**World Communion Sunday October 2nd, 2011**

**COCU 58A**

**THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD**

ORGAN PRELUDE

*The people stand for the entrance of the Bible*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Open our lips O Lord: **And we shall declare your praise.**

O God, make speed to save us.

**O Lord, make haste to help us.**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

Let us praise the Lord. **The Lord’s name be praised.**

**Hymn:**

**Welcome and greetings**

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**

Today is World Communion Sunday, celebrated around the world by all denominations, in grand cathedrals and in tiny churches, and even under the canopy of a tree for shelter. We celebrate our place in the global community of faith as we break bread and drink from the cup. World Communion Sunday has taken on new relevancy and depth of meaning in a world where globalization has often undermined peace and justice. On this day we celebrate our oneness in Christ, the Prince of Peace, in the midst of the world we are called to serve – a world ever more in need of peacemaking.

Gathering God, as we offer worship to you on this World Communion Sunday, we ask that you send your Holy Spirit to fall afresh on us. We pray for your Spirit to awaken new hope in us. Grant us the vision to see the coming of your reign, here on earth, wherever justice triumphs over injustice, compassion over cruelty, and peace over fighting. Help us to celebrate the glimpses of grace that you have given to each of us. Knit our hearts together in worship and communion so that we know we that we do not work for peace and justice alone. We pray this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Prayer of confession**

Even as we hold the vision of peace and unity, we recognize the signs of division and dysfunction in our own community, in our families, in our own lives. We are mindful of our human condition and so we begin with silence and find ourselves again in the company of God.

May the silence that we share quieten us, touch our need, refresh our courage, enlarge our wonder.  
May the silence that we share enable us to draw closer into the presence of God

May the silence that we share renew and restore our relationship with God and with each other. *A silence is kept.*

God of Grace, we grieve that the church that shares one Spirit, one faith, one hope, and one calling, has become a broken communion in a broken world. The one body spans all time, place, race, and language, but we witness fractures, fighting and fear. In our pride we have mistaken our part for the whole. In our pride, we focus so much on our own needs, we may overlook the call to serve the needs of others that we may be one. *A silence is kept.*

Yet we marvel that you gather the pieces to do your work, that you bless us with joy, with growth, and with signs of unity. We seek forgiveness for times when our words and actions have diminished communion one with the other and with God. We seek ways in which we may orient our lives to reflect the unity found in the body of Christ.

KYRIE

**Words of assurance**

Persistently, patiently, lovingly, God pours out grace and joy into our lives, healing our brokenness, forgiving our sin. Loved, we are sent to love; Forgiven, we are freed to forgive; Graced, we can offer our gifts to everyone we meet. **Thanks be to God.  Amen.**

**An Affirmation of Christian Unity** *(all stand)*  
We believe in God the creator, who is always creative and invites us to affirm and explore who we are, with all our differences; and who is the source of our faith.

We believe in God the Saviour revealed in the world as Jesus the Christ who died and is risen, the one Lord of the church.

We believe in God the Reconciler, the Holy Spirit, who is always with us bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God.

We believe that our smallness can never diminish God’s vastness; that our frailties can never overcome God’s will for wholeness; that our sin can never crush God’s power for new life even in the face of death.

We believe, and in this belief, we need one another, as a choir needs every voice and every part for the harmony to be complete.

We believe - that in the Holy Spirit, in Jesus Christ and in the love of God - we are one!

We believe - and may our lives reflect our belief.

*Ian Tozer (1997 UCA Assembly)*

**THE SERVICE OF THE WORD**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING

The word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

PSALM Parish Psalter

*Please stand and sing the concluding Gloria*

**Glory be to the Father, and / to the / Son:**

**and / to the / Holy Spirit;**

**As it was in the beginning, is now and / ever /shall be**

**world without / end. / A / men**

SECOND READING

*Please stand for the gospel*

A reading from the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to Matthew

**Glory to you, Lord**

### GOSPEL READING

The gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

HYMN

SERMON

**THE RESPONSE TO GOD IN WORD AND ACTION**

HYMN

# *During the singing of this hymn our offering will be received.*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Gracious God, you have given abundance in creation, and been generous in our lives. We offer these gifts of money that they may be used in mission and in service in and through this church. We also offer the gift of our lives. Amen.

**Communion**

**Invitation**

Christ invites us all to this Holy Feast. As we gather this morning, we remember our sisters and brothers from above and below the equator, in the north and the south, from every time zone around the globe. As today’s sunlight inches across land and sea, Christians gather to celebrate their place in God’s family. All are invited and all are welcome. Come, for the meal is ready!

As we do, we remember our brothers and sisters around the world.

These breads are symbols of the many different peoples within the family of God.

This Spicy Tea Bread in honor of the men and women in the Horn of Africa and for those who struggle with poverty, drought, famine, locusts, and civil war today.

This Pita Bread for the people of the Middle East. We pray for a way forward with the peace process with the people of Israel and Palestine.

This banana Bread for the people of Central America. May we remember that beyond the tourism ads there are hundreds of thousands of sisters and brothers facing incredible challenges with violence and poverty.

This rye bread for the people of Europe, struggling with economic issues and trying to find ways to cope with new arrivals seeking a better life.

This soybean and malt bread for the people of Korea where tyranny has divided a people and limited the marketplace in a land already over-farmed and under-producing.

This seed bread for the Aboriginal people of Australia, for fractured communities and ongoing disadvantage.

*We pause to offer silent prayers for brothers and sisters on this day, World Communion Sunday.*

We offer our own silent prayers for families and friends and loved ones facing difficulties, for those coping with illness and health, for those facing ongoing uncertainty, for those dealing with grief.

*A silence is kept*  
  
And we pray for ourselves, for the joys and challenges, for the privilege and blessings that share company with pain and sorrow.

*A silence is kept*

We pray for our church, for the Uniting Church and for the world wide church, that the church may remain faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ by continually seeking out in the world those who are most in need of your justice, compassion and love.

We offer these prayers and say together the prayer Jesus taught us saying:

THE LORDS PRAYER *(printed inside cover of hymn book)*

The Lord be with you

**And also with you**

Lift up your hearts

**We lift them to the Lord**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**Great prayer of thanksgiving**

Loving and gracious God, we give thanks and blessings to you. The diversity of our planet amazes us, from the prairies of the Americas to the dusty deserts of Africa, from the lush greenery in Asia to the majestic mountains of Europe and the vast outback of Australia. We give you thanks for the multiplicity of humanity with our complexity of colour and culture yet called into oneness-of-being through Christ. With many tongues, yet with one voice, we honour you with thanks and praise:   
  
***Sanctus and benedictus***

Loving and gracious God, who surrounds creation with abundant love, we give thanks and blessings to you. We are thankful for your love made known to us through Jesus, which reassures us and reconciles us to you, to ourselves and to one another. May the light of Christ enable us to be a light to others, illuminating the path toward communion with you, the Holy Spirit and Jesus, our friend and brother. Amen.

**Words of Institution**

**Breaking of bread, blessing of cup**

We pray that these simple elements may become for us the life of Christ in us. May this bread connect us more closely with God and with our neighbours far and near. May this fruit of the vine remind us of the inter-connectedness of people around the world. May this simple meal bring us into union with God, with each other and with creation, united in the one Body of Christ. Amen.

Bread: The bread of life, source of all life

Cup: The cup of the new covenant, God’s love for you and for all people.

Distribution of communion (insert usual instructions)

**Prayer of thanksgiving (after communion)**

In Christ, all things are made new. With thanksgiving, we celebrate our life in Christ, giving thanks to God our creator and sustainer. We have shared in the bread and the cup, that we may be renewed in our faith and commitment.

May the bread we have taken unite us with Christ, that we may share Christ’s love with others.

May the cup we have taken enable us to share the good news of God’s reconciling love for all people.

May our lives reflect the life of Christ in us, the weaving of God’s Spirit in between us, and the love of God that permeates all of creation, this day and all the days to come. Amen.

**Hymn**

**Words of mission and Benediction**

**Postlude**

A hymn has been written specifically for World Communion Sunday to the tune of Beach Spring. As we share the common element of celebrating Holy Communion and, perhaps, the singing of this hymn in our worship, may we also celebrate the unity that we share as the Body of Christ on World Communion Sunday.

**World Communion Sunday Hymn (Tune: Beach Spring)**

**Words by Rev. M. Blake Kendrick**

I. Unite, Lord, all Your people

With a passion for true peace

Enflame our hearts and minds with

Your divine love, which will ease

Our sorrow, our suffering, our greed and our hate

May we abide with patience

For your peace, Christ, we will wait

II. Let peace and justice roll down

Let them flow as mighty streams

May Your people from all nations

Inspire our world to dream

Of an end to all violence

Of an end to all wars

Lead us to love our neighbors

Teach us to fight no more

III. Do justice, love mercy

Walk humbly with the Lord

Sow seeds of compassion

And feed our hungry world

As sisters and brothers

As the Body of Christ

We share in one journey

Toward hope and toward life

IV. In the strong name of the Father

Of the Spirit and the Son

We share Holy Communion

With this meal we’re made as one

As we break one bread together

As we share one holy cup

May all that separates us

Be defeated by God’s love

For those who are wondering, the syllabic breakdown of the hymn written above goes as follows to fit the Beach Spring melody:

U-nite, Lord, all Your peo-ple  
With a pass-ion for true peace  
En-flame our hearts and minds with  
Your di-vine love, which will ease  
Our sor-row, our suff-ring, our greed and our hate  
Ma-y we a-bide with pa-tience  
For your peace, Christ, we will wait

Le-t peace and just-ice roll down  
Let them flow as migh-ty streams  
May Your peo-ple from all na-tions  
I-n-spire our world to dream  
Of an end to al-l vio-lence  
Of an end to al-l wars  
Le-ad us to love our neigh-bors  
Tea-ch us to fight no more

D-o just-ice, lo-ve mer-cy  
Wa-lk hum-bly with the Lord  
So-w seeds of co-m-pass-ion  
An-d feed our hun-gry world  
A-s sis-ters a-nd br-oth-ers  
As the Bo-dy o-f Christ  
W-e share in o-ne jour-ney  
To-ward hope and to-ward life

In the strong name of the Fath-er  
Of the Spir-it and the Son  
W-e share Ho-ly Com-mun-ion  
With this meal we’re made as one  
As we break one bread to-ge-the-r  
As we share one ho-ly cup  
Ma-y all that sep-ar-ates us  
Be de-feat-ed by God’s love

<http://www.globalministries.org/resources/special-days/WCS/world-communion-sunday-ideas.html>