

Spirit of Grace ELCA UMC



July 16th, 2023
7th Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship

Let us prepare our hearts for God's holy work
Let us ready ourselves for Divine disruption
As the earth longs to flourish and the people dream of rest
God has promised to show us the way
Setting down our egos, taking up our faith
We seek the seeds of transformation
Wisdom is here, alive and among us. Let us receive her truth.

Confession & Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who greets us in this and every season,
whose word never fails,
whose promise is sure.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God
and of our neighbors.

Silence is kept for reflection

Merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned.
We have hurt our community.
We have squandered your blessings.
We have hoarded your bounty.
In the name of Jesus,
forgive us and grant us your mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection

Righteous God,
we confess that we have sinned.
We have failed to be honest.
We have lacked the courage to speak.
We have spoken falsely.
In the name of Jesus,
forgive us and grant us your mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection

God is a cup of cold water when we thirst.
God offers boundless grace when we fail.
Claim the gift of God's mercy:
you are freed and forgiven
in the name of † Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Opening Hymn

For the Fruit of All Creation
ELW 679 – 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.
God of rebirth, renewal, and restoration,
We acknowledge how easy it is to get stuck in our ways. While we wish for radical change in the world, we still struggle to discern what change is needed from us. We turn to you for guidance. Release us from that which holds us back in mind, body, and spirit, that we might move together in directions of freedom.
Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 55:10-13

For just as from the heavens
the rain and snow come down
and do not return there
til they have watered the earth,
making it fertile and fruitful,
giving seed to the sower and bread for food,
so will my word be
that goes forth from my mouth:
it will not return to me empty,
but will carry out my will,
achieving the end for which I sent it.
And you will go out joyfully,
and be led out in peace;
the mountains and hills before you
will break into cries of joy,
and all the trees in the countryside
will clap their hands.
The cypress will grow in place of the thorn bush,
the myrtle will replace the briars;
and they will stand as a memorial to YHWH,
an everlasting sign never to be destroyed.

Word of God, Word of Life
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 65

O God, to you we owe hymns of praise in Zion;
to you our vows must be fulfilled,
**you who hear our prayers
and before whom all flesh must stand.**
When we are overcome by our sins,
you provide atonement for them
**Happy are those you choose, those you draw near
to dwell in your courts!
We are filled with the blessings of your house,
the holy things of your Temple!**

With powerful deeds of justice
you answer us, God our Deliverer,
in whom all the ends of the earth
and the farthest sea put their trust.
**You set the mountains in place by your power,
having armed yourself with might.**
You still the roaring of seas,
the roaring of the waves, the tumult of the peoples.
**And those who dwell at the ends of the earth
stand in awe of your marvels;
you make the sunrise and the sunset shout for joy!**
You nourish and water the land –
greatly you have enriched it.
The streams of God are full of water;
you provide us with grain as you ordained.
**Thus have you prepared the land:
drenching its furrows,
breaking up its clods, softening it with showers,
blessing its yield.**
You have crowned the year with your bounty
and your paths overflow with rich harvest;
**the untilled meadows overflow with abundance,
and rejoicing clothes the hills.**
The fields are covered with flocks
and the valleys are blanketed with grain.
They shout and sing for joy!

Gospel: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 13th chapter.

Later that day, Jesus left the house and sat down by the lake shore. Such great crowds gathered that he went and took a seat in a boat, while the crowd stood along the shore. He addressed them at length in parables:
“One day, a farmer went out sowing seed. Some of the seed landed on a footpath, where birds came and ate it up. Some of this seed fell on rocky ground, where there was little soil. This seed sprouted at once since the soil had no depth, but when the sun rose and scorched it, it withered away for lack of roots. Again, some of the seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it. And some of it landed on good soil, and yielded a crop thirty, sixty, even a hundred times what was sown.

“Now, listen to the parable of the sower. When people hear the message about the kingdom of God without understanding it, the Evil One comes along and snatches away what was sown in their hearts. This is the seed sown along the path. Those who received the seed that fell on rocky ground are the ones who hear the word at first and welcome it with joy. But they have no roots, so they only last a while. When some setback or persecution comes because of the message, they quickly fall away. Those who receive the message that fell among the thorns are the ones who hear the word, but then worldly anxieties and the lure of wealth choke it off, and the message produces no fruit. But those who receive the seed that fell on rich soil are those who hear the message and understand it. They produce a crop that yields a hundred, or sixty, or thirty times what was sown.”

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

Sermon

Rev. Miranda Bermes-Goller

Hymn of the Day

Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil
ELW 512 – sung three times

Affirmation of Faith: A New Creed

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

**We are not alone
we live in God's world.
We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.
We trust in God.
We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our redeemer and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God. 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

Trusting in God's abundant mercy, let us offer our prayers for a world in need.

A brief silence.

Guide your church, O God, to sow seeds of forgiveness and righteousness on good soil. Direct your people to proclaim your love in this congregation and throughout the world.

God, in your mercy,
Receive our prayer.

Sustain your creation, O God, by sending favorable weather, causing trees and fields to grow, protecting waterways from pollution, and instilling in all people the need to be good stewards.

God, in your mercy,
Receive our prayer.

Maintain peace among all people, O God, and raise up lawyers to work for justice in the courts, advocates to speak for the downtrodden, and politicians to work on behalf of the common good.

God, in your mercy,
Receive our prayer.

Heal those who are sick, O God. Guide health care workers to care for those who suffer, scientists to conduct lifesaving research, and counselors to care for victims of sexual abuse and exploitation.

God, in your mercy,
Receive our prayer.

Answer the prayers of those gathered in worship, O God. Protect those who travel near and far, accompany visitors to this congregation, and nurture our faith.

God, in your mercy,
Receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Since we have such great hope in your promises, O God, we lift these and all of our prayers to you in confidence and faith; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Offering

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](#)

Offertory Prayer

God of field and forest, sea and sky,
you are the giver of all good things.
Sustain us with these gifts of your creation,
and multiply your graciousness in us,
that the world may be fed with your love,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

Preface - TFWS 2257-a

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Father Almighty (almighty God), creator of heaven and 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, who looked for that day
when justice shall roll down like waters
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream,
when nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war anymore.

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

Sanctus - TFWS 2257-b

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 and the Spirit.
At his ascension you exalted him
to sit and reign with you at your right hand.

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."

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

Memorial Acclamation - TFWS 2257-c

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.

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 (God), now and for ever.

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.**

Invitation to Communion

This table of bread and wine has now been made ready.
So come to this table,
You who have much faith
and you who would like to have more;
you who have been here often
and you who have not been here long
you who have tried to follow Jesus,
and you who have failed;
Come and eat. It is Christ who invites us all to meet him here.

Communion Distribution

Prayer after Communion

We thank you, generous God,
for the refreshment we have received
at your banquet table.
Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world,
through the one who is our dearest treasure,
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

Sending Song:

Hymn of Promise
UMH 707 – verses 1-3

Blessing

The God who calls across the cosmos
and speaks in the smallest seed
⊕ bless, keep, and sustain you
now and to the end of the age.
Amen

Dismissal

Go in peace. The Spirit of God is alive in you!
Thanks be to God!



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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

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