

Called Together in Unity: One Body

Desert Southwest Conference of The United Methodist Church

WE GATHER TOGETHER

We gather as the body of Christ through music, prayer, and praise for our Creator.

Gathering Music

Greeting

You are invited to stand, as you feel comfortable doing so, and sign our opening hymn, "O For A Thousand Tongues to Sing."

*Opening Hymn "O For A Thousand Tongues to Sing" (vv.1-5, 7) UMH #57

1: O for a thousand tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories of my God and King,
the triumphs of his grace!

4: He breaks the power of canceled sin,
he sets the prisoner free;
his blood can make the foulest clean;
his blood availed for me.

2: My gracious Master and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
to spread through all the earth abroad
the honors of thy name.

5: He speaks, and listening to his voice,
new life the dead receive;
the mournful, broken hearts rejoice
the humble poor believe.

3: Jesus! the name that charms our fears,
that bids our sorrows cease;
'tis music in the sinner's ears,
'tis life, and health, and peace.

7: In Christ, your head, you then shall know,
shall feel your sins forgiven;
anticipate your heaven below,
and own that love is heaven.

*Opening Prayer

Will you please join me in the responsive Opening Prayer on the screen:

God of this world,
we call out for your presence
as if it were in a distant place,
yet you are here.

**Ground us at the center of all things,
that we might find You.**

God with us,
we call out for your presence
in our loneliness and the despairs of this world,
yet you are with us.

**Ground us to the holiness and humility of the dust,
that we might experience life with You.**

God in our neighbors,
we call out for your presence—
our voices carrying past those who are right in front us—
yet your image looks back at us
in the eyes of our neighbors.

**Ground us to life around us,
that we might share in the interdependence of all creation.**

In our search for healing and
in our quest for relationship,
we must recognize, understand, and confess, our own responsibility
in fostering division instead of unity,
in spreading hatred instead of love,
in inflicting wounds instead of grace.
We confess our reliance on labels
to define who we are in distinction of others—
liberal, conservative,
black, white,
gay, straight,
slave, free,
right, wrong,
citizen, immigrant,
same, other.

We confess the spiritual and sometimes physical violence
that we, the church, have knowingly and unknowingly inflicted upon
our LGBTQIA siblings
our Native American and Indigenous siblings around the world,
our African-American siblings and those on the continent of Africa,
our Hispanic and Latino siblings,
our Asian and Asian-American siblings; and
all those of whom we are afraid,
whom we consider as other.
We confess all we have done—
in thought, word, and deed—
that has wounded and harmed others,
sacrificing the unity in which you have created all life to live.

Tear down these walls that divide us.
Rip away the labels we use to define your creation
as anything other than what you have beautifully made.
Banish the violence of our thoughts, words, and deeds,
which puts faith in our fears rather than your enduring grace.
Free us from the temptations of evil, injustice, and oppression.
Heal us from the fractures of distracting doubts and constricting memories.
Reconcile us, once again, with your tender mercy.
Open our eyes and hearts to your reality for us...
We need one another.

O God, hear our prayer as we unite in one voice

**When we see those who are afraid,
may we be ones who offer courage.
When we see those who are weak,
may we be ones who offer strength.
When we see those who are afflicted,
may we be ones who hold space for them.
When we see those who are lost,
may we be ones who offer hope.
When we see those who are alone,
may we be ones who move to their side.**

We need one another.

**In our brokenness,
in our disunity,
we need you and
we need one another.**

**Breathe upon us the healing grace of your Holy Spirit,
that we may receive the mercy of your love for all creation and
share with one another a love that rebuilds and unites us.
Amen.**

WE RESPOND AND GIVE THANKS

We gather to give thanks for God's creative and active presence in the world.

Holy Communion

In our Desert Southwest Conference Covenant we affirm that we gather around the table, acknowledging God's unbounded grace for all. We come from different backgrounds, cultures, and ethnicities, and we acknowledge our differences of opinion and perspectives on many matters. Yet we gather still, knowing that Jesus calls us to break bread and share the cup no matter what and that each of us has a place here. Let us join together in the Great Thanksgiving:

The Holy One be with you

And also with you

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to the One who guides our life together.

It is our joy to offer gratitude and praise.

God, you never promised us that way would be clear. You have, however, created us in your image - the image of One who is Wisdom, who is Love, who is Courage. You breathed your life into us with the assurance that we have, within and around us, everything we need to be your faithful people. Though we sometimes act in disregard for your call on our collective life, still you show up with and for us, relentlessly. And so we join with all the saints who have gone before in gratitude for your abiding presence:

**Holy, holy, holy One, God of power and presence
all that is, is full of your glory
Blessed is the One who comes in the name of Love**

Sacred is your presence and blessed is Christ with us.

Through the life of Jesus we saw an example of what it means to navigate an uncertain path, practice creative ministry, and face with courage and compassion all the barriers that work against your Spirit on the move.

Jesus lived and breathed a ministry rooted in your Love for all people. He prioritized the lives of those who are suffering and showed us what it looks like to be with and for one another, even under great distress. Though evil attempted to silence his proclamation of an all inclusive Kingdom of God, not even death could keep Love from growing.

On the night in which he was arrested, he gathered among friends for a meal.

He took bread, gave thanks to you, 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 took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "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, in remembrance of Christ with us, and in the assurance of your Love persistent, we offer our lives, our ministries, and our church in the service of your healing work as we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died; Christ has risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Spirit on this community and these gifts. Make them a foretaste of your Kingdom through Christ with us, that we might leave the Table both nourished by your Love and still hungry for justice for all your people.

Invitation to the table

Instrumental music to be played at each site while people are coming forward to receive Communion.

Prayer after Communion (The Lord's Prayer)

Let us join our voices together in thanksgiving for these gifts of God's grace through the words Jesus taught us to pray:

**Our Father who art in heaven
hallowed be thy 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 trespasses**

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

**And lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

You are invited to stand, as you feel comfortable doing so, and join in singing our closing hymn.

WE ARE SENT ONWARD

We gather to be sent into the world in ministry with God's blessing.

*Hymn

"We All Are One in Mission"

UMH #2243

Sung to the tune of "The Church's One Foundation"

1: We all are one in mission, we all are one in call,
our varied gifts united by Christ, the Lord of all.
A single, great commission compels us from above
to plan and work together that all may know Christ's love.

2: We all are called for service to witness in God's name.
Our ministries are different, our purpose is the same:
to touch the lives of others by God's surprising grace,
so every folk and nation may feel God's warm embrace.

3: Now let us be united and let our song be heard.
Now let us be a vessel for God's redeeming Word.
We all are one in mission, we all are one in call,
our varied gifts united by Christ, the Lord of all.

***Commissioning Prayer**

Please join me in offering the Prayer of St. Francis as our closing prayer with one another:

**Lord make me an instrument of your peace
Where there is hatred let me sow love
Where there is injury, pardon
Where there is doubt, faith
Where there is despair, hope
Where there is darkness, light
And where there is sadness, joy**

**O divine master grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.**

***Blessing**

***Sharing the Peace of Christ**

Today we have gathered through the power of Christ's peace and we close this time of worship by sharing that peace with one another through our fellowship together:
May the peace of Christ be with you now and always.
And also with you.

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

O For A Thousand Tongues to Sing
United Methodist Hymnal #57
Words: Charles Wesley, 1739
Music: Carl G. Glaser
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Opening Prayer
Written by Rev. Jessica Goad

O God, Our Help in Ages Past
United Methodist Hymnal #117
Words: Isaac Watts, 1719
Music: William Croft, 1708
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Prayer for Wholeness and Unity
Co-written by Rev. Mary Klaehn and Rev. Jessica Goad

Liturgy for Holy Communion
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