

Pilgrim Uniting Church

## **COCU 13C Mid week service**

### **Welcome**

#### **Prayer of invocation**

God of awe and of great mystery,  
creator of immensity yet lover of the small and fragile,  
be especially present and real to us in this time of worship.

For so readily do we look past you,  
taking the sacred nature of life for granted,  
that we need clear reminders and soulful awakenings.

Spirit, come, focus our vision, renew our minds in the way and being of Christ. Amen.

*(Source: Words4Worship)*

#### **The prayers of who we are**

What would change in our journey of faith if we understood the goal is not to prove we are worthy? The journey of faith is dismantling, healing and transforming everything that has tried to convince us otherwise. The journey of faith is accepting that we are accepted. It is returning to the radical amazement that we bear the image of God's own goodness. The journey of faith is being a mirror that others might see their own goodness through us. It is loving with no strings attached that others might know they are worthy of love. We often only receive the love we think we deserve. What would change in our journey of faith if we knew ourselves to be loved deep in our bones, whether we think we deserve that love or not?

Sit with this deepest of all truths, the eternal truth that God is love and that love is unconditional. You are loved beyond anything you can comprehend or imagine. Now. Not someday when you prove you are worthy of love. No. You are loved NOW. Sit with this and let it sink in until there's nothing more to be said. *(Rev Steven Koski, Bend Presbyterian Church, Oregon)*

*A silence is kept.*

Gracious God, in your great love you draw near to us, and name us as beloved. Your goodness sustains us, and your graciousness gives us hope. In all we do this day and the days ahead, may we have courage to live our lives in a way that most fully reflects your love for us. **Amen.**

### **Readings and reflection**

#### **Prayers for others**

*Prayers are offered:* This is my prayer/**this is our prayer**

God of a thousand names, you come to us in many forms:

manna to the hungry, water to the parched, embrace to the grieving, rainbow to the despairing, champion of the oppressed, defender of the exploited, friend to the lonely, rescuer to the lost, rest for the weary, shock to the comfortable, peace to the restless, gift to the joyful, mystery to the knowing, revelation to the seeking.

God of many names. and still the one, true God,  
You reveal your name to us in our need,  
yet remain beyond our control or understanding.

You are God. and we are your people.

**In trust and love. we commit ourselves to exploring and discovering**

**who you are and whose we are.** *(Source: John and Norma Brown, UCA Mission Prayer Handbook)*

## **Communion**

### **The invitation**

### **The narrative**

### **Thanksgiving**

May God be with you. **And also with you.**

Beloved of God, lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the One who knows us and loves us.**

Beloved of God, give thanks to the Lord our God.

**Our praise is continually offered to our Hope, our Trust, our God.**

In that time of silence, where there was only your Hope and Love, O God, you shaped all that was good and beautiful. You shaped us, and breathed life into our lungs. You called us into your divine company. But the world sang its seductions, and sin sought to hold sway and draw us away from you. We recognise that the life of Jesus gave particular expression to your Presence, God-with-us. He loved so greatly and taught so clearly and courageously, he was able to set people free from images and ideas and religious practices that bound them into fear and a false sense of separation from the Spirit of all Life. In him, we have seen the light of the world, and found a spring of healing that never fails. When we lose our way, he calls us, so we might follow him, and find the pathway that leads to life, love and joy.

**I bind unto myself today**

**your power, O God, to hold and lead,**

**your eye to watch, your might to stay,**

**your ear to hearken to my need,**

**your wisdom, O my God, to teach,**

**your hand to guide, your shield to ward,**

**your living Word to give me speech,**

**your heavenly host to be my guard.** *(The Breastplate of St. Patrick)*

In this time of silence, Spirit of God,

may this bread which is broken become our wholeness.

In this time of grace,

may this cup which is poured touch our lips with healing.

May we believe that your justice and peace are to be shared with all people;

that our hearts can bear the burdens of others;

that we may bring joy to the lonely and suffering.

Then, when our journey is ended,

and we have followed you into eternity,

we will gather around your Table

in that silence, which is only your grace;

in that place, which is only your heart;

in that time, which is only your love,

God in Community, Holy in One. Amen.

*The bread and cup are shared*

### **After communion**

God of love, God of compassion, may the celebration of the wonder and the mystery of your Presence, strengthen and enable us to be those who will follow in the way of the Christ this day and all the days ahead.

### **Words of mission**

The presence of God reaches beyond this place...

*The candles are extinguished*

Filled with God's grace, we will go,

**to share hope with those in despair,**

**to befriend the lonely and afraid.**

Filled with God's grace, we will follow Jesus,

**to offer justice to those forgotten by the world,**

**to embrace those filled with grief and loss.**

Filled with God's grace, we are empowered by the Spirit,

to bring peace into all the brokenness around us,

to walk in faith beside our sisters and brother. *(Source: Thom M. Shuman, 2019)*

*Passing of the peace*