



ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

WORSHIP @ HOME

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World Communion Sunday

October 3, 2021

Prelude

Trumpet Tune

We are Called to Worship – On this World Communion Sunday, we gather as the people of God, as a community of Christ's followers. We gather to share Word and sacrament, to discern the ways of faithful service. Where in the world shall we serve our God? At home and school and business place – in this community and throughout every land. How in the world shall we serve our God? By working toward justice where there is oppression, by offering comfort where there is pain, by sharing love where there is hatred. Why in the world shall we serve our God? Because the Spirit beckons us, because Jesus calls us to enact our faith. Let us now worship the one who calls us!~

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns

You are welcome to send prayer requests to Pastor Sarah. Spend a few moments connecting with God and lifting up your prayers.

A Time of Prayer— Lord, renew in us the gift of your Spirit so that we may be purified in the waters of repentance and with one heart we may glorify your name and proclaim your mercy. Open our minds to the scriptures that they may become for us living words and illumine our hearts. Let your Spirit fill us with love to inspire our prayers today for our sisters and brothers, and for the perfect unity of your church...In the name of Jesus Christ, who reigns with you and with the Holy Spirit, For ever and ever...~

The Lord's Prayer (unison)—Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us

this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

We Hear God's Word

Luke 24:13-35 (CEB)

¹³ On that same day, two disciples were traveling to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They were talking to each other about everything that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were discussing these things, Jesus himself arrived and joined them on their journey. ¹⁶ They were prevented from recognizing him.

¹⁷ He said to them, "What are you talking about as you walk along?" They stopped, their faces downcast.

¹⁸ The one named Cleopas replied, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who is unaware of the things that have taken place there over the last few days?"

¹⁹ He said to them, "What things?"

They said to him, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth. Because of his powerful deeds and words, he was recognized by God and all the people as a prophet. ²⁰ But our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him. ²¹ We had hoped he was the one who would redeem Israel. All these things happened three days ago. ²² But there's more: Some women from our group have left us stunned. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³ and didn't find his body. They came to us saying that they had even seen a vision of angels who told them he is alive. ²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women said. They didn't see him."

²⁵ Then Jesus said to them, "You foolish people! Your dull minds keep you from believing all that the prophets talked about. ²⁶ Wasn't it necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" ²⁷ Then he interpreted for them the things written about himself in all the scriptures, starting with Moses and going through all the Prophets.

²⁸ When they came to Emmaus, he acted as if he was going on ahead. ²⁹ But they urged him, saying, "Stay with us. It's nearly evening, and the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ After he took his seat at the table with them, he took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹ Their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he disappeared from their sight. ³² They said to each other, "Weren't our hearts on fire when he spoke to us along the road and when he explained the scriptures for us?"

³³ They got up right then and returned to Jerusalem. They found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴ They were saying to each other, “The Lord really has risen! He appeared to Simon!” ³⁵ Then the two disciples described what had happened along the road and how Jesus was made known to them as he broke the bread.

Meditation

World Communion Sunday

A special message from our friends and partners at the Inanda Seminary in South Africa. The video presentation can be found at <https://vimeo.com/458695181>.

We Gather at the Table



Set Your Place at the Table—Communion was first celebrated in the homes of those in the early church. Friends and family would gather together to pray, singing songs, and break bread. We carry on that tradition today. Whatever you have on hand to celebrate communion will work just fine, because this ancient ritual is not about what we use for this meal or where we partake of it. Instead, it is about the act of remembrance. So, gather around the table, prepare your place, and remember that Christ is in our midst.

Our Invitation—With our siblings in Christ from all around this big, beautiful world, we gather this day because Christ has invited us to the table, to receive grace and mercy. We find our place at the table not because we must but because we may. Here, there is a place for you.

The Words of Institution—On the night when Jesus was to be betrayed, he gathered with his friends in that upper room to celebrate the Passover meal, a meal of remembrance of the liberation of God’s people from slavery in Egypt, a journey that would lead them deep into the wilderness. After the meal was over, Jesus took the bread that was left, broke it, blessed it, and said, “Take and eat, this is my body broken for you.” In the same way, he took the cup, the fruit of the vine, and pouring it out he said, “This is the cup of the new covenant, my blood shed for you and the forgiveness of sins. As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, remember me.” Today, we remember Christ’s body broken for us and blood shed for us as bread is transformed into mercy and wine into compassion. As we prepare to receive this holy meal, let

us ready our hearts by confessing our sins to God. Let us pray.

Our Confession (from our partners in South Africa)— For our failure to feel the sufferings of others, and our tendency to live comfortably with injustice, God forgive us. For the self-righteousness which denies guilt, and the self-interest which strangles compassion, God forgive us. For those who live their lives in careless unconcern, who cry ‘Peace, peace’ when there is no peace, we ask your mercy. For our failings in community, our lack of understanding, we ask your mercy. For the times when we are too eager to be better than others, when we are too rushed to care, when we are too tired to bother, when we don’t really listen, when we are too quick to act from motives other than love, God forgive us. Amen.~

Assurance of Grace (from our partners in Bangladesh)— Know that God loves you. From the very beginning God’s loving mercy has been poured out upon you. God loves you like a mother embracing us in her lap; like a father, God watches over you, guiding you each day. On behalf of the Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior, I assure you: you are forgiven, forgive others. You are restored, restore others. You are reconciled with God, be reconciled with others, in the name of the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. Amen.~

Blessing Our Meal— Dear God we are grateful for the opportunity on this World Communion Sunday to be in relationship with our brothers and sisters around the world. As we each partake of the elements today, we are reminded of Christ’s love poured out for everyone. We are reminded that we are all equal at the communion table. Give us opportunities as a community to pour out Christ’s love into the world.~ We ask that you pour out your blessings into this bread and cup that by partaking we might receive your grace. Amen.

We Share the Bread and the Cup – As you eat the bread, remember, “This is the body of Christ broken for you.” Take and eat. As you drink the cup, remember, “This is the blood of Christ shed for you and the forgiveness of sins.” Take and drink.

We Give Thanks—Almighty God, we give you thanks for the gift of our Savior’s presence in the simplicity and splendor of this holy meal. Unite us with all who are fed by Christ’s body and blood that we may faithfully

proclaim the good news of your love and that your universal church may be a rainbow of hope in an uncertain world; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.+

We Respond to God's Word with Our Giving

Invitation—With thanksgiving in our hearts for the love and mercy we have found in Christ, let us bring our gifts to God.

October Benevolence—Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion in the United States. In 2021, Neighbors in Need “Unfailing Love” offering is focused on supporting organizations and projects that are serving homeless and immigrant neighbors or communities. One-third of NIN funds support the **Council for American Indian Ministry** (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC’s Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to provide funding grants to UCC churches and organizations leading justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects in their communities.

You can mail your offerings to our office or give online at www.zionuccindy.net/donate

Doxology

We Give Thanks—God, with generous hearts we return a portion of what you have given us, trusting that you will use these gifts to fulfill your mission in this world. May these gifts bring blessing to our congregation, our neighbors, and our friends around the world, as we live out your call for us to serve and enrich the world. Amen.

Hymn

We Meet as Friends at Table, #704 (v. 1 & 4)

We Are Sent Forth with a Blessing (from our partners in Mexico)—*The congregation forms a circle large enough to include everyone. Each person either places their hand on the head of the person to their right or their right palm on the back of the left hand of the person to the right.*

May God prosper you. May your days be long and your nights serene. May your friendships honor you, and your family love you. May you eat at your table, and may you be gathered into to God's embrace with a smile. Amen~

Postlude

The Joy of the Lord