

Spirit of Grace

ELCA UMC



August 6th, 2023
10th Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship

Listen! Listen for the voice of God, naming us all: Holy. Beloved. Cherished. Valued.

We believe you delight in us!

Make us people who recognize and proclaim your beauty and goodness in unexpected places.

Surprise us. Challenge us. Transform us.

We trust in you, Holy One, to reveal to us the sacredness of every life, of every way of being, of every physical manifestation of your Spirit.

May it be so!

Centering Hymn

Be Still and Know
lyrics on screen

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

Take, Oh, Take Me As I Am
ELW 814, sung three times

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.

Loving Creator – you made humanity in your divine image, that we might reflect your goodness in this world you love so dearly. Help us to see your holiness within us, and within all people who embrace the true and authentic being you created them to be and to become. With the Spirit of Creation burning within us, we pray this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

First Reading: Genesis 1:1-27

In the Beginning
God created
the heavens
and the earth.

But the earth became chaos and emptiness, and darkness came over the face of the Deep – yet the Spirit of God was brooding over the surface of the waters.

Then God said, “Light: Be!” and light was. God saw that light was good, and God separated light from darkness. God called the light “Day” and the darkness “Night.” Evening came, and morning followed – the first day.

Then God said, “Now, make an expanse between the waters! Separate water from water!” So it was: God made the expanse and separated the water above the expanse from the water below it. God called the expanse “Sky.” Evening came, and morning followed – the second day.

Then God said, “Waters under the sky: be gathered into one place! Dry ground: appear!” So it was. God called the dry ground “Earth” and the gathering of waters “Sea.” And God saw that this was good. Then God said, “Earth: produce vegetation – plants that scatter their own seeds, and every kind of fruit tree that bears fruit with its own seed in it!” So it was: the earth brought forth every kind of plant that bears seed, and every kind of fruit tree on earth that bears fruit with its seed in it. And God saw that this was good. Evening came, and morning followed – the third day.

Then God said, “Now, let there be lights in the expanse of the sky! Separate day from night! Let them mark the signs and seasons, days and years, and serve as luminaries in the sky, shedding light on the earth.” So it was: God made the two great lights, the greater one to illumine the day, and a lesser to illumine the night. Then God made stars as well, placing them in the expanse of the sky, to shed light on earth, to govern both day and night, and separate light from darkness. And God saw that this was good. Evening came, and morning followed – the fourth day.

God then said, “Waters: swarm with an abundance of living beings! Birds: fly above the earth in the open expanse of the sky!” And so it was: God created great sea monsters and all sorts of swimming creatures with which the waters are filled, and all kinds of birds. God saw that this was good and blessed them, saying, “Bear fruit, increase your numbers, and fill the waters of the seas! Birds abound on the earth!” Evening came, and morning followed – the fifth day.

Then God said, “Earth: bring forth all kinds of living souls – cattle, things that crawl, and wild animals of all kinds!” So it was: God made all kinds of wild animals, and cattle, and everything that crawls on the ground, and God saw that this was good.

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, to be like us. Let them be stewards of the fish in the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle, the wild animals, and everything that crawls on the ground."

Humankind was created as God's reflection:
In the divine image God created them;
female and male, God made them.

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

Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21

YHWH, you are gracious and compassionate,
slow to anger, and rich in love.
**YHWH, you are good to all
and compassionate toward all your creatures.**

You lift up those who are falling
and raise up those who are oppressed.
**The eyes of all look to you in hope,
and you give them their food in due season.**
You open your hand
and satisfy the desire of every living thing.
**YHWH, you are just in all your ways
and loving toward all that you have created.**
You are near to all who call upon you,
all who call upon you in truth.
**You fulfill the desires of those who revere you;
you hear their cry and save them.**
You watch over all who love you, YHWH,
but you'll destroy all who are corrupt.

**My mouth will speak your praise, YHWH,
and may all creation bless your holy Name
forever and ever!**

Gospel: Matthew 14:13-21

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 14th chapter.

When Jesus heard about the beheading [of John the Baptist], he left Nazareth by boat and went to a deserted place to be alone. The crowds heard of this and followed him from their towns on foot. When Jesus disembarked and saw the vast throng, his heart was moved with pity, and he healed their sick.

As evening drew on, the disciples approached Jesus and said, "This is a deserted place and it is already late. Dismiss the crowds so they can go to the villages and buy some food for themselves."

Jesus said to them: "There is no need for them to disperse. Give them something to eat yourselves."

"We have nothing here," they replied, "but five loaves and a couple of fish."

"Bring them here," Jesus said. Then he ordered the crowds to sit on the grass.

Taking the five loaves and two fish, Jesus looked up to heaven, blessed the food, broke it, and gave it to the disciples, who in turn gave it to the people. All those present ate their fill. The fragments remaining, when gathered up, filled twelve baskets. About five thousand families were fed.

Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

The Expansive God Sermon Series: In the Beginning

Rev. Miranda Bermes-Goller

Hymn of the Day

Christ, Our Peace
lyrics on screen

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.

Hymn of Prayer

Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying
ELW 752

Prayers of the People

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

A brief silence.

You gather your church together by the Holy Spirit. Inspire all the baptized to proclaim your abundant love throughout the world. Guide us in the mission of the gospel through word and deed.

God, in your mercy,

Receive our prayer.

You cherish your creation, from the smallest microbe to the largest mountain. Protect fragile ecosystems, send favorable weather, supply food and water to nourish creatures, and raise us up to care for all you have created.

God, in your mercy,

Receive our prayer.

You desire peace and justice in the world. Instill within all political leaders your desire, support the work of international peace organizations, and provide relief for those in war-torn areas

God, in your mercy,

Receive our prayer.

You comfort those who are hurting. Accompany those who are alone, heal those who are sick, provide for all who hunger or thirst, console the bereaved, bring joy to the sorrowful, and attend to all who call on you

God, in your mercy,

Receive our prayer.

You place us within communities for mutual support and love. Reveal yourself to us in worship, fellowship, and ministry with our neighbors. Provide for feeding ministries and food banks in our area, that we share your abundance with all who hunger.

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

The Holy One be with you

And also with you

Open your hearts to the One who is Love

We open our hearts to you, O God

Let us give thanks to God who shapes our world

For every creature and creation, we give you thanks, O God!

Indeed, we give you thanks, our Divine Creator. You declared from the beginning that we were created in your image, a reflection of what is holy, each, in our own way, a glimpse of you. We praise the works of your creative hand that fills our life with beauty. Every flower that blooms, every animal that delights, every body of water that sustains our life – all part of your good works.

Despite the abundance of life around us, we still turn to destruction. Each in our own ways, we have failed to embrace you by failing to embrace all your people, especially those different from us. We have, at times, sided with political and religious powers that refuse to recognize your image in all people.

And so we turn to Jesus, who showed us what it looks like to live into our true selves as people of God. He was humble yet grounded in your love for him. He sought out the despised and made them friends. He confronted every power that belittled, marginalized, and oppressed. His commitment to living out the image of God enfleshed could not be swayed, even in the face of death.

On the night of his arrest, he gathered around a table with his companions.

Jesus took bread,
and gave thanks; broke it,
and gave it to his disciples.
saying: Take and Eat;
this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper,
he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink,
saying, "This cup
is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people
for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Together as the body of Christ,
we proclaim Jesus' death
until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Even in death, O God, your love prevailed. Through you Spirit, Christ was raised from the grave. No person, no institution, no force of evil could extinguish the work of your hand.

And so, by the same Spirit, bless these gifts of bread and cup that they may be the living Christ within us today; compelling us to be agents of love, uncompromising on our commitment to protecting every one of your creatures and creations.

Amen and amen!

Amen and 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. Amn.**

Instructions for 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:

God is Love
See Printed Handout

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
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Linda Boris, Pastoral Assistant
Tuesday 10-1

Attributions

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

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