

SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

November 29 and December 2, 2023



Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? - Matthew 25:37



Where we see needs, we as Christians are called to meet them.

Gathering as the Body of Christ.

CENTERING SONG

“WE HAVE COME INTO THIS HOUSE” vs. 1,3

AAHH 174

GREETING

PRESIDER

*CALL TO WORSHIP

STUDENT MINISTER

Leader: Our God and Creator asks, "How will you live the life I have given to you?"

All: Like a still, deep pool in the desert, we will live in a way that reflects your love back onto your world.

Leader: Our God and Creator asks, "How will you journey down this path I have given to you?"

All: Like the creatures of the forest, we will journey in a way that respects all life created by your hand.

Leader: Our God and Creator asks, "How will you reach out to the world beyond yourselves?"

All: Like the branches of a sapling tree, we will strive to reach beyond the safe and the familiar and encounter the world in your name. Help us to remember we all are connected through the endless circle of life and creation.

*OPENING HYMN

“JESUS SHALL REIGN” vs. 1,3 & 4

AAHH 289

*CONFESSION & WORDS OF ASSURANCE

[All are invited to turn toward the Baptismal Font.]

The baptismal font reminds us of the transformative power of water and God’s promise of forgiveness. Let us join together in a prayer of confession.

God of Justice, we confess for all of the times when we have spoken peace into the world, put on extravagant worship, and yet lived in a way that upholds injustice. May your restoring spark fill us and guide us. May the waters of your forgiveness cleanse us of our sins against you and others, spoken and unspoken.

God’s rushing waters of justice cleanse us and invite us to join in with God in the ongoing revelation of Her kin-dom.

God’s love journeys with us and guides us. We are forgiven and sent to love all. Amen.

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

STUDENT MINISTER

You are invited to pass the peace to each other in a way comfortable to you and your neighbor. Be mindful that some of our siblings may prefer non-contact ways of passing the peace, so kindly ask before hugging or shaking hands.

Peace be with you! **And also with you!**
Let us share this peace with one another.

Service of the Word

POEM [SAT. ONLY]

THE POOR MAN'S BURDEN

GEORGE MCNEILL

*The poem excerpted below is a parody of Rudyard Kipling's "White Man's Burden" which was a rallying cry for European imperialism and organized white supremacy. May we remember that the burden of empire falls not on the conqueror, but on the conquered and the downtrodden at home.

Pile on the Poor Man's Burden—
Drive out the beastly breed;
Go bind his sons in exile
To serve your pride and greed;
To wait in heavy harness,
Upon your rich and grand;
The common working peoples,
The serfs of every land.

Pile on the Poor Man's Burden—
Your savage wars increase,
Give him his full of Famine,
Nor bid his sickness cease.
And when your goal is nearest
Your glory's dearly bought,
For the Poor Man in his fury,
May bring your pride to naught.

Pile on the Poor Man's Burden—
The day of reckoning's near—
He will call aloud on Freedom,
And Freedom's God shall hear.
He will try you in the balance;
He will deal out justice true:
For the Poor Man with his burden
Weighs more with God than you.

Lift off the Poor Man's Burden—
My Country, grand and great—
[This country] has no treasures
To buy a Christian state,
Our souls brook not oppression;
Our needs—if read aright—
Call not for wide possession.
But Freedom's sacred light.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

STUDENT MINISTER

Divine Spirit, may your words from times remembered and your words spoken to our hearts today break down barriers that keep us from hearing you. **Amen.**

A reading from Matthew's Gospel, chapter 12, verses 22 through 32.

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left.

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’

Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, these my brothers you did it to me.’

Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’

Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

May we discern what God is saying to us. **May it be so!**

SERMON

REV. BETH TOLER - NOV. 29

MELINDA WENNER-BRADLEY - DEC. 2

PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

STUDENT MINISTER

Almighty God, you created us in your own image. When we look at our world and know the plans you have for us we see a great chasm. So much evil, injustice, and oppression remain in our world. We name now in the silence of our hearts the injustices weighing on our hearts today.

Grant us grace fearlessly to contend against evil, and to make no peace with oppression. Grant that we may reverently use our freedom. Help us to employ it in upholding your righteous ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen

Service of the Table

OFFERTORY SONG

INSTRUMENTAL

*THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Community of saints, beloveds of God, we are invited to come and gather at the table of love and liberation, to feast on the dreams of God, to be nourished by but a taste of what God desires to do among us.

God calls us from institutional halls of power, From shelters and the streets;

God calls us from classrooms and pulpits, Gay bars and prison cells.

God calls us as we are, from wherever we are, to come and be in solidarity with Christ, who lives and loves on the margins.

God whispers, “come” and live abundantly, turning from all that claims that blessings flow from money, power, or control.

Come, and love relentlessly; following Christ on paths of uncertainty, taking risks for one another, calling down unjust power from its throne and lifting up the lowly, the impoverished, the burdened.

When these are the desires of our hearts, we open ourselves to God.

Blessed are those, Jesus said, who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

And so let us come to the table, expectant, eager, open to tasting the rich blessings of heaven born from unexpected places, and people, and experiences. In this meal, we remember the life, death, and resurrection of the One who still takes on flesh among us today.

On the night he would be arrested, Jesus gathered his friends and companions. In the midst of a tense and dangerous time, they found each other at table, connecting over the story of God-enfleshed among them.

And as they did so, Jesus took bread, gave thanks to God, broke the bread and shared it with his disciples saying, “Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over, he also took the cup, gave thanks to God, and shared it with his disciples, saying, “Drink from this, all of you; this is the cup of the new covenant. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

And so we pray, Come Holy Spirit, Breath of God, Renewer of life, settle on these gifts and all who gather here, that we might be transformed in our remembrance of your radical love, your eternal embrace, and your grace that makes all things new. Remember also those whose names are written in this book of remembrance. For the sake of our shared lives and the lives of those yet to come, nourish us and renew our hope that soon Christ may rise again among us.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRESIDER

We have a few COVID related options for those who wish to partake. If you wish to receive from the ministers, take an empty cup from the stack on the aisle table and approach the minister, who will place a piece of bread in your open hand. All bread is gluten free.

Or you may take one of the sealed celebration cups with the wafer on top and juice beneath; hold them out to the minister for a blessing. A minister will pour grape juice into your cup. Eat, drink, and dispose of the cup in the waste baskets at the side aisles as you return to your seat.

If you are unable to come forward, please signal the ministers and we will come to you at your seat. Those who prefer not to partake in Communion are invited to a different kind of divine encounter through an interfaith prayer of blessing. If this is your preference, we invite you to meet the minister at the baptismal font.

Whoever you are and wherever you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here at this table where Christ is the host.

COMMUNION SONG

“BREAD OF THE WORLD”

UMH 624

Going Forth as the Body of Christ

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

PRESIDER

God of water, earth, wind, fire, and spirit, thank you for this nourishment on the journey towards liberation. Lead us to live in ways that work with your loving spirit. Be with us as we move through the world this week. Amen.

*CLOSING SONG

“WHEN THE POOR ONES”

UMH 434

SENDING & POSTLUDE

INSTRUMENTAL

*May our prayers be never ceasing.
May our hope lead to us new beginnings.*

Cover Art: Food for the Hungry, Drink for the Thirsty. <http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=57571>

Call to Worship: By Rev. Delana Taylor

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/native-american-heritage-month-worship-resources>

Poem: George McNeill, "The Poor Man's Burden," American Federationist (March 1899).

Hyperlink: <https://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5475/>

Prayers of the Community: Adapted from <https://www.episcopalct.org/mlk-day-collects-prayers/>

Communion Liturgy: Adapted version of God calls us from <https://enfleshed.com/liturgy/communion-liturgies/>

**The worship planning team creates all other parts of the liturgy except where noted.*

LANCASTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY WORSHIP TEAM

*Equilla Curry, Chynaah Maryoung-Cooke '21, Patricia Hall, Jack Kasander, Cam Richesson '23, Deklan Rupp, Rev. Dr. Kellie Turner '18., and DV Yost.
Rev. Dr. Catherine E. Williams, Advisor*

THE WORSHIP TEAM SEEKS:

To serve the universal church of our Creator.

To minister to the unique and diverse needs of the seminary community.

To foster an expansive culture of worship that values difference and challenges the normative.