

Spirit of Grace ELCA UMC



August 18th, 2024
13th Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship

God of Healing and Transformation,

we hunger and thirst for your abundant life.

We bring you our sorrow and ask for the bread of joy;

we bring you our despair and ask for the bread of hope;

we bring you our weariness and ask for the bread of inspiration.

Meet us here.

We need the bread of heaven to sustain us

as we journey to find our way,

that we may be one with you.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen

Hymn of the Season

Loaves Were Broken, Words Were Spoken

ACS 966 – verses 1-4

Confession & Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
the God of manna,
the God of miracles,
the God of mercy.

Amen.

Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God, our provider,

help us.

It is hard to believe there is enough to share.

**We question your ways when they differ from the ways
of the world in which we live.**

**We turn to our own understanding
rather than trusting in you.**

We take offense at your teachings and your ways.

Turn us again to you.

Where else can we turn?

**Share with us the words of eternal life
and feed us for life in the world.**

Amen.

Beloved people of God:

in Jesus, the manna from heaven,
you are fed and nourished.

By Jesus, the worker of miracles,
there is always more than enough.

Through Jesus, ☩ the bread of life,
you are shown God's mercy:

you are forgiven and loved into abundant life.

Amen.

Centering Hymn

As We Gather at Your Table

ELW 522 – 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 abundant life, through Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life, you have given us the gift of eternal life. May this life we receive in you fill us with your divine presence, that we may go out into the world to be what we receive – the body of Christ, given for the life of the world.

Amen.

First Reading: Ephesians 5:15-20 & 6:10-20

Keep careful watch over your conduct. Don't act like fools, but like wise and thoughtful people. Make the most of your time, for these are evil days. Don't continue in ignorance, but try to discern the will of God. Avoid getting drunk on wine – that is debauchery! Instead, be filled with the Spirit, meditating on psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making music to God in your hearts. Always give thanks to Abba God for everything, in the name of Jesus our Messiah.

Finally, draw your strength from Christ and from the strength of that mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand firm against the tactics of the Devil. Our battle ultimately is not against human forces, but against the sovereignties and powers, the rulers of the world of darkness, and the evil spirits of the heavenly realms. You must put on the armor of God if you are to resist on the evil day and, having done everything you can, to hold your ground. Stand fast, then, with truth as the belt around your waist, justice as your breastplate, and the zeal to spread the Good News of peace as your footgear. In all circumstances, hold faith up before you as your shield; it will help you extinguish the fiery darts of the Evil One. Put on the helmet of salvation, and carry the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Always pray in the Spirit, with all your prayers and petitions. Pray constantly and attentively for all God's holy people. Pray also for me, that God will open my mouth and put words on my lips, that I may boldly make known the mystery of the Good News – that mystery for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may have courage to proclaim it as I ought.

Word of God, Word of Life

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 34:9-20

Happy are all who dwell in the Beloved's heart!
Abandon yourself into Love's hands,
O you holy ones,
For those who give themselves to the Beloved,
lack no good thing.
**Everyone separated from Love is empty and hungry within;
but those who open their hearts to the Beloved
are filled to overflowing!**

O come and see, come and hear,
how we honor the Beloved.
**Many there are who desire Life,
who yearn for fulfillment,
who covet the wisdom of Truth.**
Keep your heart open and free,
take time to dwell in the Silence,
become a peaceful presence in the world.
**For the Beloved sees the deeds of our hearts,
and hears our innermost thoughts.**
The face of the Beloved turns from the evil ways of men and women;
for Love is kind and merciful
and remembers not our sins.

**Rather, the Beloved is patient,
ever-waiting for us to cry out for forgiveness,
to embrace Love's way.**
How often the Beloved weeps with compassion
over those who are crushed in spirit.

**Though we are beset with many fears
that cause illness and troubles,
the Beloved is ever ready
to comfort us in our sorrows,
to strengthen us on our soul's journey to wholeness.**
The Beloved renews the life of all
who surrender to Love.

Gospel: John 6:51-58, 59-69

The Holy Gospel according to John the 6th chapter.

Jesus continued, "I myself am the Living Bread come down from heaven.

If any eat this bread, they will live forever;

the bread I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

The Temple authorities then began to argue with one another, "How can he give us his flesh to eat?"

Jesus replied,

"The truth of the matter is,

if you don't eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Chosen One, you won't have life in you.

Those who do eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.

For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

Everyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me, and I live in them.

Just as the living Abba God sent me and I have life because of Abba God, so those who feed on me will have life because of me.

This is the bread that came down from heaven.

It's not the kind of bread your ancestors ate, for they died; whoever eats this kind of bread will live forever."

Jesus spoke these words while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

Many of his disciples remarked, "We can't put up with this kind of talk! How can anyone take it seriously?"

Jesus was fully aware that the disciples were murmuring in protest at what he had said. "Is this a stumbling block for you?" he asked them.

"What, then, if you were to see the Chosen One ascend to where the Chosen One came from?

It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh in itself is useless.

The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

Yet among you there are some who don't believe."

Jesus knew from the start, of course, those who would refuse to believe and the one who would betray him. He went on to say,

"This is why I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by Abba God."

From this time on, many of the disciples broke away and wouldn't remain in the company of Jesus. Jesus then said to the Twelve, "Are you going to leave me too?"

Simon Peter answered, "Rabbi, where would we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe; we're convinced that you are the Holy One of God."

Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Rev. Miranda P. Bermes

Hymn Response

We Eat the Bread of Teaching
ELW 518 – 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

Calling on the spirit of Wisdom to guide our hearts and our minds, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Wisdom has built her house. May the church be a house of wisdom for all who enter. May we continue to grow and stretch in ways we never thought possible.
God of grace,
Receive our prayer.

Wisdom has mixed her wine. May the harvest seasons be plentiful this year. We pray for orchards, vineyards, farms, and all of creation. Protect and conserve the earth.

We pray especially for all creatures of creation feeling the impact of blazing wildfires, especially throughout the state of Oregon. Bring your creation to safety, and send your Spirit of protection to watch over those protecting communities in danger.

God of grace,
Receive our prayer.

Wisdom has employed her laborers. Be with all who seek adequate employment. Guide our economic and governmental leaders to support the people of our world with fair wages and safe working conditions.

God of grace,
Receive our prayer.

Wisdom has invited her guests. Make your presence known to all who feel lost, abandoned, or hurting at this time. Direct your spirit of care to all who seek healing and comfort.

We pray especially for those enduring genocide in Palestine, for all of the protestors and advocates for liberation, and especially for all of the aid and relief workers who have put themselves in harms way to tend to the wellbeing of victims of violence.

God of grace,
Receive our prayer.

Wisdom has set her table. May this congregation be a welcome table to all who seek the refuge of God. Break down walls and barriers that prevent us from offering a seat at this table to anyone who comes.

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

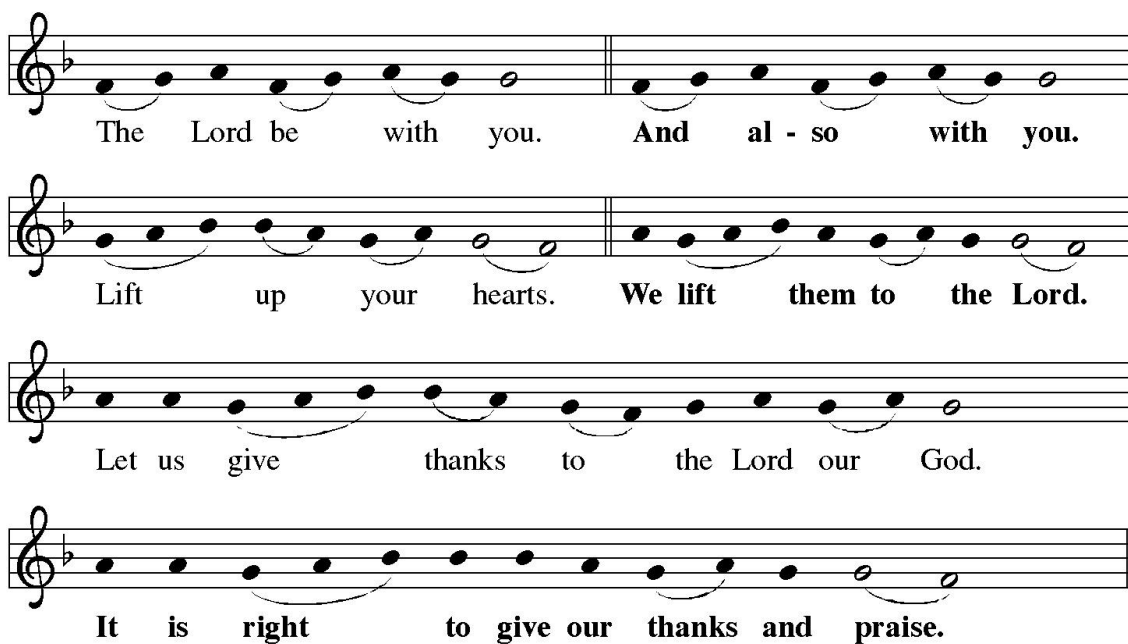
At this time, if you are willing and able, please consider giving to Spirit of Grace Church to support our ongoing ministry. Checks can be mailed to 1140 Tucker Road, Hood River OR, 97031. Online Donations can be made through the link below:

[Spirit of Grace Church](#)

Offertory Prayer

Jesus, Bread of life,
you have set this table with your very self,
and called us to the feast of plenty.
Gather what has been sown among us,
and strengthen us in this meal.
Make us to be what we receive here,
your body for the life of the world.
Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving



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.

The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. Each staff contains a melody line with lyrics underneath. The first staff has two measures: 'The Lord be with you.' and 'And al - so with you.'. The second staff also has two measures: 'Lift up your hearts.' and 'We lift them to the Lord.'. The third staff has one long measure: 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.'. The fourth staff has one long measure: '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.

O God most mighty,
O God most merciful,
O God our rock and our salvation,
hear us as we praise,
call us to your table,
grant us your life.

When the world was a formless void,
you formed order and beauty.
When Abraham and Sarah were barren,
you sent them a child.
When the Israelites were enslaved,
you led them to freedom.
Ruth faced starvation,
David faced Goliath.
and the psalmists cried out for healing,
and full of compassion,
you granted the people your life.
You entered our sorrows in Jesus our brother.
He was born among the poor,
he lived under oppression,
he wept over the city.
With infinite love,
he granted the people your life.

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.

Remembering his death,
we cry out Amen.

Amen!

Celebrating his resurrection,
we shout Amen.

Amen!

Trusting his presence
in every time and place,
we plead Amen.

Amen!

O God, you are Breath:
send your Spirit on this meal.
O God, you are Bread:
feed us with yourself.
O God, you are Wine:
warm our hearts and make us one.
O God, you are Fire: transform us with hope.
O God most majestic,
O God most motherly,
O God our strength and our song,
you show us a vision of a tree of life
with fruits for all and leaves that heal the nations.
Grant us such life,
the life of the Father to the Son,
the life of the Spirit of our risen Savior,
life in you, now and forever.
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.**

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

Jesus, Bread of life,
we have received from your table
more than we could ever ask.
As you have nourished us in this meal,
now strengthen us to love the world with your own life.
In your name we pray.
Amen.

Sending Song:

Become to Us the Living Bread
UMH 630 – verses 1-3

Blessing

The blessing of God,
who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us,
✠ be upon you now and forever.
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

M-W 9-1, or by appointment

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Linda Boris, Pastoral Assistant

Tuesday 10-1

Attributions

Call to Worship – from Spiritual Hunger and Thirst for God, written by the Rev. Bonnie Tarwater. Posted on the United Church of Christ website. <http://www.ucc.org/worship/worship-ways/>

Prayer of the Day –

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