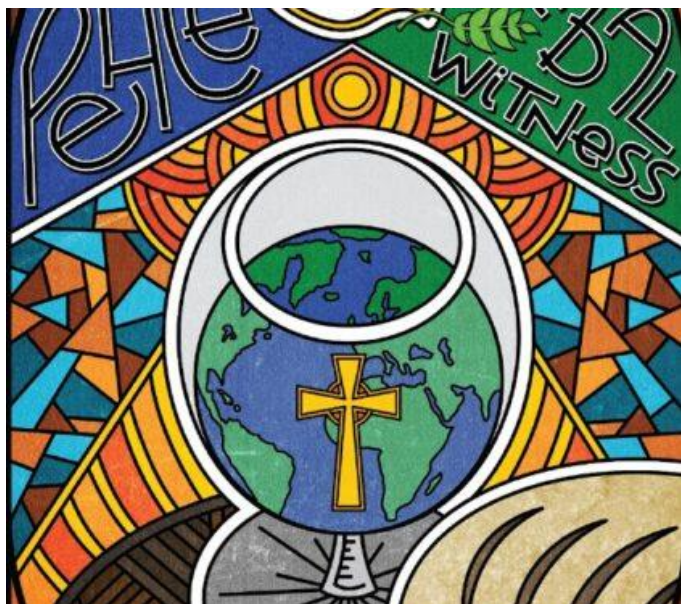


Living Out God's Call To Joy and to Justice



First Presbyterian Church, McAllen
World Communion Worship Service
Peace and Global Witness Offering
Sunday, October 1, 2023

Opening Sentences

- Christ invites us to feast at his table. As we gather on this World Communion Sunday, we remember siblings from above and below the equator, from every time zone around the globe. As sunlight inches across land and sea, Christians gather to celebrate their unity in God's family. All are invited and all are welcome.

Prelude

Call to Worship

Please rise in body or in spirit for the Call to Worship.

We gather from the west to the east,
from the south to the north,

**to celebrate the God of peace
who accompanies us in our acts of peace.**

This God of peace accompanies us
in each and every circumstance around us.

We praise God's name! Alleluia! Amen!

Come, worship God, who is worthy of honor;
enter God's presence with thanks and a song!
You are the rock of your people's salvation
to whom our jubilant praises belong.

Ruled by your might are the heights of the mountains;
held in your hands are the depths of the earth.
Yours is the sea, yours the land, for you made them,
God above all gods, who gave us our birth.

We are your people, the sheep of your pasture;
you are our Maker, and to you we pray.
Gladly we kneel in obedience before you;
great is the one whom we worship this day!

Now let us listen, for you speak among us;
open our hearts to receive what you say.
Peace be to all who remember your goodness,
trust in your word, and rejoice in your way!

Prayer of the Day

God of all nations,
you have poured out your blessings upon all the peoples of the earth.
Grant us eyes to see your gifts of faith and love.
Appoint us as heralds of your mercies that are new every morning.
Empower us to write the vision of your peaceable kingdom,
where destruction and violence are no more,
where suffering and wars shall cease.
Through our worship empower us to be sent out with joy
as bearers of your hope in a hurting world;
through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Call to Confession

God's grace was given to us in Christ before the ages began.
In spite of God's love for us and gift of love to us,
humanity has not ceased to act in destructive and hurtful ways.
Trusting in Christ's mercy that never ends,
let us with honesty confess our sin before God and one another.

Prayer of Confession

**Gracious Lord,
you created the whole world and called it good,
but we look out at your world and see division and suffering.
You call us to maintain the unity of spirit in the bond of peace,
but we choose division over diversity,
confrontation over civility,
conflict over peace born from justice.
You call us to love the least of these among us,
but we hear the cries of the oppressed and remain in our own comfort.
We allow senseless suffering rather than sacrifice for our neighbors.
Forgive us.
Grant us fresh vision to see one another as your beloved children.
Rekindle in us your gifts – the spirit of power, love, and self-discipline –
that, with faith in Christ, we might be made new
and be part of bringing forth your peaceable kingdom. Amen.
*A moment of silent prayer.***

Assurance of Pardon

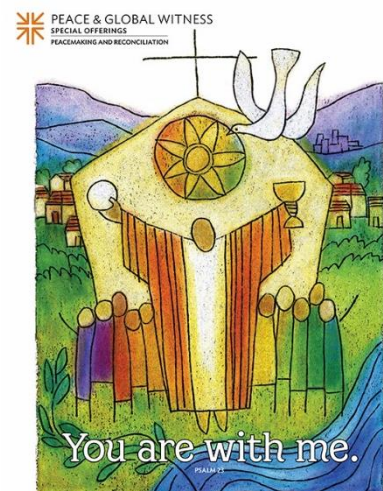
We call to mind God's promises and therefore we find hope:
The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases.
God's mercies are new every morning.
Hear and trust in the good news of the Gospel:
**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, healed, and made whole.
Thanks be to God!**

Act of Praise

Glory Be to the Father

GG #581

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, amen.



Passing the Peace of Christ

The peace of our Lord be with you all.
And also with you.

Anthem

Scripture Reading

Exodus 17:1-7

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ² The people quarreled with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink" Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" ³ But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" ⁴ So Moses cried out to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." ⁵ The LORD said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. ⁶ I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷ He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

Sermon

The Upside of Lament

Rev. Rebecca Segers

Third Presbyterian Church, Rochester, NY

Hymn

We Gather Here in Jesus' Name

GG #510

We gather here in Jesus' name;
his love is burning in our hearts like living flame;
for through the loving Son the Father makes us one:
come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord.
No one is a stranger here; everyone belongs.
Finding our forgiveness here; we in turn forgive all wrongs.
He joins us here; he breaks the bread;
the Lord who pours the cup is risen from the dead;
the one we love the most is now our gracious host:
come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come share the Lord.
We are now a family, of which the Lord is head.
Though unseen, he meets us here in the breaking of the bread.
We'll gather soon where angels sing;
we'll see the glory of our Lord and coming King;
now we anticipate the feast for which we wait:
come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord.

Invitation to the Offering

With grateful hearts, let us offer our gifts,
trusting in God's goodness.



This morning, we are receiving the *Peace and Global Witness* special offering of the PC(USA). This offering draws Presbyterians together as active peacemakers, working together to address systems of injustice in our own communities and across the world. There is an insert in your bulletin and an envelope. A link to give on-line will be included in this week's Monday Message.

It is the first Sunday of the month, so we are also receiving gifts to our Power of Hope Fund, which provides assistance to members of this faith community.

Offertory

Act of Dedication Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow GG #606

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Offertory Prayer and Lord's Prayer

O God, use these gifts to do your will in the world
and prepare us for your coming kingdom.

We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord,
who taught us to pray together, saying:

Our Father, who art in heaven ...

Invitation to the Lord's Table *Presentation of the Breads*

On this World Communion Sunday, we offer breads from around the world as symbols of the many different peoples within the family of God.

We gather at the table. / **O taste and see that the Lord is good!**

We offer pita bread in honor of the people of the Middle East. We pray for peace throughout that war-torn region. We remember those whose lives have been disrupted by war, homes and livelihoods destroyed, who now live as refugees in a strange land. We trust that they are in God's care.

We gather at the table. / **O taste and see that the Lord is good!**

We offer this banana bread in honor of the people of the Caribbean. We pray that they will be kept safe from destructive weather, economic exploitation, and environmental degradation. We trust that they are in God's care.

We gather at the table. / **O taste and see that the Lord is good.**

We offer baguettes in honor of the people of Europe. We pray that they will find ways to move into a strong future which preserves what is good and strong from their history, resists any tendency toward the misuse of power, and creates space for new ventures in and between nations. We trust that they are in God's care.

We gather at the table. / **O taste and see that the Lord is good.**

We offer naan bread in honor of the people of Asia. We remember their rich and diverse cultures, their challenges and struggles. We pray that Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Christian, Muslim, and all others may live in peace with one another. We trust that they are in God's care.

We gather at the table. / **O taste and see that the Lord is good.**

We offer honey bread in honor of the people of Africa. We pray for healing, justice, and peace throughout the continent. May Africa's abundant resources of beauty and wealth be used for the benefit of all. May abuses of power end so that all may flourish. We trust they are in God's care.

We gather at the table. / **O taste and see that the Lord is good.**

We offer tortillas in honor of the indigenous peoples of the Americas. We pray for all those in Central and South America who have fled violence in their homeland in search of safety and opportunity. May we remember their struggles and work for their welfare. We trust that they are in God's care.

We gather at the table. / **O taste and see that the Lord is good.**

We offer Challah bread in honor of our Jewish brother and sisters, giving thanks for the covenantal history of the people of Israel, for the Law and the prophets which we share with them. While they do not join us in this sacrament, they remain important partners in the holy work of speaking God's peace and hope into the world. We pray that Jewish people everywhere may be kept safe from hatred and violence. We trust that they are in God's care.

We gather at the table. / **O taste and see that the Lord is good.**

We offer mixed grain bread in honor of all people everywhere. May we remember today and always our common humanity, and recommit ourselves to making peace, working for justice, and protecting the integrity of creation throughout God's earth.

These different breads – symbolizing siblings in Christ throughout the world – connect us to the one Lord, our risen Lord, who invites us to dine at the table of his grace and love.

We gather at the table. / **O taste and see that the Lord is good!**

Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

God of all nations, you created every person in your image and called us by your Holy Spirit to become one in Christ Jesus, through Baptism and through faith.

In Jesus Christ, you showed us the way to live with unique gifts and particularities, yet in harmony with you and with each other.

You, O God, are indeed above all and through all and in all.

So, today we join with voices throughout the earth and in heaven, saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest!

Holy are you and blessed is your child, Jesus Christ.

Jesus lived among us to show us your love: caring enough to feed hungry persons, stopping to touch persons in need of healing, reaching out to those not like himself:

a Samaritan woman at a well,

lepers from another country,

those tortured by demons,

a father pleading for his daughter,

a woman from Syro-Phoenicia,

Zacchaeus, a tax collector,

a rich young ruler, and humble fishermen.

When people gathered to hear his teachings, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to them to eat, so that they might be fed.

When Jesus ate with his disciples for his final meal on earth, they remembered his blessing on the multitude, and listened as he told them:

“Take, eat, this is my body given for you.”
They watched as Jesus took the cup, blessed it and said,
“Take, drink, this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for the whole world for the forgiveness of sins.”
After his death and resurrection, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the disciples
told others through this meal, that Jesus was the Messiah, sent by God, for all
humankind.

Remembering now, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ, by your cross and resurrection
you have set us free.**

You are the Savior of the world.

**Pour out your Holy Spirit on the table
spread this day around this globe,
and here spread with breads from around the world.**

**May all who partake, wherever they live,
know the reconciling love of Jesus Christ.**

**May your church go forth from Communion with you
to be one in Christ and one in witness to the world.**

In your Holy Name we pray. Amen.

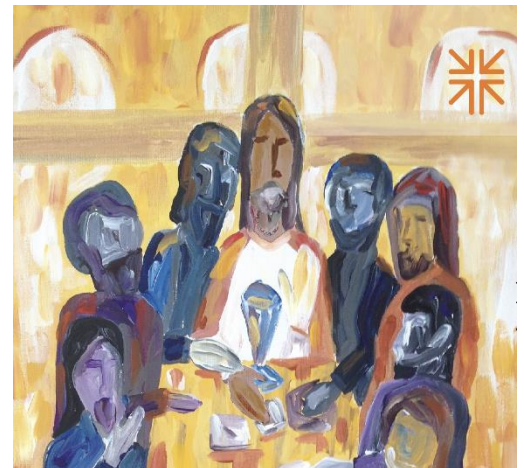
Sharing Bread and Cup

We give thanks for this bread,
fruit of the earth and hard work,
a gift of the grace of God.
We break it and share it,
remembering the words and actions,
gestures and glances, silences and self-offered life
of the teacher from Nazareth. (*Bread is broken*)

And we give thanks for the fruit of the vine,
for the joy of communion,
for alliances that endure
in the search for justice and wholeness.

We take the cup,
knowing we are part of a community-people
renewing its covenant with life. (*The cup is filled*)

These are the gifts of God for the people of God.
Whenever we share in this sacrament,
we celebrate Christ’s death and resurrection
until he comes again.



The body of Christ, the bread of heaven.
Let us eat.
The cup of the new covenant sealed in Christ.
Let us drink.

Prayer after Communion

Holy God, giver of wine and bread,
send us from your table in confidence
that we are your own children,
born of your Spirit, fed at your table,
filled with your grace, sent to speak your truth
and offer your love to the world in Christ's name. Amen.

Hymn

Together We Serve, v. 1-3

GG #767

Together we serve, united by love,
inviting God's world to the glorious feast.
We work and we pray through sorrow and joy,
extending God's love to the last and the least.

We seek to become a beacon of hope,
a lamp for the heart and a light for the feet.
We learn, year by year, to let love shine through
until we see Christ in each person we meet.

We welcome the scarred, the wealthy, the poor,
the busy, the lonely, and all who need care.
We offer a home to those who will come,
our hands quick to help, our hearts ready to dare.

The Life of the Church

Charge and Benediction

Together, by grace, we witness and work,
remembering Jesus in whom we grow strong.
Together we serve in Spirit and truth,
remembering love is the strength of our song.

Postlude

Today's Worship Leaders:

Rev. Kathryn J. Escandell
Robert Garza

Sher Wilkes
Ale Pacheco

Beverly Avila
FPC Chancel Choir

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