

Spirit of Grace ELCA UMC



October 1st, 2023

Season of Creation Week Five: Waters of Justice & Peace

World Communion Sunday

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship

O Divine Voice,

You sing and the universe comes into being;

O Divine Breath,

You breathe and all things spring to life;

O Divine Word,

You call and creation is sustained;

O Divine Flesh,

You are born among us,

and the Creator is clothed in creation;

O Divine Spirit,

You fill all that has been formed;

O Divine Life,

You are the pulse of all that is.

In amazement and awe,

in wonder and celebration

we marvel at this mystery:

In you all things live and move and have being.

And so we join with creation

in the eternal song of worship and wonder.

Hymn of the Season

Water, River, Spirit, Grace
TFWS 2253, sung three times

Litany of Repentance & Forgiveness

God of light and life and love,
God of land and sea and sky,
Who called creation into existence
and wove it into a rich tapestry, a web of life
Your Spirit hovered over the face of the primordial waters,
And was breathed into humankind
after You made us equally in Your image.
Your Word was made flesh
and embodied Your divine love
as it took root and bore fruit in us,
restoring our relationship with You.

**Yet we have not honored this relationship
with You and the rest of Your Creation.
We have disrespected the web of life
We have devalued the fine ecological tapestry
that You wove with so much love.
We have uprooted Your tree of life and sold it as logs.
We have polluted Your oceans and rivers;
oceans that cry for justice
and rivers that call to righteousness.
Instead of everything that has breath praising You,
all creation groans in pain from our desire for more,
and our care for less.**

The consequences of our ecological sin are all around:
In bitter winters and scorching summers
Through endless droughts and raging wildfires
In contaminated water, polluted air, rising temperatures –
Yet we refuse to see.
Creation roars in pain
Yet we refuse to hear.
You call us in Christ, to speak truth to power and peace to
this planet, our common home
Yet we refuse to speak out.

God of hope and healing
May your Rivers of Righteousness
Wash away our apathy, our greed, and our selfishness.
Nourish us with the water of life that restores,
turning deserts of despair into oases of hope.
May the waves of Your embrace
Transform us back into guardians of Your creation.
May the currents of Your justice
Carry us to Your lagoon of peace
Where all creation may enjoy
Life in abundance

Silence for reflection

Beloved Siblings in Christ
in God there is endless forgiveness.
in Christ we will find our resurrection,
and through the Spirit we will be reconciled
to one another, to all of Creation, and to the Divine.
May it be so among us.
Amen.

Opening Hymn

Come to the Water
W&S 3114 – verses 1+2

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 of Life,
You love the universe into being – let us give praise.
You embrace the world without distinction – let us give thanks.
You call humanity to make flesh Your tenderness – let us live accordingly.
You endow all creation with Your divine beauty and wisdom – let us acknowledge.
You forgive all trespasses – let us learn Your ways.
You grace us unconditionally – let us receive humbly.
You are our hope – let us remember.
In the name of your son, Jesus Christ, we pray.
Amen.

First Reading: Amos 5:21-24

[For thus says YHWH, God Omnipotent:]
I despise and reject your feasts!
I am not appeased by your solemn assemblies!
When you offer me burnt offerings,
I reject your oblations,
and refuse to look at your sacrifices of fattened cattle!
Spare me the racket of your chanting!
Relieve me of the strumming of your harps!
Instead, let justice flow like a river,
and righteousness flow like an unfailing stream.

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

Psalm 85

YHWH, favor your land once again
and restore the fortunes of Israel;
**forgive the guilt of your people
and cover all their sins.**
Set aside all your anger,
and calm the heat of your rage.
Return to us, O God of our deliverance!
Put an end to your displeasure with us.
Will you be angry with us forever?
Will your wrath continue from one generation to the next?
**Won't you revive us again
so that your people can rejoice in you?**
Let us see your mercy, YHWH,
and grant us your deliverance.

**I will listen to what you have to say, YHWH –
a voice that speaks of peace,
peace for your people and friends
so long as they don't return to their folly.**
Your salvation is near for those who revere you
and your glory will dwell in our land.
**Love and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.**
Fidelity will sprout from the earth
and justice will lean down from heaven.

**YHWH will give us what is good,
and our land will yield its harvest.**
Justice will march before you, YHWH,
and peace will prepare the way for your steps.

Gospel Acclamation

Halle, Halle, Halleluja
TFWS 2026

Gospel: John 7:37-8:1

The Holy Gospel according to John the 7th chapter.

On the last and greatest day of the festival [the Jewish Feast of the Tabernacles],
Jesus stood up and shouted,

“Any who are thirsty,
let them come to me and drink!
Those who believe in me, as the scripture says,
‘From their innermost being
will flow rivers of living water.’”

Here Jesus was referring to the Spirit, which those who came to believe were to receive – though she had not yet been given, since Jesus had not been glorified. Several people in the crowd who had heard the words of Jesus began to say, “This must be the Prophet.” But others were saying, “He’s not the Messiah.” Still others said, “Surely the Messiah is not to come from Galilee? Doesn’t Scripture say that the Messiah, being of David’s lineage, is to come from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?” So the people were sharply divided over this. Some of them even wanted to arrest Jesus. However, no one laid hands on him.

The Temple guards went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, “Why haven’t you brought him in?”

“No one has ever spoken like that before,” the guards responded.

“So, you too have been taken in!” the Pharisees replied. “Do any of the Sanhedrin believe in him? Any of the Pharisees? This rabble knows nothing about the Law – and they are damned anyway!”

One of their own, Nicodemus – the same person who had come to Jesus earlier – said to them, “Since when does our Law condemn anyone without first hearing the accused and knowing all the facts?”

“Don’t tell us you’re Galilean, too!” they taunted him. “Look it up. You’ll see that no prophet comes from Galilee.”

After that, everyone went home, and Jesus went out to the Mount of Olives.

Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Waters of Justice & Peace

[Vanessa Nakate: Reflection for Season of Creation 2023](#)

[A Mighty River - song for Season of Creation 2023](#)

Hymn of the Day

Creating God, Your Fingers Trace
ELW 684 – verses 1-4

Affirmation of Faith: adapted from the New Zealand Prayer Book

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

**You, O God, are supreme and holy.
You create our world and give us life.
Your purpose overarches everything we do.
You have always been with us.
You are God.
You, O God, are infinitely generous,
good beyond all measure.
You came to us before we came to you.
You have revealed and proved
your love for us in Jesus Christ,
God made flesh,
who lived and died and rose again.
You are with us now.
You are God.
You, O God, are Holy Spirit.
You empower us to be your gospel in the world.
You reconcile and heal; you overcome death.
You are our God. We worship you.**

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

Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

Lead us in your truth as we pray for creation. Empower us to look to the interests of others as we make choices that impact the environment. Summon us to be advocates for healthy waterways, habitats, and air.

God of all Creation,
Receive our prayer.

We put our trust in you as we pray for the church. Give bishops, pastors, deacons, and teachers the gifts of wisdom and discernment. Be with them in bold truth and faithful witness.

God of all Creation,
Receive our prayer.

Trusting your goodness, we pray for all caregivers and people who are sick or suffering in any way. Give them encouragement and consolation in your presence.

God of all Creation,
Receive our prayer.

Teach us your paths as we pray for this congregation. Be at work in us and unite us in your love as we labor together for the sake of the gospel.

God of all Creation,
Receive our prayer.

We give thanks for all the saints who died secure in the knowledge of salvation. We give you thanks for the lives of Barabara Hustman and Bill Crompton, who left this earth to return to your presence last week. May their spirits be at peace and watch over us. Keep us fearless in our faith and certain of your resurrection.

God of all Creation,
Receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Remember us, Creator God, according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ. **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:

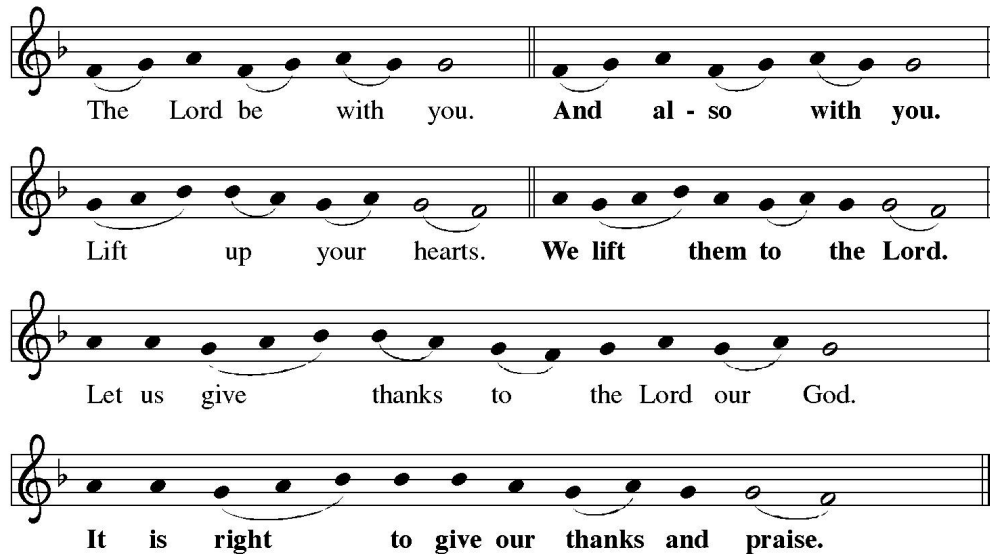
[Spirit of Grace Church](#)

Offertory Prayer

God of abundance, God of plenty,
all things belong to you.
We bring your gifts to the table,
that all of creation might be fed
through your mercy and grace.
Form us into the body of your Beloved,
Jesus Christ, and strengthen us
through this meal, in service to your Work.
Amen

The Great Thanksgiving

Dialogue & Preface



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

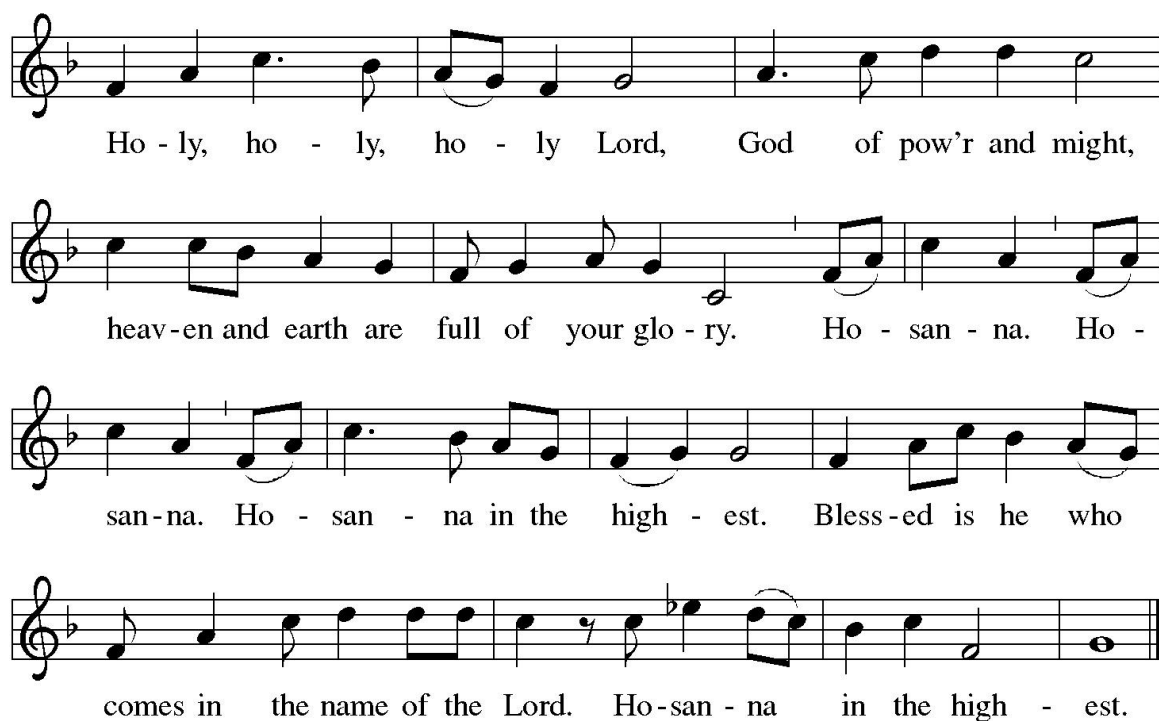
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise...

...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
 san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

Thanksgiving at the Table & Words of Institution

O God triune,
 how majestic is your name in all the earth.
 Over the eons your merciful might
 evolved our home, a fragile tree of life.
 Here by your wisdom
 are both life and death,
 growth and decay,
 the nest and the hunt,
 sunshine and storm,
 darkness and light.
 Sustained by these wonders,
 we creatures of dust
 join in the ancient song:
 The earth is full of your glory.
The earth is full of your glory.

O God triune,
you took on our flesh
in Jesus our healer.
In Christ you bring life from death;
we remember his cross,
we laud his resurrection.
Broken like bread, he enlivens our body.
Outpoured like wine,
he fills the earth with goodness.
Receiving this mystery,
we mortals sing our song:
The earth is full of your glory.
The earth is full of your glory.

We praise you for the heart of Jesus,
so filled with your love for this earth.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord 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.

Gathered around this table,
we your children unite in this song:
The earth is full of your glory.
The earth is full of your glory.

O God triune,
you created the worlds,
you uphold the living,
you embrace the dead.
Send forth your Spirit
and renew the face of the earth.
Strengthen us for our journey
with this meal,
the body and blood of Christ.
Give us a future that trusts in you
and cares for your earth.
Empowered by your promises,
we rise from our deaths
to praise you again:
The earth is full of your glory.
The earth is full of your glory.

God of all nations, on this World Communion Sunday, we give You thanks that we are all made in Your image, with such rich diversity.

On this day we are in solidarity with the faithful around the world. As we break bread together, we remember that we are still one body in You, even though we have different languages, cultures and traditions, different ways of worship, praying and praising.

In solidarity we drink the cup together of hope, of new life, knowing that Your will is for Your people to be one body.

We are one body, but we are not the same—it is through the gift of diversity that we are able to be Your body.

We thank You and praise You for making us all who we are, individually and collectively.

We each celebrate our own ancestry, culture and ethnicity, and we pray to You now as You taught us, using the language or translation that each of us are most familiar with – the language of our heart.

Together, we pray:

**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.**

At this time I would like to invite forward the Sibley Family, as we celebrate Piper and Summer's completion of their communion class!

Today, our community of faith celebrates Piper and Summer, who spent time this week learning about God's love and welcome that we receive through Christ at the communion table.

In the sacrament of Holy Communion, we are all welcomed to Jesus' table as friends, whether we are joyful or crabby! Just as Jesus welcomed strangers, healed sick people, forgave sinners, and helped people who were poor, hungry, or scared, we are now part of that work. We get to welcome, heal, forgive, and help. As friends of Jesus, we do our best to love people generously, just as he loved his friends, and just as he loves us. In this special meal, Jesus is with us – feeding us, loving us, forgiving us, and asking us to do the same for the people around us and around the world.

Let us pray.

God of soil, sunshine, and rain,
You bring forth gifts of grain and grapes from the fields.
You gather your people from all over the world.
Today, we thank you for your gifts of food and drink for your people.
You have claimed Piper and Summer as your own forever.
Remembering your love for us proclaimed in our baptism,
we make the sign of the cross over our own hearts.
We are grateful for your love and forgiveness.
We are grateful for your call to live lives of helping, healing, and doing justice.
As we receive the fruit of the field and vine today,
may we taste your love and be united with you in great purpose.
In the name of Jesus, who loves us, we pray. **Amen.**

Instructions for Communion

Invitation to the Table

*[sung to the tune of BINGO,
from Dan Erlander's "There's a Place for You" communion curriculum]*

There's a place for you!
There's a place for you!
There's a place for you,
with Jesus at the table!

Jesus came to show the world that God loves everybody!

Jesus healed and taught and preached and welcomed little children!

Jesus also showed God's love by eating with the people!

Now we share the bread and cup and Jesus is here with us!

Communion Distribution

Prayer after Communion

Blessed be your name, O God,
for we have feasted on your Word,
Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts.
Strengthened by this food,
send us to gather the world to your banquet,
where none are left out and all are satisfied.
In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

Sending Song:

You Are the Seed
UMH 583 – verses 1+2

Benediction

May we be blessed to open our hearts to receive
the living waters of God's justice and peace within us:

Amen.

May we be blessed to share the living waters of God's
justice and peace with our suffering siblings
and creatures all around us:

Amen.

May we be blessed to walk together
with all people of good will
so that the many streams of
God's living waters of justice and peace
may become a mighty river all over the Earth:

Amen.

And may God bless us on this journey,
+ in the name of the Creator, the Son,
and the Holy Spirit.

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

Attributions

Call to Worship – posted on Third Space: third-space.org.uk accessed via re-worship.blogspot.com

Litany of Repentance & Forgiveness – Rev. James Shri Bhagwan, General Secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches, adapted by Rev. Bermes-Goller

Prayer of the Day – Amy Echeverria, Columbans International, LSM Cofounding Member and Founding Board President. originally printed in Laudato Si Movement Prayer Book.

Prayers of the People – copyright 2023, Augsburg Fortress, adapted by Rev. Bermes-Goller

Benediction – Fr Joshtrom Kureethadam, Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, adapted by Rev. Bermes-Goller

World Communion Prayer – written by Rev. Mindi and posted on her Rev-o-lution blog.

<http://rev-o-lution.org/>

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