

Spirit of Grace ELCA UMC



July 30th, 2023
Hymn Sing Sunday

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship

The Spirit is coming to bless us all with a new song:

Let our joy be complete!

Gifts for the good of all, poured out on all to teach us a new song:

Love one another!

Strangers and neighbors, foreigners and family will join in the new song:

No longer servants but friends!

Come, let our worship make a joyful noise,

Rejoicing in the friendship of God.

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.

Hymn #1

Holy, Holy, Holy
UMH 64 - verses 1+4

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.
Creator God, in praise and adoration our spirits dance before you today.
You have created this wondrous universe and all the magnificent things within it.
You have blessed us with so much throughout our lives, even to this day of praise and thanksgiving.
Let our spirits soar! Let our hearts sing boldly of your wondrous love.
We celebrate your love and presence with us, and it is in the name of your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, that we offer this prayer.
Amen.

Hymn #2

He Has Made Me Glad
TFWS 2270, sung twice through

Psalm 98, from Nan C. Merrill's "Psalms for Praying"

O sing to the Beloved a new song,
for Love has done marvelous things!
By the strength of your Indwelling Presence,
we, too, are called to do
great things;
we are set free through Love's
forgiveness and truth.
Yes, your steadfast Love and faithfulness
are ever-present gifts
in our lives.
All the ends of the earth have seen
the glory of Love's eternal Flame.

Make a joyful noise to the Beloved
all the earth;
break forth into grateful song
and sing praises!
Yes, sing songs of praise extolling
Love's way;
lift up your hearts with
gratitude and joy!
Let the voices of all people blend in harmony,
in unison let the people magnify the Beloved!

Let the sea laugh, and all that fill it;
the world and those who dwell in it!

Let the waters clap their hands;
let the hills ring out with joy
before the Beloved, who radiates Love
to all the earth.
For Love reigns over the world
with truth and justice
bringing order and balance to
all of Creation.

Hymn #3

Just a Closer Walk with Thee
TFWS 2158 - verses 1+2

A reading from 2 Chronicles 5:11-14

After the priests had come out of the Holy of Holies – all the priests there, without regard for divisions, had purified themselves – the levitical cantors, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, and their heirs and their kinfolk, all dressed in fine linen, stood with cymbals, harps and lyres to the east of the altar with 120 priests with trumpets. It was the duty of these trumpeters and singers that they should be heard in a single voice praising and giving thanks to YHWH, and so this chant was raised, to the sound of the trumpets and cymbals, and harps and lyres: “Give thanks to YHWH, who is good, and whose mercy endures forever.”

Then the building was filled with a cloud of God’s glory. The priests could not continue to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of YHWH filled the house of YHWH.

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

A reading from Colossians 3:12-17

Because you are God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with heartfelt compassion, with kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive whatever grievances you have against one another – forgive in the same way God has forgiven you. Above all else, put on love, which binds the rest together and makes them perfect.

Let Christ’s peace reign in your hearts since, as members of one body, you have been called to that peace. Dedicate yourselves to thankfulness. Let the Word of Christ, rich as it is, dwell in you. Instruct and admonish one another wisely. Sing gratefully to God from your hearts in psalms, hymns, and songs of the Spirit. And whatever you do, whether in speech or in action, do it in the name of Jesus our Savior, giving thanks to God through Christ.

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn #4

In the Garden
UMH 314 - verses 1+2

Litany: Sing a New Song!

Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD;
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before God with thanksgiving—
with music and song!

**It is good to sing praise to You,
and make music to Your name, O Most High;
to proclaim Your love in the morning
and Your faithfulness at night.
For You make us glad by Your deeds, O God;
we sing for joy at the work of Your hands.**

Worship God with gladness;
come into God's presence with joyful songs—
with thanksgiving and praise!
For God has taken away our garments of sadness,
and clothed us with joy,
that we might sing praise, and not be silent!

**We will sing of God's love forever!
Young and old will hear, and rejoice.
For Your unfailing love lasts forever;
Your faithfulness is as enduring as the heavens above.**

Sing new songs to God! Praise God's name!
Each day proclaim the good news of God's salvation.
Tell everyone about the amazing things God has done.

**May Your ways be known throughout the earth, O God;
Your saving power among people everywhere.
May the nations praise You and sing for joy,
for You govern them with justice,
and guide the actions of the whole world.**

Hymn #5

My Faith Looks Up To Thee
ELW 759 - verses 1+3

A compilation of Luther's writings on the importance of music:

Experience testifies that, after the Word of God, music alone deserves to be celebrated as mistress and queen of the emotions of the human heart (of animals nothing is to be said at present). And by these emotions men are controlled and often swept away as by their lords. A greater praise of music than this we cannot conceive. For if you want to revive the sad, startle the jovial, encourage the despairing, humble the conceited, pacify the raving, mollify the hate-filled—and who is able to enumerate all the lords of the human heart, I mean the emotions of the heart and the urges which incite a man to all virtues and vices?—what can you find that is more efficacious than music?

I firmly believe, nor am I ashamed to assert, that next to theology no art is equal to music; for it is the only one, except theology, which is able to give a quiet and happy mind. This is manifestly proved by the fact that the devil, the author of depressing care and distressing disturbances, almost flees from the sound of music as he does from the word of theology. This is the reason why the prophets practiced music more than any art and did not put their theology into geometry, into arithmetic, or into astronomy, but into music, intimately uniting theology and music, telling the truth in psalms and songs.

I am not satisfied with him who despises music, as all fanatics do; for music is an endowment and a gift of God, not a gift of men. It also drives away the devil and makes people cheerful; one forgets all anger, unchasteness, pride, and other vices. I place music next to theology and give it the highest praise.

Beautiful music is the art of the prophets that can calm the agitations of the soul; it is one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us.

Hymn #6

Softly & Tenderly, Jesus is Calling
ELW 608 - verses 1+3

A reading by Hoyt Hickman from the United Methodist Discipleship Ministries, on the Importance of Music in Worship

If we want our churches to be alive, our worship must be alive. And if we want our worship to be alive, our music must be alive.

Most of us find that music reaches and expresses our deepest feelings far more powerfully than words alone. Few of us would want to worship in a church where there was no music. If we experience worship as boring, we probably have experienced something lacking in the music.

Music is something we both hear and sing when we worship. This is related to the fact that worship is both call and response. The call of God reaches the depths of our hearts with special power through music, and our singing expresses with special power the deepest response of our hearts to God.

When we recognize the importance of music we do not detract from the centrality of Word and sacrament. On the contrary, music adds immeasurably to the power of Scripture and preaching, prayer and sacrament.

We not only hear the Bible read in our worship, we also hear it sung. In Handel's *Messiah* a long succession of Bible verses becomes unforgettable. Most of the great anthems are settings of Scripture.

Augustine tells us that when we sing, we pray twice. Rarely does a congregation pray so powerfully as when singing a great prayer hymn such as "Breathe on Me, Breath of God" or "Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart." Prayer as praise almost demands to be sung: "Alleluia! Alleluia!" "Holy! Holy! Holy!"

The inherent power of the sacraments is brought out by music. How much a good baptism hymn adds to holy baptism! What a world of difference it makes when a congregation is receiving Holy Communion if they can be singing familiar and beloved hymns and songs and choruses all the while! How much more the responses in the ritual mean if they are sung by all the people in their "musical heart language" rather than simply read in unison or sung by a few brave souls in some strange and forbidding musical style!

The music makes a difference in how everything else in the service goes. When we all have been lifted to the heights through music, the pastor and others who lead worship are inspired to preach and lead with greater freedom and power. Those who worship in the pews find their hearts and minds opened to hear more clearly and receive more fully the good news that is the gospel.

Yes, and when we scatter into the weekday world, we do so with more God-given power if there is music echoing in our hearts and a tune on our lips.

Hymn #7

Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore
UMH 344 - verses 1+3

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.

Almighty God, we pray for the church and all servants of the gospel. We give you thanks for those who have shared their musical skills and talents with the church throughout the ages, inspiring all your children to embrace the music within our souls, that we might lift our voices in praise to you.

God, in your mercy,
Receive our prayer.

Gracious God, we pray for the well-being of creation. Safeguard the environment, send your servants to clean polluted rivers and lakes, preserve the mighty tree and the tiny mustard seed, and send advocates for sustainable practices throughout the earth.

God, in your mercy,
Receive our prayer.

Compassionate God, we pray for the nations. Instill in all who govern the ability to discern between good and evil, free those who are oppressed, and protect those facing danger. Promote peace across the world and in our towns and neighborhoods.

God, in your mercy,
Receive our prayer.

Merciful God, we pray for all in any need. Protect those fleeing from war, shelter any who are in poverty, comfort the weary, soothe all who grieve, and heal all enduring illness and injury.

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 Music

Linda Boris, Harp

Prayer of Thanksgiving

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.
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.

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.**

Hymn #8

What a Friend We Have in Jesus
UMH 526 - verses 1+2

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
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Pastor Miranda Bermes-Goller
M-Th 9-1, or by appointment
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Tuesday 10-1

Attributions

Call to Worship: from Friends of God: Service Prayers for the Sixth Sunday of Easter, written by the Rev. Susan A. Blain. Posted on the United Church of Christ's Worship Ways archive.

Prayer of the Day: written by Nancy C. Townley, and posted on the Ministry Matters website.
<http://www.ministrymatters.com/>

Psalm 98: from *Psalms for Praying*, written by Nan C. Merrill

Litany: Sing a New Song: written by Christine Longhurst, from re:worship

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Affirmation of Faith: A New Creed – Statement of Faith of the United Church of Canada

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