

COCU59C Midweek service

Welcome

Call to worship

As we pause in the middle of the day to gather in God's presence, we reflect on God's steadfast love. Even when we feel alone, overwhelmed, dispirited, tired or when everything around us seems hopeless, we remember the great faithfulness of God and our hope is restored. Let us worship God.

Opening prayer

God of faithfulness, we come to offer this time of worship to you. As we become present to you in this place, may we experience afresh your grace, mercy and love as fresh gifts in our lives.

A silence is kept to reflect on God's faithfulness and steadfast love.

May our faithfulness also be great and our love for all you created never cease. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

The prayers of who we are

"How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives." ~Annie Dillard

There are two kinds of richness in life: a "richness of having" and a "richness of being." Advertisers try to sell us items they promise we need using people pretending to be overwhelmed with joy because they have that certain item. We're sold a lie that the good life is found in a richness of having but, deep down, what we desire is a richness of being. We scramble after a richness of having because we hope it will provide a richness of being, but intuitively we know it doesn't.

What are the things that matter most that money can't buy? What brings you joy? How do you keep what is most important from being at the mercy of what is least important? What are the gifts that surround you everyday, gifts that invite a richness of being, gifts that don't cost a single penny that you don't even notice or take for granted?

What will make for a good today? What will lift you to the life that is larger than yourself? What will make you laugh? Where will you find delight?

The answer to these questions won't magically erase life's challenges. Reminding yourself of what really matters most and what makes your soul come alive may give you the courage to stare at life's soul-crushing realities in the face and say, "You're not winning today. You will not have the last word."

Inhale the gift of today's sunrise. Look for the joy hidden under every rock.

Refuse to allow what is least important to steal the joy of what matters most.

How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives. How will you spend this day?

(Rev Steve Koski, First Presbyterian Church, Bend)

A time for reflection

Readings

Our readings come from the Hebrew and Christian traditions.

May we open ourselves to the seeds of wisdom that lie dormant in them.

**And may our minds and hearts be fertile soil
in which wisdom may grow strong and true.**

Prayers for ourselves, prayers for others, prayers for our church

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

God in Community, Holy in One, we offer our spoken and silent prayers in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray:

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.**

The tradition of the meal

The sharing of bread and wine was common in the time of Jesus. Folk gathered for the sacred moment of the meal when bread was broken and the cup blessed. It reminded them of their story, the way they believed their God had led them, the hope that was given to them, and the blessing they received. The church through the generations has embraced this meal-event as a central sacrament of the faith. This table sets before us the bread and wine, the ordinary things of life, signs of the eternal mystery of God's acceptance and grace.

Great prayer of thanksgiving

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

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to God**

Let us give thanks to God

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

God of steadfast love, it is right that we should always give thanks to you, for you are not a distant God - your presence permeates creation and all of human history. You did not abandon your people of old, but through the prophets spoke words of mercy and hope to them, simply because they were chosen and beloved by you. You revealed how beloved we are by entering our history in the person of Jesus Christ, who touches our lives with healing and wholeness and a love, which like yours, is unending and unconditional. We who hold all these things in trust, in the company of each other, and in company with people throughout the world declare as generations before us have declared:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of mercy and love,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

The narrative of the Last Supper *adapted from 1 Corinthians 11:23-26*

At this table we bear witness to the love that has been poured into our lives. We remember when Jesus washed his disciples' feet and sat down at a table to share the meal with them. At that meal - he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant between God and humanity. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me". For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. We remember and we give thanks for such outpouring of love.

Bread and wine

As Jesus took the bread, I take it. As Jesus blessed the bread, I bless it. As Jesus broke the bread, I break it. *Bread is broken.*

Let it be a symbol of God's presence: a symbol of care and compassion calling us to the highest spirit of care and compassion. The bread is broken for us to take.

We will receive it in faith.

As Jesus took the wine, I take it. As he raised the cup, I raise it. As he blessed the cup, I bless it. Let it be a symbol of remembering. And a symbol of healing and renewal. The wine is here for us to take.

We will receive it in faith.

Prayer before communion

In these moments, in this holy place, upon these gifts which offer hope and life, and upon each of us present here in this place, pour out your Spirit of compassion and peace. As we eat of the bread, tasting its grace, may we carry healing and wholeness to others. As we drink from the cup of

compassion, may we become the healing balm for others. Amen.

Distribution of the bread and wine.

Prayer after communion

Holy God, present with us, we give you thanks that we have been fed and renewed by Christ's life in us and we go now to share that life with others, to spread the message of your love and mercy to all whom we meet. Amen

Blessing and dismissal

We began our service in worship; Now we continue our worship in service. And as you go, may you know the blessing of the faithfulness of God, the companionship of Jesus Christ and the sustaining of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The passing of the peace.