

October 1, 2017 – 10:00 am
17th Sunday After Pentecost
ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

Please respond with words in **bold print**.

*Please stand if comfortably able

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE BELLS CALL US INTO SILENT REVERENCE.

THE CANDLES ARE LIT TO LIGHT OUR WAY INTO WORSHIP.

PRELUDE: “Gathered Together”

**Gathered together, loving each other,
singing and praying Lord God, our Father.
Bless us and guide us, teach us, unite us,
these things we ask Lord, Lord, please forgive us.**

**REFRAIN: Holy God, Holy God Father, Spirit, Son,
Holy God, Holy God, three persons all in One;
Prayers and sacrifice, your blood it was the price,
Holy God, Holy God you’re the one for us.**

**Accept our gifts Lord, and our salutations.
In your name, offered from this congregation.
We are all people praying for others;
For our salvation to your heavenly home.**

**REFRAIN: Holy God, Holy God Father, Spirit, Son,
Holy God, Holy God, three persons all in One;
Prayers and sacrifice, your blood it was the price,
Holy God, Holy God you’re the one for us.**

***CALL TO WORSHIP:**

“Come Let Us Worship”

**Come, let us worship, join voices in one accord.
Come, let us worship, come now and worship the Lord.
Sing Alleluia, this is the day God has made.
Lift your hearts with joyful music, giving thanks and praise.**

**Jesus, our Savior, your cross and death set us free.
Now by your Spirit, we can profess and believe.
Here at Your table, your grace and peace is renewed.
Make us, Christ, to love all others in our praise to you.**

*** OPENING PRAYER:** Almighty God, even as the drums of warfare beat on through the night, even as the cries of injustice linger in the morning, even as the hustle of busyness rumbles through the day, quiet our hearts. Still our thoughts. Join us in our worship. Remember us in your mercy as we try to remember you, through the proclamation of your good news, in story and in song, and through the hospitality of your gracious table. Welcome us again, one Lord, Creator, Son, and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

***OPENING HYMN: "Let the Son Shine In"**

**Joyful hope, love of God and smiling faces.
Is the heritage we have as children of God.
Christ is risen to new life, put an end to death and strife.
Now we celebrate as one as children of God.**

**REFRAIN: So let the sun shine in. Share Christ with your neighbor.
And happiness will never leave your heart.
So let the sun shine in, shake hands with your neighbor,
And happiness will never leave your heart.**

**On the job, in your home or at a party,
People wishing all their friends the peace of Christ.
Happy feelings in the air, forget your troubles and your cares,
And join all of those who share the peace of Christ.**

**REFRAIN: So let the sun shine in. Share Christ with your neighbor.
And happiness will never leave your heart.
So let the sun shine in, shake hands with your neighbor,
And happiness will never leave your heart.**

***CALL TO CONFESSION:** Great is the faithfulness of God, and yet our hearts are not so reliable. We wander. We argue. We forget. We divide ourselves with anger and bitterness and falsehood. Let's try to come back together again, and let's start with the truth. Let's confess our sins, to God, and also, to each other.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION:** Almighty God, mother of mercy, father of grace: You have called us to one table, but we have pursued our own course. You have promised us the abundance of all creation, but in our greed, and in our envy, the world goes without. You have promised us the bread of life itself, but in our pride, and in our arrogance, the world goes hungry. You have promised us the waters of peace and justice, but in our violence, and in our discord, the world goes thirsty. And now we are famished, too, Lord. Have mercy on us. Forgive us, again. Transform us, at this table, and for this table, and send us from this table as servants of your righteousness, by the power of your Son, our Lord. Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON:** Even when our cups run dry, God's grace overflows. Even when our plates are empty, God's generosity overflows. And even when our hearts feel barren, God's love overflows. Friends, you have been called and claimed by the God of all things, and by the abundance of God's grace, and by the power of God's love, your sins have been forgiven. Go in peace. Amen.

All: Alleluia! Amen.

***GLORIA: #759**

**Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit,
Three-in-One; As it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.**

EPISTLE READING: Philippians 2:1-13 Lay Liturgist

TIME FOR THE CHILD IN US ALL:

***GOSPEL LESSON:** Matthew 21:23-32 Pastor Rosemary

SERMON:

***HYMN OF RESPONSE: "Wings of a Dove"**

**On the wings of a snow white dove, He sends His pure sweet love.
A sign from above on the wings of a dove.**

**When troubles surround us, when evils come.
The body grows weak, the spirit grows numb.
When these things beset us, God doesn't forget us
God sends down his love on the wings of a dove.**

**On the wings of a snow white dove He sends His pure sweet love.
A sign from above on the wings of a dove.**

**When Noah had drifted on the flood many days
He searched for land in various ways.
Troubles, he had some, but wasn't forgotten.
He sent own his love on the wings of a dove.**

**On the wings of a snow white dove He sends His pure sweet love.
A sign from above on the wings of a dove.**

PASTORAL PRAYER: ending with the Lord's Prayer.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed it be your name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO OFFERING: We approach the table today but we don't approach it alone. We approach it on this World Communion Sunday with Christians around the world, in congregations large and small, speaking every language and one language. And so part of our approach this morning is to remember in our offering our connection to the work of the church in every corner of God's creation.

OFFERTORY: “We Offer Bread and Wine”

**We offer bread and wine to show our love for you.
We share this sacred meal because you want us to.**

**REFRAIN: Lord, accept us as we are,
for we come from near and far, to worship through your Son.
Children of a sinful race, who do seem so out of place,
But worshipping as one.**

**Our work and joy and pain, we also offer you.
Accept our humble gifts, because we want you to.**

**REFRAIN: Lord, accept us as we are,
for we come from near and far, to worship through your Son.
Children of a sinful race, who do seem so out of place,
But worshipping as one.**

**We realize we’re poor, but we offer what we can.
Accept our change of heart, accept our open hand.**

**REFRAIN: Lord, accept us as we are,
for we come from near and far, to worship through your Son.
Children of a sinful race, who do seem so out of place,
But worshipping as one.**

**Now as we celebrate this sacrament of love,
You give yourself to us a gift from up above.**

**REFRAIN: Lord, accept us as we are,
for we come from near and far, to worship through your Son.
Children of a sinful race, who do seem so out of place,
But worshipping as one.**

HOLY COMMUNION: (Written by Rev. Jordan Rimmer)

It began last night- as we were going to bed—World communion Sunday.

Asian Christians shared the bread and the wine. Churches in China met in secret so that they would not be arrested. Christians in the Middle East, some of whom were saved only by having dreams of Jesus, met under the watchful eye of the government as they celebrated the Eucharist. In Europe, Christians gathered in churches that used to be much fuller and celebrated the Lord’s Supper. In African the sacrament was celebrated in great numbers by a growing number of Christians, many of whom bare scars of persecution as they Commune together.

Those celebrating today include the United Church of Christ, Presbyterians, Methodists, Catholics, Lutherans, Pentecostals, Baptists, thousands of other denominations, and even those without denominations.

Christ followers met both in public and in secret. Some met in freedom while others gathered under threat of persecution and death. Some take the sacrament today with organ music, others with simple singing, and still others in quiet so as not to be arrested.

In wealthy churches and in desperate poverty the sacrament is observed. In churches, homes, huts, and in God's creation this seal of the covenant was experienced. The bread is given to people that could overeat all day and to people who had no idea what they would eat or where they would get it today.

The one thing in common- We all come to the same table of our Lord.

In many different languages, by ordained clergy and volunteer pastors, something like these words of institution were given.

On the night He was betrayed Jesus took bread. And when he had given thanks and blessed it, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying, "This is my body, broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way after supper Jesus took the cup and gave it to His disciples, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Drink you all of it."

The bread is many different types and colors and from many places. Some created primarily from wheat, others from rice or other kinds of grain. Some will have bread left over. Some with very small pieces that could barely give every Christian there a morsel. Still- it represented the body of Christ broken and sustained the body of Christ around the world today.

(Break Bread)

The juice around the world will be different. For many it will be wine, some will have juice, some will celebrate with water that had to be carried from a dirty well some miles away. Some will use individual cups, others fancy goblets, still others have been passing around whatever cup was in the home where they were meeting Still- it represented the blood of the covenant in their place and in their communities, just as it does in ours.

(Pour Cup)

Let us pray, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we thank you for this sacrament of communion shared with Christians around the world. Pour out your Holy Spirit on these elements and on those who partake—that we may be your body and the representation of your covenant in our lives and throughout the world. Amen.

SHARING THE ELEMENTS: Communion Music – Sharon Banjavcic

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:**

Gracious God, we offer our thanks, for the whole communion of saint’s witness to this feast, and for the ministry of churches around the world who gather with us today. By this broken bread may we each be restored for the work yet to come. By this shared cup may we each be claimed for the proclamation of your Kingdom. At this shared table may we be united as children of your promise, children of your word, dying and made new again, sent boldly together into the world as servants of your peace. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN: “Let Us Sing”**

Let us sing, let us sing, let us sing to Christ our King.
Sing to Christ our King as we thank Him for this day.
God is good, God is kind, God will give us peace of mind,
Give us peace of mind if we follow His ways.

There are no strings upon His love,
and He asks only your love in return.
God is good, God is kind, God will give us peace of mind,
Give us peace of mind if we follow His ways.

***BENEDICTION:** You were called to this table. You were fed at this table. You were united at this table. Now, you are sent from this table into all the world. Go therefore into the world, with courage. Set a place for all who hunger. Fill the cup of all who thirst. And as you go, May the Spirit of power and love attend you, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ uphold you, and may the great faithfulness of our God sustain you, now and forever. **Amen.**

***POSTLUDE:**

We thank the Polka Connection for sharing their music with us this morning as we celebrate communion with people around the world. The Polka Connection band was formed in 1989. They play at local events including Spaßfest in Germantown IL, the Polishfest in DuBois IL and St Ann's Catholic Church for their fall picnic Dance and Polka Mass.