

Spirit of Grace

ELCA UMC



February 2nd, 2025
RIC/RMN Celebration Sunday
Resilient Community

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship

Here in this place, there are no outsiders or foreigners,
for all are welcome to be at home in God's house.

Here in this worship, there is abounding acceptance,
for love is the language of our faith.

Here in our lives, there are differences, but no divisions,
for God dwells in each of us.

Come, let us worship in unity and love.

Hymn of the Season

Come! Come! Everybody Worship!
TFWS 2271, verses 2+5

Communal Lament — *based on Psalm 10*

In response to the ways that people have been excluded and condemned for whom they love and their gender identities or expressions, let us call out to the God who knows the depths of our sorrows and shares the grief in our hearts.

Silence is held for reflection

O God, when racism, intolerance and queerphobia,
homophobia, transphobia, and biphobia feel inescapable
and it is hard to imagine justice
and a love that welcomes all of your children to our community,
you seem hidden and far away.
Come closer and dwell among us,
encouraging us as we build just and resilient communities.
Come near to us. Show us the way.

O God, we have witnessed the harm and suffering of many beloved children,
especially those whose sexual or romantic orientation,
gender identity or expression do not follow the patterns of patriarchy.
Challenge us to disrupt this way of treating people who need our love and support.
Come near to us. Show us the way.

O God, we have witnessed the harm and suffering of many beloved children,
especially those whose race, ethnicity, or immigration status
cause us to ignore their needs and longings;
as we tolerate racism, xenophobia, and the lack of equity in our society
that keep so many of your beloved children from full belonging.
Come near to us. Show us the way.

Help us to remember that you see us:
our troubles and grief,
the broken relationships that undermine community,
our weakness and lack of courage in confronting evil.
You hold our pain. We can leave it all to you. You are our helper.
Come near to us. Show us the way.

Help us to remember that you listen to our desires
and calm our troubled hearts.
We can cry out to you. You will not abandon us.
Come near to us. Show us the way.

God, rise up and comfort us so we no longer have to be afraid.
Lead us to trust in the hope and promise of a resilient community,
with justice for the oppressed, the afflicted, and the excluded.
May it be so! Amen!

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.

Holy God, your Word teaches us, calls us, and shapes us, that we will become the wisdom of God and the body of Christ for others. On this Reconciling Sunday, may your word turn us toward what is good and holy and just, that all your beloveds of all sexual and romantic orientations, all gender identities and expressions, and all races and ethnicities will know we are seen, known, and loved by you. May the example of Jesus continue to create words of action and courage in this work of ministry in our community.

Amen.

First Reading: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Even if I can speak in all the tongues of earth — and those of angels too — but do not have love, I am just a noisy gong, a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy such that I can comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge, or if I have faith great enough to move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away everything I own to feed those poorer than I, then hand over my body to be burned, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind. Love is not jealous, it does not put on airs, and it is not snobbish; it is never rude or self-seeking; it is not prone to anger, nor does it brood over injuries. Love doesn't rejoice in what is wrong, but rejoices in the truth. There is no limit to love's forbearance, to its trust, its hope, its power to endure.

Love never fails. Prophecies will cease; tongues will be silent; knowledge will pass away. Our knowledge is imperfect and our prophesying is imperfect. When the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away. When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child. But when I became an adult, I put childish ways aside. Now we see indistinctly, as in a mirror; then we will see face to face. My knowledge is imperfect now; then I will know even as I am known.

There are, in the end, three things that last: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Word of God, Word of Life

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 71:1-6

In you, YHWH, I take shelter —
let me never be disappointed.
**In your justice, rescue me, deliver me,
turn your ear to me and save me!**
Be mine, O mountain of strength!
Send your decree — deliver me,
for you are my rock, my fortress!
**O God, rescue me from the hands of the violent,
from the clutches of thief and outlaw!**

For you alone are my hope, YHWH my sovereign —
I have trusted you since my youth.
**I have relied on you from the womb;
you have sustained me from my mother's breast;
to you I give constant praise.**

Gospel: Luke 4:20-30

The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 4th chapter.

Rolling up the scroll, Jesus gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he said to them, “Today, in your hearing, this scripture passage has been fulfilled.”

All who were present spoke favorably of him; they marveled at the eloquence of the words on Jesus' lips. They said, “Surely this isn't Mary and Joseph's son!”

Jesus said to them, “Undoubtedly you'll quote me the proverb, ‘Physician, heal yourself,’ and say, ‘Do here in your own country the things we heard you did in Capernaum.’ But the truth is, prophets never gain acceptance in their hometowns.

“The truth is, there were many women who were widowed in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens remained closed for three and a half years and a great famine spread over the land. It was to none of these that Elijah was sent, but to a woman who had been widowed in Zarephath, near Sidon. Recall, too, that many had leprosy in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one was cured except Naaman the Syrian.”

At these words, the whole audience in the synagogue was filled with indignation. They rose up and dragged Jesus out of town, leading him to the brow of the hill on which the city was built, with the intention of hurling him over the edge. But he moved straight through the crowd and walked away.

Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Rev. Miranda P. Bermes

Hymn of the Day

Build a Longer Table
ACS 1062 – verses 1-4

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

Please stand as you are able as we confess our faith in God together using the words of our common creed:

**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 our worship video so that we may lift them up together as a community.

Prayers of the People

Holding all of the hopes, joys, prayers, and concerns of our community in our hearts, let us pray together by the power of the Holy Spirit for the church, God's creation, and all who are in need this day.

A brief silence.

Holy One, you are the strength of your church. Inspire the proclamation of all our faith leaders by the power of the Holy Spirit, so that all the baptized may be bold to speak truth to power and share your expansive and affirming good news with all.

Merciful God,

Receive our prayer.

The heavens declare your glory, and the sky proclaims your handiwork. Where creation groans because of human misuse, waste, and neglect, bring healing and renewal. Open us to heed creation's laments so that all creatures can thrive and sing your praise.

Merciful God,

Receive our prayer.

Your statutes are just, and your commandments are clear. Direct leaders of nations, cities, and towns to pursue justice and equity for our neighbors who are hurting, vulnerable, full of fear, and held captive in unjust systems. Strengthen us in our resolve to build your beloved community on earth as it is in heaven.

We pray especially this day for the people of Sudan, Myanmar, the Congo, Ukraine, Palestine, Israel, and so many other places impacted by acts of war and violence. Empower all people and nations to pursue your pathways of peace.

Merciful God,

Receive our prayer.

You call us together as one body in Christ, and you create each member with unique gifts and identities. Renew our commitment to celebrate the diversity among us as people of all gender identities and expressions, sexual and romantic orientations, and racial and ethnic identities. Empower this assembly to recognize and uplift the voices and skills of those who are overlooked in the mission of your church. Shape us into an adaptive, resilient community that does not relent in proclaiming your good news and caring for one another.

Merciful God,

Receive our prayer.

Your teaching revives the weary soul. Inspire faith formation ministries and classes that foster in us a sense of wonder and curiosity. Make us attentive to your world, and fashion us into a people who never stop asking questions and who never stop learning more about your word and your world.

Merciful God,

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

Generous God, we give you praise! You liberate us from sin and death by the abundance at this table. Multiply these gifts and fill us with your spirit, so that we may embody Christ and en flesh your radical freedom on earth. **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 flat). Each staff contains a melody line with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: '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.', and 'It is right to give our thanks and praise.'

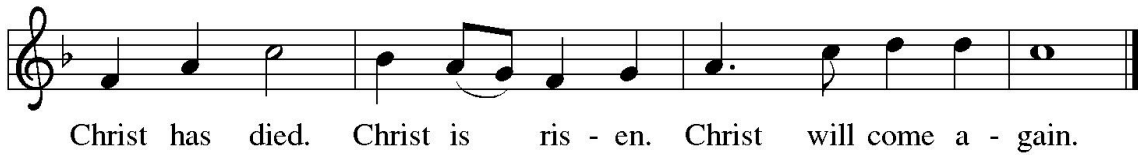
It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise...

...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.

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Holy God, you alone are holy, you alone are God...
...and to the end, we proclaim the mystery of faith:



We pray for the gift of your Spirit:
in our gathering;
within this meal;
among your people;
throughout the world.

Blessing, praise, and thanks to you, holy God,
through Christ Jesus,
by your Spirit,
in your church,
without end.
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

God of grace and mercy, in this holy meal you have fed us with wisdom,
forgiveness, and grace — and we are full of your abundance. By your Spirit send us
out to become what we have received: new life in Christ, for the world.

Amen.

Sending Song:

The Lord Now Sends Us Forth
ELW 538 – sung twice through

Blessing

May the blessing of God,
‡ Holy One and Holy Three,
be with us today and every day,
building us into a resilient community
that practices justice and radical inclusion.

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 Thursdays & Fridays

Pastor Miranda Bermes-Goller

M-W 9-12, or by appointment

spiritofgracepastor@gmail.com

Linda Boris, Pastoral Assistant

Tuesday 10-1

Attributions

Call to Worship: written by Erik Alsgaard, and posted on the Worship Elements page of the Ministry Matters website. <http://www.ministrymatters.com/> – adapted by Rev. Bermes for this service

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