



October 4, 2020

World Communion Sunday

Rev. Helen Reed, Diaconal Minister

Welcome & Announcements

Candle Lighting

We light the Christ Candle, aware of God around, among, & within us. In a moment of silence, we prepare ourselves to celebrate God's presence in our community.

Call to Worship

Come before the God of steadfast love.

We come as a people called by grace.

Come with story and with song.

We come as a people called to faith.

Come to the joy of worship together.

We come as a people called by love.

Prayer of Approach

Faithful God,

we come together as people

yearning to know you,

to feel again your strength,

your call, your love.

Rekindle in us the gift of faith;

warm it in our open hands,

breathe it into our spirits,

light it in our hearts. Amen

☞Hymn: 🎵 VU#283 God is the One Whom We Seek

Prayer for Grace:

Gracious God,

we name ourselves as your faithful people

but sometimes we forget

that faith

includes words and actions of care

that shine far beyond our walls.

Sometimes we forget
that our faith demands that we care for all people
Sometimes we forget
that loving like Jesus loved, means that
we must put the welfare of others before ourselves.

Forgive us God
Forgive us for those times when we
get caught up in our own needs
Send your voice to us
to give us courage to be in partnership
with your whole world.
Guide us, God,
to be who you would have us be. Amen

Words of Assurance

God loves us even when we are imperfect...
perhaps because we are imperfect.
We have the words of God that remind us that
God's love is written on our heart.
God waits patiently for us to turn to the Holy
and promises to be there for us. Always.
Thanks be to God.

Scripture is our song for the journey,
the living word passed on from generation to generation
to guide and inspire.
God calls us to be doers of the word
and not hearers only.

Scripture:

A loving Community (from Seasons of the Spirit)
A bible story based on
Exodus 20:1–4, 7–9, 12–20

The people of Israel lived together as a community.

They did not live in only one place, but they moved to different locations and set up camps wherever they went. When they moved, they brought everything they had with them.

The leader of the people was named Moses. Moses was called to speak for God, and to lead the people of Israel away from their troubles and to a new life. Sometimes, God would speak directly to Moses and then ask Moses to tell the people what God had said.

One day, the people of Israel arrived at the base of a mountain; it was called Mount Sinai. The people were only allowed to be at the bottom of the mountain, but God wanted Moses to go up to the top of the mountain so that God could speak to Moses from there. Moses went up the mountain to talk with God.

When God spoke with Moses, God gave the people of Israel ways of living together in community. They were rules of love so that they could care for one another and God. God gave these words to Moses and Moses gave them to the people:

Love only me as your God.

Do not create carvings and statues of false gods; these are idols.

My name is important, so please only use God's name for good and for praise.

On one day of the week, you should rest and keep the day holy. That day will be the Sabbath. You can work the other six days of the week.

Love your parents.

Be respectful of all living things.

Be faithful and loyal in your marriages.

Respect what belongs to others.

Be honest at all times,
especially about others in your
community.

You have been given many things. It is not good to look
at what your neighbours have and want those
things also.

When God finished speaking, all of Mount Sinai was
covered with smoke. There were thunder and lightning.
There was even the sound of a trumpet!
The people saw all of this and became scared and tried
to move away from the mountain.

Then, the people of Israel spoke to their leader Moses.
The people said, “Moses, when you speak with us, we will
listen to you. But please do not let God speak with us –
we think that we will die!” Moses told the people not to be
so scared. “God spoke to us with love,” Moses said. “God
gave us rules so that we could be a loving community
together!”

Message/Reflections

Our scripture story today is titled “A Loving
Community”.

As we continue to watch the Israelites move from
one disaster to another, to be drawn into
unknown places, with unknown destinations we
see that their community didn’t immediately draw
together to support each other.

We watched as they asked for deliverance from a
hard life and then not like the solution. We
watched as they complained about the changes

that they had to live with as they were not what they had envisioned they would look like. We watched as their leader turned to God and said: “What do I do with these people?”

Just before today’s reading, God told Moses to remind the people of their faith, that in listening to the voice of God they would remember the power of love to move them through trouble. Moses directed the people to remember some of their rituals that would help them wait patiently for God’s direction.

In today’s reading, we see God setting up specific rules for people to live by. We might think that these are simply common sense, but in that moment of time they needed to be reminded of how to live together in ways that made people safe.

They needed to be reminded of the common courtesy of treating elders with respect, of not killing people, of respecting the property of others, of being honest in your dealings with people and partners, of being content with what you have. They needed to be reminded that God had their back, that God knew this was a long hard road, that God was walking with them.

Once again, our Scripture stories from generations past jump right into our daily living.

We, too, are finding ourselves on unknown paths and journeys. We, too, have moments when we might think returning to what was is the answer. We, too, have lost the common sense and courtesy that could make this unexpected travelling safer for everyone on it. We, too, have moments when we want someone else to interpret God's word for us, because what we are being asked to do is more than we expected, more than we think we can do.

But God knows better. God also knows that to do this, we need to be working together to make it happen. God knows that we can do this.

We need to be working with God and remembering that God gives us courage and support to get through the times when we are lost and out of our normal. We need to stop and listen to God telling us to respect our elders, to be honest with each other, to be content with where we are, to know that God is taking us somewhere we don't understand but that God knows will be good for us.

The Israelites really didn't want to go back to being slaves – they were just afraid of the unknown...and if they had gone back don't you think they would have been treated differently for the trouble they had caused?

God knew. They were moved forward and reminded of the basics of common sense in preparation for the new community they would be forming.

We, too, are in a time when we might yearn to go back, but, instead, we are asked to remind ourselves of the basic tenets of our faith so that we can use them to ground ourselves as we move forward into a new and forming community of faith.

From our scripture today, that fits so well with our life, let us listen to the wisdom of leaders that remind us to take care of each other, let us have faith that, even through the noise of attention seeking people, unsettling storms, mystifying smoke, the voice of God reminds us that we are to care for each other and travel together so that all will reach the place God is leading us to.

And, as the Israelites did, we ground ourselves in ritual. Today, we use Communion to bring us together.

World Communion Sunday reminds us of the “together” that we need to be living. It reminds us that there are many on this journey of change. It reminds us that, even though we bring different perspectives to life, there are basics that hold us together, make us God’s children. This day of

remembering how important the Church of Jesus Christ is in the world, and promoting Christian Unity was conceived by a Presbyterian Moderator in 1930 and adopted by The World Council of Churches in 1940.

The church, in the world and in our small communities, is to be God's action in the world. We are the ones who are to lead by compassion. We are the ones who are to lead by faith – and not peer pressure. We are the ones who are to show that we can work together to make God's world a better place. We are the ones who are to find the common sense and loving ways of caring for a new and transforming world where God has placed us together.

We gather in as many ways and places and times as we can to celebrate that God holds us together, invites us together and that Jesus shows us how to be together with compassion and faith and justice. Throughout the whole world, people share in this ritual of Communion/ Eucharist because we know that we are on unknown, God driven journeys together. Each experience may be different, but common sense, common faith in the Holy will make it right. God knows. We know it too.

We are the ones, chosen by God to be on this journey together. We are the ones, chosen by

God to be learners together. We are the ones that God knows can be transformers of the world, looking out for each other. We are the ones. God has faith in us. Let us have faith in God.

☞Hymn: 🎵 VU#595 We Are Pilgrims

Offering Invitation

Based on prayer by Bill Steadman, St. Andrew's United Church, Sudbury, Ontario, Gathering, Pentecost 2, 106 (Year C) page 42. Permission Granted.

We are called to be Christ's church.

We are called to love one another.

We are called to reach out in faith and hope.

God has called us

to be the church in this time and this place.

We respond to that call by offering our gifts

to the work of the church in the world

and in our community.

Prayer of Dedication:

God of love, accept these offerings.

Bless them and increase them.

May they find their way into the world

and bring your just and loving vision into being.

Amen.

Prayers of the people for God's people.

Holy and wonderful God,

Today,

in a world that appears to be splintering and breaking,

in a world that appears to be confused as to

how we should work and live together

putting others before ourselves,

we give you thanks for your presence

and your challenge to live our faith.

In this ever-changing world,
You are with us in the rising of the Sun
marking the beginning of each new day of possibilities
You are with us in the setting of the Sun
marking the time of rest.

You are with us in the familiar patterns of the Moon,
setting the rhythms of the earth,
breathing in and breathing out.

Holy One,

Today we pray for the gathering of the world:
That Leaders and Followers will work together
for the good of all

That stories of hurt and from generations past
will be heard by generations present
That systems grown to benefit one will be dismantled
and replaced by systems that benefit all.

That we will remember that we are all your people:
Born in the spirit of your loving
Born to share and care for each other

We pray for those who
need healing for body and mind
need hearing for inclusion
need support to escape lives of violence and oppression
need strength for journeys of caring
need compassion for times of sorrowing

God of our hearts, of our world
We pray for ourselves
That we will see your presence in all of our days
That we will feel your love pushing us into wilderness
places that challenge us and heal us.
That we will remember, in all our decisions,
That we are to love as you loved
Always and all ways. **Amen.**

∞Sending Forth... from A Song of Faith

In grateful response to God's abundant love,
we bear in mind our integral connection
to the earth and one another.

May we feel the warmth and power
of God's Holy Spirit with us.

May we be inspired by God's love
and the teachings of Jesus
to know the power of love,
and to share it, without question,
in God's world.

Changing the Christ Candle:

The light of Christ, shining into all the corners of the earth,
showing us where we are and where we are meant to be.

The Spirit of God. Breathe it in...and know that God is with
us wherever we go.

∞Sending Song: ♪ MV#145 Draw the Circle Wide

Acknowledgements

Seasons of the Spirit™ SeasonsFUSION Pentecost 2 2020

Communion...

*From the Beginning, followers of Christ have broken bread
together. Gathered at tables fancy and simple, sharing wafers
or full meals.*

*In this era of pandemic and separation we continue to come
together sitting in our homes, with our own supplies,
we are linked together by our faith and God's spirit that cannot
be held back by walls, doors. This meal we share is hosted by
the God who meets us where we are.*

Call to Give Thanks

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 our God!
It is good to give God thanks and praise.

Thanksgiving

Song of Faith...

Carrying a vision of creation healed and restored,
we welcome all in the name of Christ.

**Invited to the table where none shall go hungry,
we gather as Christ's guests and friends.**

In holy communion we are commissioned
**to feed as we have been fed,
forgive as we have been forgiven,
love as we have been loved.**

The open table speaks of the shining promise
of barriers broken and creation healed.

**In the communion meal,
wine poured out and bread broken,
we remember Jesus.**

We remember not only the promise
but also the price that he paid
for who he was, for what he did and said,
and for the world's brokenness.

**We taste the mystery of God's great love for us,
and are renewed in faith and hope.**

Song of Creation: MV #203 (Tune VU#625)

**O Holy, Holy, Holy God, O God of time and space.
All earth and sea and sky above
bear witness to your grace.
Hosanna in the highest heav'n,
creation sings your praise.
And blessed is the One who comes
and bears your name always!**

Remembering Jesus at Table:

We remember that

Jesus invited his friends to God's table

Knowing that life was full of challenge

he reminded them of their commitment

to follow God's teachings so that

the world could grow into God's vision of love

He shared food with followers and friends,

with saints and sinners,

With crowds of thousands on the hillside,

and a few friends in an upper room.

He took a loaf of bread, and after giving thanks,

he broke it, and gave it to them, saying:

"Take, eat. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then, he took a cup, and after giving thanks,

he passed it among them, saying:

"Drink this. Do this in remembrance of me."

Through this loaf and cup, Jesus lives within us.

In word and deed, Jesus lives among us.

Prayer of Self-Giving

Eternal God,

you invite us to your table to this banquet of love,

as we come to you this day

we remember that your table is so large

as to encompass the whole earth.

and we remember that the church has a purpose:

To nurture faith and comfort hearts

To share gifts for the good of all

To resist forces that exploit and marginalize

To be fierce love in the face of violence

To defend all human dignity.

Loving the world as you do, as Jesus taught us,

may our actions be earth's healing. Amen.

Remembering God's promise and gift

MV 204 (Tune VU#625)

**Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen,
Christ will come again!**

**Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen,
Christ will come again!**

Prayer for Transformation

Holy One,

Send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts of bread and cup.

As we pause to remember today,

join us together again in spirit with full hearts.

In this bread and this cup,

gifts of the land we share,

may we remember your nourishing love.

In this meal of faith and transformation

may we feel your spirit fill us,

ready to move us forward in love.

The Prayer of Jesus

We pray in the name of the One

who breathes hope and peace into our fear,

and who encouraged us to pray together as we sing

VU#960 Lord's Prayer.

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 trespasses,

as we forgive them that trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil:

for thine is the kingdom

and the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sharing the Bread and Wine

The Gifts from God for the people of God.

Let us share together

The Bread of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Cup of Blessing. **Thanks be to God.**

Prayer after Communion

God, creator of all,

We give you thanks

for the many blessings that you give us.

You know us, and love us

even when we are not at our best.

Persistent, loving God

You know our strengths and our weaknesses,

You push us to be our best

in a world that needs peace.

We offer you our gratitude for these gifts of
nourishment for our soul.

Fill us with wisdom and courage and grace.

Teach us how to live for others,

in all that we do and say.

God of our hearts,

we open ourselves, with Hope and Faith,

to be filled with your love.

Amen

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we bear in mind our integral connection

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Communion Liturgy includes:

words by Rev. Gord Waldie, Grande Prairie, Alberta

Song of Faith. United Church of Canada, 2006

