

SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

September 4 and 7, 2024

So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" - Mark 7:5



Gathering as the Body of Christ

CENTERING SONG

“GIVE ME A CLEAN HEART”

AAHH 461

GREETING

PRESIDER

*CALL TO WORSHIP

WORSHIP LEADER

Leader: We gather together to worship our awesome God, not just with our lips, but with our whole hearts!

All: We want to bring genuine praise and thanksgiving, our real and honest selves.

Reader: Let our worship reflect the depths of desire for God.

All: We offer ourselves as holy gifts to you, our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. We are an offering to you for your good and faithful desires.

*OPENING HYMN

“LORD, I WANT TO BE A CHRISTIAN”

UMH 402

*CONFESSION & WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Reader: Let us take this time to reveal our hearts to God in confession.

All: God of the sparrow, have mercy upon us. We have fallen short in our care for the world. We have squandered every good gift – depleting the land, poisoning the water, and fouling the air, killing your children and harming your house, beyond our ability to fix or even understand, turning from you and from one another.

We are sorry for our sins against the Earth, for choosing convenience over compassion, whim over wisdom, and self over service. We ask for forgiveness and hope, that we may once again be stewards in your household, true friends to life, and heirs of your transforming love, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

[Pause for 2 breaths to allow silence for personal prayer]

Presider: Know that you are forgiven, good, holy and capable. May God visit you with grace as vast as the mountains and the seas. May Christ fill you with abundant life and wondrous growth.
May the Spirit breath such breath into your lungs that every word and act spills forth new life into the world. And may every injustice be blown away.
Amen.

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

WORSHIP LEADER

You are invited to pass the peace to each other in a way comfortable to you and your neighbor if you're gathered together. If you're online please share this greeting in the chat.

Peace be with you! **And also with you!**

Let us share this peace with one another.

Service of the Word

POEM [SAT. ONLY]

CLEAN UP MY CLUTTERED MIND

BEVERLY JOY

This poem compares a cluttered room to a cluttered mind, reflecting the author's journey to restore equilibrium. Through tackling physical and mental clutter, the poem emphasizes the need to sift through thoughts, retain valuable ones, and embrace clarity. How are we able to declutter the things that are not significant and focus on the things that matters most to God?

Slowly, I open the door and enter the room
The door slams shut behind me
With no glimpse of light, my vision is dim
The air I breathe is heavy with dust.

I tentatively feel my way into the room
I kick something and bruise my shin
I trip and fall to the hard wooden floor
My pride is bruised, I am confused and in pain

I struggle to my feet, I reach out
My fingertips search for something secure
I turn around in circles
Frustrated with this 'waste of time'.

“So much stuff in one room?”
Every inch of space is filled with obstacles
Such a simple task seems out of my control
The darkness is seeping into my emotions.
At last, I touch a wall and feel my way along
I feel a curtain and tug it open.

In streams the light
Floating dust particles
Fill the room crowded with junk,
Outdated furniture and brick-a-brac.

Some broken and worthless
Some valuable
Some in need of T.L.C.
So much disorganized ‘stuff’ and clutter!

So, to my mind is cluttered with ‘stuff’
Thoughts and beliefs
Some of it junk
Some worth keeping
Some are in need of TLC.

If I clear my mind of junky thoughts
Renew past thoughts that are valuable
Replace the junk with new useful thoughts
And place them in an orderly fashion?

Then, I would rip down the curtain of ‘untruth’
And let in the light through the window of my mind
So, I could see things and people as they really are
No more tripping over junk and causing myself pain.
Once my mind was clean, organized, and neat
No more allergic dust to cause my mind to react
My mind shall be my valuable asset
Ever ready to be put to good use.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

STUDENT MINISTER

Please, join me in prayer.

[Pause for 2 deep breaths for centering.]

Holy Wisdom, we ask your Spirit to guide us in meditation on your word, that we might be led more deeply into knowledge of you and love for all your creatures and creations. In Christ we pray – **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READING

MARK 7:1-8,14-15,21-23

NRSV

Reader: A reading from the Gospel of Mark, chapter 7, verses 1 through 8, 14 to 15, and 21 through 23.

Reader: Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.' You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition." Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile." For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

[Pause for 1 deep breath.]

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

SERMON

REV. DR. CATHERINE E. WILLIAMS

Let us pray. Divine Artisan, grant us the awareness and motivation to respect and care for Your diverse creation. You bless all of your creatures as a sign of Your wondrous love. Stir up in us a passion to end the suffering of the poor and bring healing to all that are in need of your restorative touch.

Holy Designer, you have imparted to us the abilities to create. May we use those gifts for good and not for harm. Help us to use our technological inventiveness to undo the damage we have done to Your creation and to sustain Your gift of nature, which is imbued with your fingerprints.

Today, we renew our covenant with You, Good Creator, and with one another in helping to protect this good earth and all that is within it. As followers of Jesus, we commit ourselves anew to one another and to the work of healing injustice and poverty.

All: We have come to stand together against all threats to life. We will remember always that You speak to us through the beauty of Your creation, and we will do our best to answer Your call to nurture and sustain all of Your good gifts. Amen.

Service of the Table

OFFERTORY SONG

INSTRUMENTAL

*THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Reader: The Creator be with you and all creation.

All: And also with you.

Reader: Open your hearts.

All: We open them to our Creator.

Reader: Let us give thanks to our Creator.

All: It is right to join creation in thanking God.

Reader: It is right to give you thanks, loving Creator. Your word is the impulse for all things to be, for space, stars and stardust to appear, for Earth to emerge from the deep, for life to be born of Earth and for humans to be born of Earth and the Spirit. Your presence is the living impulse in all things, the Christ deep among us, filling Earth—land, sea and air; filling every element and place; filling the grain and the grape we share with you this day.

All: Holy, holy, holy, God of all life, Earth and sea and sky and all things that exist are full of your presence and glorify your name. Amen.

Presider: As Jesus ate with his disciples, he took bread, made from the grains of the earth. He blessed and broke it, sharing it with his disciples, saying, “Take, eat. This is my body broken for you.”

After the meal was over, Jesus took the cup, full of wine, made from the fruit of the vine. He shared it with his disciples, saying, “Drink from this cup, all of you. For this represents the new covenant, poured out for you and for all.”

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon these gifts of bread and cup. In them, may we be nourished and strengthened, as we remember Your great love for us as shown in Jesus, our brother.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRESIDER

Come, for all is now ready. If you wish to partake there are options printed in your bulletin. For those joining us online you are welcome to partake now of whatever food and drink you have with you. Those who prefer not to partake in Communion are welcome to use this time for spiritual reflection. We are now united at Christ’s table.

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

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.

COMMUNION SONG

ONE BREAD, ONE BODY

UMC 620

Going Forth as the Body of Christ

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

PRESIDER

Presider: Let us pray

We thank you Jesus, for the meal we have celebrated with you and we pray that through these symbols of your gifts to us that we may be healed and become agents of healing for Earth. Amen.

*CLOSING SONG

“GOODNESS OF GOD” (v 2) BEN FIELDING, BRIAN JOHNSON

*BENEDICTION

SENDING & POSTLUDE

INSTRUMENTAL

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

Cover Art: “Untitled” <https://pixabay.com/photos/hand-mechanic-coffee-break-cup-1370027/> (accessed June 12, 2024).

Call to Worship: (adapted by Cam Richesson, based on Mark 7:6-7)

Confession and Assurance of Pardon: (<https://docalu.wordpress.com/2019/09/23/confession-for-the-season-of-creation/>)

Prayer of Illumination: (adapted from <https://enfleshed.com/liturgy/prayers-for-illumination/>)

Prayers of the Community: (Adapted from: <https://bit.ly/4emAn6K>)

Poem: “Clean Up My Cluttered Mind” Beverley Joy copyright 2010

<https://simplystorypoetry.com/2021/09/24/clean-up-the-clutter-in-the-mind/> (accessed June 12, 2024).

Communion Liturgy: (Adapted from: <https://seasonofcreation.com/worship-resources/liturgies/>, under Climate Change Series, Week One)

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

LANCASTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY WORSHIP TEAM

Mark Achtermann, Sean Carter, Equilla Curry, '24, Jenna Duanko, Chynaah Maryoung-Cooke '21,

Stepahnie Oelrich '24, Cam Richesson '23, Julia Snyder, and Rev. Dr. Kellie Turner '18.

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.