

Spirit of Grace ELCA UMC



November 19th, 2023
Twenty Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship

Gather us in, the brokenhearted and the joyful.

Gather us in, the weak and the strong.

Gather us in, the fearful and the brave.

Gather us in, the young and the old.

Gather us in, to sing of God's works.

Gather us in, to praise Jesus Christ.

Gather us in, to worship and wonder.

Gather us in, to know of God's love.

Confession & Forgiveness

Blessed be God,
the one who forms us,
✠ Jesus who bears the cross,
the Spirit who makes our joy complete.
Amen.

Let us come before God in humility,
confessing our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Steadfast and faithful God,
you have revealed the ways of justice,
yet we fail to follow you.
We are overwhelmed
by the world's violence and suffering.
We are afraid to risk what we have
for the sake of others.
For the harm we have caused,
known and unknown, forgive us.
For the unjust demands we place on others
and your creation, forgive us.
For the ways we turn away
from you and our neighbor, forgive us.
Lead us back to you
and set us on the right path;
in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.

Beloved in Christ,
God's justice stretches beyond all understanding.
God's compassion is beyond compare.
In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.
In ☩ Christ, you are already and always forgiven.
Amen.

Opening Hymn

O God, Our Help in Ages Past
ELW 632 – 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.

God of mercy, you are full of compassion, overflowing in grace, and abundant in love. Open our eyes and help us to see you for who you are, that we might reflect your graceful divinity into this world we are charged to care for. In the name of your son Jesus Christ, we pray.

Amen.

First Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

But as to specific times and era, sisters and brothers, you don't need me to tell you anything – you know very well that the Day of God is coming like a thief in the night. Just when people are saying, “At last we have peace and security,” then destruction will fall on them with the suddenness of labor pains, and there will be no escape.

But you, sisters and brothers, are not in the dark. The Day of God will not catch you like a thief. No, you are all children of the light and children of the day. We don't belong to the darkness or the night. So let's not be asleep as others are – let's be awake and sober! Those who sleep do so at night, and those who get drunk do so at night. But we belong to the dark, so let us be sober. let us put on the breastplate of faith and love, and the helmet of the hope of salvation.

God has destined us not to suffer wrath, but to receive salvation through our Savior Jesus Christ, who died for us so that, whether awake or asleep, we might live together with Christ. So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you're already doing.

Word of God, Word of Life

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 90:1-12

YHWH, you have been our refuge
from one generation to the next.
**Before the mountains were born,
you brought forth the earth and the world;
you are God without beginning or end.**
You turn humankind back into dust
and say, "Go back, creatures of the earth!"
**For in your sight a thousand years
are like yesterday, come and gone,
no more than a watch in the night.**
You sweep us away like a dream,
fleeting as the grass that springs up in the morning –
**in the morning it sprouts,
but by evening it has withered and died.**

In the same way, we are consumed –
terrified by your anger and indignation.
**Our guilt lies open before you;
our secrets are revealed in the light of your presence.**
All our days pass away under your anger,
and our life is over like a sigh.
**The span of our life is but seventy years –
perhaps eighty if we're strong –
but the best of them are nothing
but sorrow and pain;
they pass swiftly and we are gone.**
Who understands the power of your anger?
We fear the strength of your wrath.
**Make us realize how short life is
that we may gain wisdom of heart.**

Gospel: Matthew 25:14-30

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 25th chapter.

“Again, it’s like a wealthy landowner who was going on a journey and called in three workers, entrusting some funds to them. The first was given five thousand dollars, the second two thousand, and the third one thousand, according to each one’s ability. Then the landowner went away. Immediately the worker who received the five thousand went and invested it and made another five. In the same way, the worker who received the two thousand doubled that figure. But the worker who received the one thousand instead went off and dug a hole in the ground and buried the money.

“After a long absence, the traveler returned home and settled accounts with them. The one who had received the five thousand came forward bringing the additional five, saying, ‘You entrusted me with five thousand; here are five thousand more.’

“The landowner said, ‘Well done! You are a good and faithful worker. Since you were dependable in a small matter, I will put you in charge of larger affairs. Come, share my joy!’

“The one who received the two thousand then stepped forward with the additional two, saying, ‘You entrusted me with two thousand; here are two thousand more.’

“The landowner said to this one, ‘Cleverly done! You too are a good and faithful worker. Since you were dependable in a small matter, I will put you in charge of larger affairs. Come, share my joy!’

“Finally, the one who had received the one thousand stepped forward and said to the landowner, ‘Knowing your ruthlessness – you who reap where you did not sow and gather where you did not scatter – and fearing your wrath, I went off and buried your thousand dollars in the ground. Here is your money back.’

“The landowner exclaimed, ‘You worthless, lazy lout! So you know that I reap where I don’t sow and gather where I don’t scatter, do you? All the more reason to deposit my money with the bankers, so that on my return I could have had it back with interest! You, there! Take the thousand away from this bum and give it to the one with the ten thousand.

“Those who have will get more until they grow rich, while those who have not will lose even the little they have. Throw this worthless one outside into the darkness, where there is wailing and grinding of teeth.”

Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Rev. Miranda Bermes-Goller

Hymn of the Day

Take My Life, and Let it Be Consecrated
UMH 399 – 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

Let us turn our hearts to God, our breath and life, as we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, you give talents and gifts to all your people, and you equip the church to serve. Turn us from fear and self-serving ways, that we use our talents to glorify you and encourage our neighbor.

God of grace,

Receive our prayer.

You have been our dwelling place from one generation to another. Sustain the life of the planet; protect farmlands and harvests. Direct all people in wise stewardship of all the earth's resources.

God of grace,

Receive our prayer.

You call us to honesty and integrity. Instill these values in the hearts of all nations and their leaders. Free any who are oppressed, expose all corruption, and bring redemption to victims of injustice.

God of grace,

Receive our prayer.

You teach us to count our days so that we may gain a wise heart. Where there is sickness or sorrow, bring healing, and where there is loneliness, reveal your love in community.

God of grace,

Receive our prayer.

Holy God, the nations rage and the kingdoms shake, but your word stands fast forever, a sign of your everlasting peace. Let your justice and peace roll down like waters wherever there is strife, injustice, war, or religious conflict. We pray to you especially in this time of war, oppression, and persecution in the Holy Land. Help us in our confusion, and guide us in our actions and responses. Lead us in the way of solidarity with the oppressed and peace for all people – give us the strength we need to not stay silent in situations of injustice. Heal the hurt and harm, console the bereaved and afflicted, protect the innocent and helpless, and deliver all who are still in peril.

God of grace,

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 all goodness,
generations have turned to you,
gathered around your table,
and shared your abundant blessings.
Number us among them
that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance,
and give thanks for your rich blessings,
we may feast upon your very self
and care for all that you have made,
through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant.
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.

Great Amen - TFWS 2257-d

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

Lord Jesus,
in this simple meal you have set a banquet.
Sustain us on the journey,
strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children,
and give us glad and generous hearts
as we meet you on the way.
Amen.

Sending Song:

Christ, Be Our Light
ELW 715 – verses 1, 2, 5

Blessing

May the God of all creation,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved,
who strengthens us for service,
give you reason to rejoice and be glad!
The blessing of God,
Sovereign, † Savior, and Spirit,
be with you today and always.
Amen.
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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Tuesday 10-1

Attributions

Call to Worship – written by Mary J. Scifres, and posted on the Ministry Matters website.

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