

As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.

May we together experience the presence of God

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We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord

Prelude

Welcome



Announcements/Joys & Concerns

The command to “love your neighbor as yourself” means not only to love them as much as you love yourself, but to love them as if they are yourself. We don’t live according to the flesh, our “self” defined by and confined to our physical bodies, but according to the Spirit: even though we appear in separate bodies we are all one, in one spirit. You and your neighbor are part of the same body. To love our neighbor is to love ourselves.

Today we look at the teaching of Jesus

In Luke 6.27-38 in which Jesus lays out the heart of his message: God loves us perfectly—“God is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked”—and we are to have that same love for others, even for our enemies.

And we extend this teaching by Pauls words to the people of Corinth - through 1 Corinthians 15. 35-50 where he tells of the greatest love God has blessed us with, eternal life. Paul says we are raised in a resurrection body which is different from our biological body. But, as with a seed, the first body must die for the second to come. What we sow does not come to life unless it dies; it is sown in weakness and raised in power.

To live a life of love is the message and the promise is that we will receive the power of love through salvation.

CALL TO WORSHIP

God, you who are love, you create us in love.

We are the body of your love.

Christ, love made flesh, you come to us in grace and healing.

We are your Beloved, blessed and embraced.

Holy Spirit, energy of love, your fire alone in us is our life.

We are bearers of your love to this world.

Fill us with your love, fill us to overflowing,

for the sake of the world, you love. Amen.

OPENING PRAYER

Gracious God, set us free from our desires to be right, to be safe, to be comfortable. With the love of Christ warm in our hearts, we turn to you to receive your Spirit, the spirit of gentleness and mercy, the spirit of courage and generosity. Bless us, that we may be vessels of your love for our neighbors, even for our enemies, in the spirit of Christ. Amen.

*HYMN OF PRAISE, UMH 408 "The Gift of Love"

Author: Hal Hopson

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1. Though I may speak with bravest fire,
And have the gift to all inspire,
And have not love, my words are vain,
As sounding brass, and hopeless gain.

2. Though I may give all I possess,
And striving so my love profess,
But not be given by love within,
The profit soon turns strangely thin.

3. Come, Spirit, come, our hearts
control,
Our spirits long to be made whole.
Let inward love guide every deed;
By this we worship, and are freed.

We Hear God's Word

Gospel Reading..... Luke 6:27-38

New Revised Standard Version

Love for Enemies

27 "But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. 29 If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. 30 Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. 31 Do to others as you would have them do to you.

32 "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you?

For even sinners do the same. 34 If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. 35 But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return.[a] Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Judging Others

37 "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; 38 give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

The Word of God for the People of God, **Thanks be to God!**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

FAITH HYMN W&S #3043 "You, Lord are both Lamb and Shepherd"

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**You, Lord, are both Lamb and Shepherd. You, Lord, are both prince and slave.
You, peacemaker and sword bringer of the way you took and gave.
You, the everlasting instant you, whom we both scorn and crave.**

**Clothed in light upon the mountain, stripped of might upon the cross,
shining in eternal glory, beggar'd by a soldier's toss,
You the ever-lasting instant; you, who are both gift and cost.**

**You, who walk each day beside us, sit in power at God's side.
You, who preach the way that's narrow, have a love that reaches wide.
You, the everlasting instant; you who are our pilgrim guide.**

**Worthy is our earthly Jesus! Worthy is our cosmic Christ!
Worthy your defeat and victory. Worthy still your peace and strife.
You, the everlasting instant; you, who are our death and life.**

"Message"

1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

PASTORAL PRAYER

Holy loving God, we come to your house on this day of worship because we seek to live in your ways. We want to be children of God. We want to walk in the footsteps of Jesus

Christ. We want to be those who you lift up as "good and wonderful servants." But, God, our humanity gets in the way. Our presumption gets in the way. We want all the benefits of the job without any of the work. We want a grace that doesn't call us to accountability in

how we live it out. Holy God, in the midst of our willingness and our weakness, walk with us. Guide us to walk with the footsteps of faithfulness, the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ. Help us to find compassion in our hearts when we'd rather find fault. Help us to love one another when we want to mock and gossip. Help us to find energy to look deeper

when we think we have it all figured out. Gracious God, help us to live into a selfless attitude that reflects your qualities of care and compassion. In other words, God, help us to

be godly in our hearts and godly outward in our actions. In that spirit of care, we lift up the

prayers of our loved ones, the prayers of those we distantly know, and the prayers of those we will never know. We pray for the wellbeing of those we love and those we'd rather not love, in your spirit, God of all. We pray for those in war; we pray for those in peace. Hear our requests, already said aloud and those within our hearts, as we lift our prayers to you.

Fashion us to be your instruments in a world needing your goodness. We pray to be godly as we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us together, in one voice

Departing Hymn UMH #102 "Now Thank We All Our God"

1. Now thank we all our God
with heart and hands and voices,
who wondrous things has done,
in whom his world rejoices;
who from our mothers' arms
has blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.

2 O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us,
to keep us in his grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills
of this world in the next.

3 All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given,
the Son and Spirit blest,
who reign in highest heaven
the one eternal God,
whom heaven and earth adore;
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore.

BENEDICTION

May the Source of life hold you in the faith;
the Word of life speak clearly in truth around you;
and Breath of life, of grace, of wisdom,
sing in your inmost being this day and all your days. Amen.

***POSTLUDE**