**Pilgrim Uniting Church**

**12 Flinders Street, Adelaide**

**MIDWEEK WORSHIP**

**HOLY WEEK 2019 [COCU28C]**

*Welcome to this time of worship, of gentle reflection, and caring community.*

**WELCOME and GREETING**
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you. **And also with you**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**
From God comes the wonder of creation.
**We will worship God the Creator.**
From God comes healing for the brokenness we see.
**We will worship God our Redeemer.**
From God comes the strength to face the new day.
**We worship God our Sustainer.** *(c) Katherine Hawker, 1994*

**THE PRAYERS OF WHO WE ARE (PRAYERS OF CONFESSION)**
Praying is a slow dying. In prayer you give up something of yourself and appropriate something of the sphere of the Divine in a continuous cycle of dying and resurrection. In prayer the growing soul leans toward the Light as a seedling leans toward the sun’s path. Plant a bean in soil, and soon it puts forth roots and a stem and the seed itself is lifted up upon the stem, broken, transforming into the nourishing cotyledon.  This skeletal shell gives itself to the new green leaves which then begin the process of photosynthesis. The cotyledon, the old bean in withered form, falls off, spent, like the human body in death, having birthed and nurtured something new. *(Source: Suzanne Guthrie)*
In this holy week, let us consider afresh the continuous cycle of dying and resurrection, and reflect upon these words for ourselves. Let us make space for the prayers of our heart - and lean a little more towards the Light. *A silence is kept.*

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**
The Word of God is planted in our hearts.
**May our hearts be receptive to the Word.**
The Love of God rains down on us.
**May our souls soak in the wonder of God’s love.**
The Breathe of God blows softly within us.
**May our minds be stirred by the power of God’s spirit.** *(c) Katherine Hawker*

**BIBLE READINGS AND REFLECTION**

**PRAYERS FOR OTHERS**
**Introduction:** Imagine if we would stand in awe at the weight people have to carry rather than standing in judgment in how they carry it. Everyone we meet is carrying some burden, facing some challenge, experiencing some difficulty, struggling with some demon that we know nothing about. If there is one thing I have learned in 30 years of ministry it is that everyone has a story. Everyone is fighting some battle.
Miller Williams wrote, “Have compassion for everyone you meet even if they don’t want it. What seems conceit, bad manners, or cynicism is always a sign of things no ears have heard, no eyes have seen. You do not know what wars are going on down there where the spirit meets the bone.”
Be kind. Be gentle. Be understanding. Be an encourager. For as you extend grace to others today, you just might find the weight you are carrying feels a little lighter. *(Rev Steve Koski, 1st Presbyterian Church, Bend, Oregon)*
*(The Prayers of the People continue)*This is my prayer/**this is our prayer**
We offer our prayers in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray:

**THE LORD’S PRAYER**
**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.**

**COMMUNION**

**INTRODUCTION**
Our Universe is Eucharistic in its nature. Since the "great flaring forth" 13.7 billion years ago, all beings have been engaged in the exchange of energy. Everything arises, has its manifest time, and then surrenders itself to become food for another to arise into being. Each of us enters into a sacred trust upon receiving the energy given us; if wise, we use that energy for the furthering of the Universe adventure, then relinquish our life so that others may come into being. From stars to mites, everything eventually becomes good food so that life might continue. We might describe the miracle and mystery of photosynthesis with curiously familiar language: a prokaryotic cell learned to eat the sun, storing that life energy to later release it to another so that life might continue. Is that not what we do in our liturgical ritual: eat of the Son that we might remember life was given in order to give us life?

*(Sister Catherine Grace CHS)*

**THE INVITATION**

**THE NARRATIVE OF THE LAST SUPPER**

**THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

God of all time and all creation, we thank you for your work in our world, for good food and good friends, for the time to share a bountiful meal and the space to worship you. All that we have and all that we are comes from you.
Most of all, this night we thank you for Jesus Christ, for the faithful and righteous life that he lived, for the journey he made during this week that we celebrate from exalted king to crucified lord, and for the meal that he shared with his disciples before he was killed, where he revealed and shared his full self with those who cared for him.
Be present with us now, by the power of your Spirit, that once again this meal might be a chance for us to share in the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.
May this bread be for us the body of Christ, this cup be his life poured out for us, and the sharing of this feast our participation in that meal of so long ago.
Among friends, gathered around a table, as they shared a meal as we have done, Jesus took bread, gave thanks to God, and gave it to his disciples, promising that as they ate they would share in his life and death and resurrection. As we share it now, we join in the feast of all creation, now and always. And he also shared a cup of wine, offering them a taste of the new covenant of life sealed in his life. As we share it now, we join in the feast of all creation, now and always.

**BREAKING OF THE BREAD** *Communion is shared*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**
Strengthen us by this meal for the journey ahead, that we might continue to walk with Christ along the road of his passion and death as we await his rising on Easter and to the fullness of new life. Through Christ, who shares this table with us even now, we pray. Amen.

**WORDS OF MISSION AND BLESSING** *Candles are extinguished*
We wait for the joy of Sunday, but must pass through betrayal and the valley of the shadow of death. And on this journey:
May God, the brightness of the universe, bless us.
May Jesus, the light of the world, be our companion on the way.
May the Holy Spirit, energy of the cosmos, strengthen us. Amen.

God’s peace be with you. **And also with you.**
*The sign of the peace is exchanged*