stress. Stress can't handle joy! If you like stress, eliminate joy from your life. For when you are truly joyful, it is not impossible, but it is much more difficult to be defeated by anxiety. Joy and peace and meaningful fruitfulness go hand in hand.

<p>Keys to Releasing His Peace (KtRHP): Rejoice</p>
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George Bernard Shaw put it this way: This is true joy... being used for a mighty purpose... being a force of nature instead of a feverish selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy... my life belongs to the community and as long as I live it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can...

Or to put it another way, a big dog saw a little dog, a puppy, chasing its tail and asked, "Why are you chasing your tail?" The pup said, "I have mastered philosophy and solved the problems of the Universe. (Doesn't that sound like a little puppy?) I learned that the best thing for a dog is happiness, and happiness is my tail. So I am chasing it, and when I catch it, then I shall be happy."

The big dog said, "I too, have paid attention to the problems of the Universe in my own humble way, and I have formed some opinions too. I agree that happiness is a fine thing for a dog, and that happiness is in my tail. But I have noticed that when I chase after it, it keeps running away from me. But when I pursue the purpose of my life, it follows right on after me.

Do not seek things that promise ultimate happiness *as an end in itself* -- over time

you may be disappointed in the constant chase, and if you manage to sink your teeth into it, it may even hurt you. Instead, seek to push forward toward meaningful purpose, and happiness may well follow along.

Stephen Covey talks about a man named Roger. He was in his 50s, nice family, and vice-president of a multi-national corporation. During a conference, he confessed to Covey, "...I was active in sports, a good student, a choirboy, went on to college where I was active in clubs and programs. Then my first big job, marriage, a child, traveling abroad, promotions, a new home, another child, and promotion to vice-president."

As Covey listened, he was anticipating some life-shattering disaster that brought this picture-book life crashing down around him. Roger concluded: "The problem is that my life is full of good things - nice house, nice car, a good job, a busy life. But when I was asked to think deeply about my life, to think about what matters most; I realized that ... I [used to be involved] in some kind of cause. I wanted to make a real difference in the world, to contribute in a meaningful way... but over the years, that sense of purpose has gotten lost. I've been lulled [to sleep] by a sense of [comfortable] security. I haven't made a difference. I haven't taught my children to make a difference. I've basically been watching life go by through the hedges of my country club.

But I've made a decision. I've determined to reestablish connections with a charity that does incredible work in helping people. I want to be a part of it again." And as he talked, Covey could see a light come on in his eyes, a sense of purpose in his words. He became energized... for our context, let's call it contented (peaceful) joy.

Paul called it displaying your gentleness – or other versions call it (the Bible is all over the place in translating this original word into English as it is used here. It is called: patience, kindness, moderation, reasonableness, graciousness, unselfish-ness, considerate. I summarize it as “a generous portion of merciful, gracious kindness to others”. If we are overly worried and impatient about what we wish everyone else is going to do or not do, (over which we have no control) then we will be constantly wringing our hands (“How is all of this going to work out with them”) in anxious worry.

KtRHP: Generous Mercy and Gentleness evident to all

Therefore, the next thing in Paul's text is: “Do not worry.” Don't you just love it when the Bible just

KtRHP: Do not Worry - Pray

matter-of-factly puts that out there like it is so easy to do? But it is based on a head and heart knowledge that our loving, caring God is in control, and so instead of worrying, we pray. We pray because we believe God is bigger than the problem, that prayer changes things (or us); and trusting that God knows what is best for us and for others... A little aside here: Be specific in your prayers, because:

First of all, Once upon a time a man decided to skip church and go bear hunting. He trudged through the forest and climbed a large, steep hill that was difficult to climb up, and just as he was pulling himself up over summit, he came nose to nose with a huge grizzly. The bear roared. The man reared backward and tumbled back down the hill crashing all the way with the bear chasing not far behind. During the fall, the man lost his rifle and got tangled up in some shrubbery. Escape was impossible. So he prayed. "God, I know I should've been in church, but I beg for mercy. If you make this bear a Christian, I will do whatever you want." The fast approaching bear was three feet away when it stopped dead in its tracks, looked up to the heavens quizzically, and then fell to its knees. Then the bear prayed in a loud voice: "Lord bless this food to my body... "

So be specific. It isn't that God doesn't already know what is in our hearts and minds – but it helps us in our personal prayers -- it helps us cooperate with God's work with us and in us and if we are specific and we name it out loud; when we can name our sins, name our issues, name our needs, name people we are concerned for, name our specific hopes our dreams. It also helps us to count our blessings and answers, which are more easily counted if our prayers are not vague and general. And counting helps build our confident trust in our God because we see the answers, and that in turn helps build peace within us.

Paul adds that our prayers should be filled with thanksgiving. We pray with thanks not because we are minimizing the problems, but because we are maximizing the power of God to change the problem -- or us.

KtRHP: Pray with thanksgiving

From the journals George Muller, who founded orphanages in England long ago. I've condensed and paraphrased it for space and time, but the essence is this:

Aug 18, 1838. I have not one penny for the orphans. In a couple days many pounds will be needed. My eyes are up to the Lord. Evening (of that same day). I have received from a sister five pounds. She said she had stored some trinkets to be sold for the benefit of the orphans, and while in prayer this morning it came to her that she should give the money at once since it might be some time before she

could collect from the trinket sale. So she delivered the money, never knowing that we had not a penny and were about 5 pounds short of paying for the housekeeping of the Boy's orphan house.

Aug 23. Today I was again without a single penny. Three pounds was sent from Clapham with a box of new clothes for the orphans.

Muller looked back on the difficult period from 1838 through 1846 which seemed to have a perpetual pattern: a few months of trial, followed by some months of relative plenty. Muller journaled, "If I had had a thousand pounds in hand, or not a penny; these dear little orphans knew nothing about it, because they always had nourishing food, the necessary clothing, everything they needed. God supplied the need by the day, sometimes by the hour.

He could have worried, but he chose to pray with confident thanksgiving and the results were the same. Had he worried more, would it have changed the results? Worry would not have changed anything. The cure for worry is thankfully trusting and praying to our powerful God -- whatever the results may be.

Paul goes on. Don't only focus in prayer on God's possibilities; also-- I like the way

KtRHP: Dwell on what is good

today's blended translations captures the meaning of the word: "fill your minds, meditate on, continually fix your thoughts" on those things in life that are positive and good. It doesn't mean we pretend the negative doesn't exist – Remember he is talking, at least in part here, about -- his purpose is to encourage two people to face up to and resolve a negative conflict/relationship in their life.

But sometimes, because of personality, training, or repeated experiences, some of us tend to get so caught up in the negative and wrong that we fail to notice all the good that surrounds us and that blindness robs our joy, and what do we have when we lose joy? Stress and worry. How did we get trained that way in the first place? Maybe it was like the adult polar bear that was gifted to the Denver Zoo years ago. The problem was that they had no place to put him. The Board of Directors were in the middle of a fund-raising campaign to renovate the zoo. They adjusted their plans to include a magnificent habitat for the polar bear. In the meantime, the bear had to be kept in a rather small temporary cage. The bear could take 3 steps, reach the end of his cage, turnaround, take three steps back and reach the other end of the cage. Three steps one way, three steps back -- back and forth and that was all the room he had.

Unfortunately, there were unforeseen delays in construction and it took 3 years to complete that habitat. But when it was finally completed, it was beautiful. It had waterfalls and caves, and lots and lots of space. It was an amazing setting that the bear would enjoy. There was much anticipation for the big day when the bear would be released into its new home. They couldn't wait to see how it would react to its new freedom. The day came and they let him out of the cage -- it looked all around -- then it took three steps one way, and turned around, took 3 steps the other, and turned around, and took three steps more, and turned around.

Some of us who have become conditioned to focus on the negative, to play “worst-case-scenario” over and over. We need to find a way to re-train ourselves. For those of you who are fortunate enough to think positively all the time, just do so more and more. For the rest of us, figure out a way to retrain ourselves. It may be as simple as taking 4 steps instead of 3 -- gradually working in small increments, a bit more time focusing on things that lift our spirits, and inspire our confidence in God, and recondition ourselves to focus on the positive *truths* of God and life.

KtRHP: (Re-) Training

But it is more than just positive thinking. As we put our trust in God, Paul tells us -- actually it is a thread that runs throughout this series, and throughout the Bible for that matter -- that whatever we have learned -- to put that into action, to put praiseworthy things into practice; and in so doing we may encounter God's peace guarding our hearts and minds. We only need see his joyful, peaceful, securing presence wrapping his loving arms all around us.

KtRHP: Act on your (re-) training

That is not always easy to see.

The Amazon River is the largest river in the world. Its mouth is 90 miles across. They can detect its currents 200 miles out into the Atlantic Ocean. During ancient times, distant sailors sometimes got stuck in place, caught in windless waters. They would run out of drinking water. If they were lucky, ships from the area who knew the area and had alternate back up power sources besides wind in the sails (I'd guess rowing oars) would come up and pull alongside. “Can we help?”

The distant travelers said, “Can you spare water? We are dying of thirst!” The local sailors would answer -- “Just lower your buckets -- you are still in the mouth of the mighty Amazon.”

God, in Christ, is the fountain of living water. He surrounds us and buoys us up, but if our focus is off, if we don't recognize him in the midst of the stillness, or in

the midst of the storm, if we fail to drink in his badly needed peace which comes as we remember to rejoice in him, as we graciously extend mercy to others, as we refuse to worry by thankfully praying, as we dwell on good things, and as we take action on all of these things -- we may begin to experience a peace within that will begin to move out into our relationships and beyond. Let's sing that prayerful hope.

Musical Response to the Word Let There Be Peace

A Modern Affirmation

Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is one true church, apostolic and universal, whose holy faith let us now declare:

We believe in God the Father, infinite in wisdom, power, and love, whose mercy is over all his works, and whose will is ever directed to his children's good.

We believe in Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Man, the gift of the Father's unfailing grace, the ground of our hope, and the promise of our deliverance from sin and death.

We believe in the Holy Spirit as the divine presence in our lives, whereby we are kept in perpetual remembrance of the truth of Christ, and find strength and help in time of need.

We believe that this faith should manifest itself in the service of love as set forth in the example of our blessed Lord, to the end that the kingdom of God may come upon the earth. Amen.

Let's prepare our hearts for prayer and Communion by singing

Prayer Chorus Fill My Cup, Lord (2x)

Pastor's Prayer Holy God, we come before you, grateful that you are the ruler of the universe, lord of time and space, redeemer of creation, judge of every human heart. We offer what you alone deserve -- our worship, our praise, and our devotion. We are awed by your power, humbled by your presence, freed by your mercy, and changed by your love. As people who are created in your image and called to be yours, we receive your gracious acceptance of us with grateful hearts.

We pray for those whose burdens this day are heavy, who carry physical, mental and emotional cares that weigh them down. We pray for those who will lie down tonight hungry, sick or displaced. We pray for those who are grieving, alienated or despairing; for those who are victims of hatred, neglect or violence. May what we have received from you -- forgiveness for our failures, love when we have been unlovely, comfort in our distress -- may your acceptance of us motivate us to embrace our neighbors near and far, that we may intercede for them **Intercession**

Today, specifically we pray for * Jamie and Danny, both hospitalized with covid, * for Susan Woodworth and her battle against breast cancer * for the Kirkpatricks and others as they travel, * for Debbie Kirkpatrick's sister Penny who is awaiting test results, * for Jim Malott in physical therapy, * for Sheila Daniel's brother Brent Sampier with bladder cancer, * for Jan Martin and good friend in TN Gaynell and her sister Jackie -- all with covid. (Jan not too bad so far, we pray it continues to be that way)... * and for others who are feeling poorly in one way or another... and Terri Preiss's friend's husband who is now in ICU with covid, for the family and friends of Karen's three cousins, Danny Stine, Sharon Stine, David Dunn, whose funeral is today, the other two from last week, and for Kathy Novak's friend John Fleming, in the hospital with covid. And finally, for Lisa Weaver's brother-in-law J R Newcome who passed away Thursday, and for whom we were going to dedicate this quilt, but will now dedicate it for the family. First these words from Jerry Weaver about -- J R Newcome, His name is Manuel Newcome, surviving are his wife Diane, his children Tamara, Nicholas, and Nicole. He really helped a lot with his mother Gloria, giving his time, love, and mercy in her last five months of life [She passed away about 3 weeks ago]. The meaning of the name Manuel is "God is with us" and now we believe he is with God. So let's pray over this quilt. Lord we were going to pray that this quilt will give comfort to JR, but now we pray it will give comfort to the family as they grieve his loss. May they feel your presence and warm comfort and strength as they go day by day. acknowledging, really two losses still, in that family. We just ask that your presence will be with them, consistently reminding them that they are never alone, that the warmth of this quilt is warmth of your love and the warmth of the prayers of this church being offered for them. We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.

Now to the Lord who loves us, cares for us, blesses us, tends to us, for we are his precious fruit and faithful seed -- he hears us, helps us, trusts us, even though sometimes we are more faulty fruit than precious fruit -- but no matter what -- we are yours, God, through your Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

Thanksgiving and Communion

Invitation Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him, who earnestly repent of their sin and seek to live in peace with one another. Therefore, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

Confession and Pardon Our Father, forgive us for thinking small thoughts of you and for ignoring your immensity and greatness. Lord Jesus, forgive us when we

forget that you rule the nations as well as our small individual lives. Holy Spirit, forgive us when we minimize your power and squander your gifts. Merciful God, we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to be an obedient church. We have not done your will, we have broken your law, we have rebelled against your love, we have not loved our neighbors, and we have not heard the cry of the needy. For all that works against life and blessing in our hearts, and in the world, we open ourselves to your transforming grace. Heal us, forgive us, and make us new, we pray. Free us for joyful obedience, through Jesus Christ our Lord to his Lord. Amen.

Offering (including elements of bread and cup)

As forgiven and reconciled people, let us offer ourselves and our gifts to God.

Special Music with Offering

Doxology

Offering Prayer We present these gifts, will God, in the confidence that healing, hope, and wholeness will flourish through them and because of them -- that they may be a blessing to many in your name. Amen.

Thanksgiving (P - Pastor C - Congregation)

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up to the Lord.

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

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. You have made from one every nation and people to live on all the face of the earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets. And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

This section is a musical echo -- I will sing a phrase -- then we will sing it again together. (♫ - sung ♫ - Congregation repeats with singer)

♪ Holy, holy, holy Lord, ✂
 ♪ God of power and might ✂
 ♪ Heaven and earth are full of your glory ✂
 ♪ Hosanna in the highest ✂
 ♪ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. ✂
 ♪ Hosanna ✂
 ♪ in the highest ✂

Holy are you, and blessed is your son Jesus Christ. Your Spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to announce that the time had come when you would save your people. He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners. 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 in the Spirit. He commissioned us to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth and to make disciples of all nations, and today his family and all the world is joining at his holy table. When the Lord Jesus ascended, he promised to be with us always, and the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took the bread, gave thanks you, wrote 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."

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."

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 offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

♪ Christ has died ✂ ♪ Christ has risen ✂ ♪ Christ will come again ✂

Almighty God, from the ends of the earth you have gathered us around Christ's holy table. **We come to feast together.**

Have mercy on your church...

Renew us and make us one.

O God, we join with our sisters and brothers around the world in remembering Christ's sacrifice for us. For the opportunity to eat and drink together and for the life we have received, we give you thanks and praise. In the abundance of your many gifts, grant us grace to fill one another's lives with love. Redeem, restore and remold us until we are made new. Transform our daily bread into the bread of life, and the cup that we drink into the cup of salvation. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here [and at home], and on these gifts of bread and cup. 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. Renew our communion with your church throughout the world, and strengthen it in every nation and among every people to witness faithfully in your name. 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 for ever.

♫ Amen ✂ ♫ Amen ✂ ♫ Amen ✂

And now, with the confidence of children of God, let us pray:

Lord's Prayer (Sung in unison)

Breaking and Receiving the Bread and Cup

[Lift and break bread during the following words]. Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf. The bread which we break is a sharing in the body of Christ. [Lift cup during the following words] The cup over which we give thanks is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

The body of Christ given for you. Take and eat.

The blood of Christ given for you. Take and drink.

Prayer of Thanksgiving Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world and the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Music Go Now in Peace (2x)

Blessing Now go blessed and renewed by the Holy Spirit. Go forth with strength and courage to bear the fruit of a peace filled life, so that our lives will help transform and renew the earth, and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit will be with you all. Amen.