

Spirit of Grace ELCA UMC



April 30th , 2023
Fourth Sunday of Easter
Abuse Prevention & Awareness Sunday

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship

Come praise God the Creator who made each child in God's image!
We will praise our Creator by recognizing each child's sacred worth.
Come praise the Christ who blessed the children!
We will praise Christ by being a blessing to children in need.
Come praise God the Holy Spirit who moves among us!
We will praise the Holy Spirit by working for justice.
Come praise the Triune God who created us, redeemed us, and sustains us!
We will praise God by putting our faith into action to seek justice for children.

Thanksgiving for Baptism

Alleluia! Christ is risen.
Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!
Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
by whose hand we are given new birth,
by whose speaking we are given new life.
Amen.

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,
we are welcomed, restored, and supported
as citizens of the new creation.

Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Holy God,
holy and merciful,
holy and mighty,
you are the river of life,
you are the everlasting wellspring.

In mercy and might you have freed us from death
and raised us with Jesus, the firstborn of the dead.
In baptismal waters our old life is washed away,
and in them we are born anew.

Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister continues.

Glory to you for oceans and lakes,
for rivers and streams.
Honor to you for waters that wash us clean,
quench our thirst, and nurture both crops and creatures.
Praise to you for the life-giving water of baptism,
the outpouring of the Spirit of the new creation.

**Wash away our sin and all that separates us from you.
Empower our witness to your resurrection.
Strengthen our resolve in seeking justice for all.**

Satisfy the world's need through this living water.
Where drought dries the earth, bring refreshment.
Where despair prevails, grant hope.
Where chaos reigns, bring peace.
We ask this through Christ,
who with you and the Spirit reigns forever.
Amen.

Opening Hymn

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us
ELW 789, verses 1-3

Greeting & Prayer of the Day

The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the
Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Living God, you are here among us and within us in the midst of whatever is ailing us. As Jesus reached out and touched the lives of those who gathered around him, may we also reach out in love to you and to each other. Open our lives in this worship to the indwelling power of your Spirit. To you be all glory for now and forever.

Amen.

First Reading: Acts 2:42-47

Those converted devoted themselves to the apostles' instructions and the communal life, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. A reverent fear overtook them all, for many wonders and signs were performed by the apostles. Those who believed lived together, and shared all things in common; they would sell their property and goods, sharing the proceeds with one another as each had need. They met in the Temple and broke bread together in their homes every day. With joyful and sincere hearts they took their meals in common, praising God and winning the approval of all people. Day by day, God added to their numbers those who were being saved.

Word of God, Word of Life

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading: Psalm 23

YHWH, you are my shepherd –

I want nothing more.

You let me lie down in green meadows;

you lead me beside restful waters:

you refresh my soul.

You guide me to lush pastures

for the sake of your Name.

Even if I'm surrounded by shadows of Death,

I fear no danger, for you are with me.

Your rod and your staff –

they give me courage.

You spread a table before me

in the presence of my enemies,

and you anoint my head with oil –

my cup overflows!

Only goodness and love will follow me

all the days of my life,

and I will dwell in your house, YHWH,

for days without end.

Gospel: John 10:1-10

The Holy Gospel according to John the 10th chapter.

Jesus said,

“The truth of the matter is,
whoever doesn’t enter the sheepfold
through the gate
but climbs in some other way
is a thief and a robber.
The one who enters through the gate
is the shepherd of the sheep,
the one for whom the keeper opens the gate.
The sheep know the shepherd’s voice;
the shepherd calls them by name
and leads them out.
Having led them all out of the fold,
the shepherd walks in front of them
and they follow
because they recognize the shepherd’s voice.
They simply won’t follow strangers –
they’ll flee from them
because they don’t recognize the voice of the stranger.”

Even though Jesus used this metaphor with them, they didn’t grasp what he was trying to tell them. He therefore said to them again:

“The truth of the matter is,
I am the sheep gate.
All who came before me
were thieves and marauders
whom the sheep didn’t heed.
I am the gate.
Whoever enters through me will be safe –
you’ll go in and out and find pasture.
The thief comes only to steal
and slaughter and destroy.
I came that you might have life
and have it in full.”

Word of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Rev. Miranda Bermes-Goller

Safe Sanctuary Annual Recommitment

[Safe Sanctuaries: Living into the Covenant](#)

Discipleship Ministries, UMC

Litany of Healing

Group 1: We believe that beyond the violence

Group 2: there can be love;

Group 1: That beyond the despair,

Group 2: there can be hope;

Group 1: That beyond the torment,

Group 2: we will find rest;

Group 1: That beyond our brokenness,

Group 2: there can be healing;

Group 1: That beyond our agony,

Group 2: We will find joy.

**All: Oh God, transform our disbelief
and gently carry us from darkness to light.**

Prayer of Confession & Reconciliation

God of endless love,
ever caring, ever strong,
always present, always just:
You gave your only Son
to save us by the blood of his cross.

Gentle Jesus, shepherd of peace,
join to your own suffering
the pain of all who have been hurt
in body, mind, and spirit
by those who betrayed the trust placed in them.

Hear our cries as we agonize
over the harm done to our brothers and sisters.
Breathe wisdom into our prayers,
soothe restless hearts with hope,
steady shaken spirits with faith:
Show us the way to justice and wholeness,
enlightened by truth and enfolded in your mercy.

Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts,
heal your people's wounds
and transform our brokenness.
Grant us courage and wisdom, humility and grace
so that we may act with justice and find peace in you.
In the name of Christ our healer we pray.
Amen.

Words of Assurance

Hurting, they came to him.
Healed, they followed him.
Grateful, they gave to him what they had, what they were.
Blessed, they became a blessing
and went out to all the world in his name.

Those who are hurt
and healed
grateful
and blessed
still move among us
in his name.
Amen.

Litany of Commitment

God did not call us to succeed,
God called us to serve.
God did not call us to win,
God called us to work.
God did not call us to live long,
God called us to live for God.
God did not call us to be happy,
God called us to be hopeful.
God did not call us to fame,
God called us to faith.
God did not call us to seek power,
God called us to seek peace.
God did not call us to loot the earth and each other,
God called us to love our earth and each other.
Amen.

Hymn of the Day

My Shepherd, You Supply My Need
ELW 782, verses 1-3

Affirmation of Faith: Ionian Creed

Please stand as you are able as we confess our faith in God together:

**We believe in God above us,
maker and sustainer of all life,
of sun and moon, of water and earth,
of male and female.
We believe in God beside us,
Jesus Christ, the word made flesh,
born of a woman, servant of the poor,
tortured and nailed to a tree.
A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief,
he died alone and forsaken.
He descended into the earth
to the place of death.
On the third day he rose from the tomb.
He ascended into heaven,
to be everywhere present throughout all ages,
and His kingdom will come on earth.
We believe in God within us,
the Holy Spirit burning with Pentecostal fire,
life-giving breath of the Church,
Spirit of healing and forgiveness,
source of all resurrection and of eternal life.
Amen**

Joys & Concerns

If you have any joys, concerns, or prayer requests to share, please type them into the comment section of the livestream so that we may lift them up together as a community.

Prayers of the People

Set free from captivity to sin and death, we pray to the God of resurrection for the church, people in need, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

You are the shepherd who gathers us in your mighty and loving arms. Help your church to listen for your voice, especially when the voices of sin, idolatry, and oppression threaten to overpower us.

Be with us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

The green pastures, still waters, and dark valleys of this earth all belong to you, O Lord. Sustain your creation with a love that is both mighty and just. Where there is destruction, bring healing. Where there is desolation, bring abundance

Be with us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You are the sheepgate that gives safety to your beloved flocks. Provide protection for refugees, victims of domestic violence, those who are imprisoned, and all people who are vulnerable to violence and mistreatment

Be with us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God, we pray for survivors of sexual abuse. We pray for healing. We pray for deep comfort. We pray that you will restore what has been stolen and broken. While you do not alter history, you reveal your love in the present and the future. What seems hopelessly shattered, in you can be redeemed. We turn to you and cry out for help and healing.

Be with us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

In your mercy, O God, respond to these prayers, and renew us by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

Dedication & Blessing of Quilts

Dottie and/or Bette Lou to say a few words about the quilts, the work that has gone into them, and where they will be sent to.

As we bless these quilts and prepare to send them out to be sources of God's comfort in this weary world, I invite you all to raise your hands towards a quilt near you and join me in this litany of dedication.

God, our neighbors around the world are in need of hope. Your comforting Spirit moves in big and small ways, bearing whispers of hope to all your children. Open our hearts and hands to see your presence in our neighborhoods and across the world.

Jesus, help us speak words of hope to our neighbors.

God, we give you thanks for the pieces of fabric, thread, sewing machines, and all other materials that have gone into these quilts – small things that have been brought together and transformed into something new. We ask that you bless these quilts among us today. May their presence be a sign of hope, and may these quilts wrap our neighbors in your unending love.

Jesus, help us reach out in hope to our neighbors.

God, we give thanks for each and every hand that helped to fashion hope into a quilt – for the hands that sewed and tied – the hands that cut and ironed – the hands that poured your love into every seam and stitch. May the work of these hands inspire us all to be sources of love and hope in this world.

Jesus, help us see hope in our neighbors.

God, we ask you to guide the staff and partners at Lutheran World Relief. May their voices and hands be a beacon of hope for those who need it most. Keep them safe and sustain them in their work with your strength and perseverance.

Jesus, help us share a taste of hope with our neighbors.

God, be with our neighbors who will receive these gifts. May these quilts wrap them in a blanket of your love, that they might see and feel tangible signs of your hope and presence in this world. Whether or not we know their names or where they live, they are our neighbors, our siblings in Christ. We pray all this in the name of the risen Christ, who is our life and our hope.

Amen

Offering

5th Sunday Special Offertory: [The Next Door](#)

At this time, if you are willing and able, please consider giving to Spirit of Grace Church to support our ongoing ministry. Checks can be mailed to 1140 Tucker Road, Hood River OR, 97031. Online Donations can be made through the link below:
[Spirit of Grace Church](#)

Offering Prayer

Generous God,
through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit,
you have given us your very self.
We offer to you that which you have first given us,
and ask that in all we do and everywhere we go,
we may be a blessing
to those we encounter on the way.
Through the risen Christ we pray.
Amen.

Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us, using the language you are most familiar with - the language of your heart.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Sending Song:

They'll Know We Are Christians
TFWS 2223, verses 1-4

Benediction

Go forth to answer God's call;
Go forth to protect the vulnerable;
Go forth to pursue justice.

Now may the blessing of God who calls us,
of Christ who welcomed the children and vulnerable into his protective embrace,
and of the Spirit who moves in and through us as we work for justice
be with you and every child of God now and forever more. Amen.

Dismissal

Alleluia! Christ is risen!
Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!
Go in peace. The Spirit of God is alive in you!
Thanks be to God!



1140 Tucker Rd. Hood River, OR 97031
541-386-3993
www.hoodriverchurch.org

Church Office Hours
Closed on Fridays
Pastor Miranda Bermes-Goller
M-Th 9-1, or by appointment
spiritofgracepastor@gmail.com
Linda Boris, Pastoral Assistant
Tuesday 10-1

Attributions

This worship service was compiled and based off of Worship Resources for Oregon-Idaho Churches for Abuse Prevention Sunday by Rev. Roberta J Egli – originally created for the 2013 observance.

Call to Worship – Adapted by Rev. Roberta J Egli from 2012 National Observance Children’s Sabbath Manual

Prayer of the Day – Rev. Roberta J Egli

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Benediction – Adapted from 2012 National Observance Children’s Sabbath Manual.