

One Bread, One Body

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Preacher: Pastor Cathy Hall Stengel

[0 : 00] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[2 : 30] Good morning. It's so good to hear how happy everyone is to be together. I just want you to know we decorated for you.

You know, it's not very many people that get this kind of party rolled out for them. Having said that, no, we didn't exactly decorate for you.

This is the work of our youth and young adults who have turned the entire church into a knight's castle.

And I put our thing in front of Sparky. Sparky usually lives up on the communion table. And that's the puppet who doesn't breathe real fire.

He might get you cold, right? Am I right, you guys? Get you a little frosty, but no fire. It's an incredible ministry. And we are doing it two weeks this year because of the COVID restrictions that deal with specifically children and youth.

[3 : 30] So half one week and half the other week. And it's just incredible. If any of you want to dress for the occasion, let's see.

Monday, it's patriotic. Tuesday, Disney. Wednesday, wild animals? No. Safari? Thursday?

What's Thursday? Hawaiian. And Friday? Oh, you wear the color of your family, which are the tents out there.

And if anybody wants to come and buy a hot dog and chips and a drink for lunch on Thursday, come by around 1230, right? Help us, too.

That's another way that we can raise money because it costs us a lot of money to put on Vacation Bible School. And that's why there's a special envelope in your bulletin.

[4 : 24] And there's some. If you didn't get one in your bulletin, you can find one back there in some of the other bulletins or get one from your neighbor. So it's a great and wonderful thing.

And we are, this week, we have been moving our way around this heart from dreaming, looking for God's plan, soul searching.

What should I do? Where should I go? Taking a risk of actually doing it. Listening to God. Listening to how the Holy Spirit guides us. And today, one body, many parts.

And so I would like to share with you this video about one body, many parts. One hundred years. Agnes Calati of Hungary for the wonderful display of skill.

A life. An Olympian. And in her century, what did Agnes see? Agnes saw a light.

- [5 : 26] A light that helped illuminate the entire world. She saw the grandson of slaves. Get you. Just made history. Redefine freedom.
- She saw the mother of two. They call her the flying housewife too, Roka. Prove that anyone can fly. The fanny's laughing now. And she saw a man with no shoes.
- Stevie Michaela with a new world record. Teach the world how to run. She saw generation after generation stand in that light.
- And watch their differences disappear like shadows in the noonday sun. And now, she sees a new generation.
- Sky Brown. One of the youngest Olympians of all time. Full of hope. Running towards their century. A generation who sees the same light Agnes saw.
- [6 : 37] A generation who knows. Together, we're stronger than the darkness can ever be.
- The light.
- The light of Christ. The light of the world. And when we imagine that something like the Olympics brings medals to more countries than ever before.
- Broken hearts like we have not experienced at other times. And yet, rising up in the midst of all that is broken after this past couple of years.
- And living in love and hope and kindness. And so it is that we are called. One body. Many parts.
- [7 : 40] The light of the world is Jesus Christ. Let us pray. Lord, bind us. Gather us. Teach us.
- Help us. To see one another as brilliant pieces of light. And to see ourselves together. As shining.
- Brighter than ever before. In Jesus' name we pray and serve. Amen. Our first hymn celebrates that unity.
- And there's a line in this song that says we are one body in this one Lord. So I invite you to stand as we sing One Bread, One Body. Thank you. Thank you. One Bread, One Body One Lord of All One cup of blessing which we bless And we, though many, Throughout the earth We are one body in this one Lord
- Gentile or Jew Servant or free Servant or free Woman or man no more One bread, one body One Lord of all One cup of blessing which we bless And we, though many, Throughout the earth We are one body in this one Lord Many of the gifts
- [10 : 36] Many of the gifts Many of the gifts Many of the works One in the Lord of all One in the Lord of all One bread, one body, one Lord of all.
- One cup of blessing which we bless. And we, the many, throughout the earth, we are one body in this one, Lord.
- You may be seated. We come together in this space to honor God with the words that come out of our mouths, what our hands and our feet do, where we serve, and what we offer from all parts of our lives.
- We call that in the United Methodist Church. Your gifts, your talents, your time, your service, and your mission. This church, as it looks right now, is an example of living the mission.
- We are each and all a part of that. And gathering our gifts, whether it's the financial gifts that support the church, or the volunteer gifts that support the church.
- [12 : 30] We give because we have been given life. Amen. Take care.
- Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
- Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[14 : 52] Thank you.

Thank you. Oh, wondrous gods, with our hands accepting what you give and giving what we are so blessed with, with our arms reached out to those who have not love, nor home, nor faith, nor place at the table they believe.

We work to gather them in with feet that run the race you have set before us, sometimes stumbling and falling, but getting up and finding our way each time.

Receive these and all the gifts that we bring to you, the Lord of the universe, the God of creation, and the Savior of all.

Amen. You may be seated. Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. So we have some blessings today.

[16 : 56] Today, Grace, Tyler's girlfriend, came home from the hospital. So she still has a long way to go, but we are so excited and continue to keep her in our prayers. Our college students, some of them are going back to school this week.

Some of them are going for the first time. So we ask that you continue to keep them in your prayers this week. Bill Murray passed away last week, and his service will be at 11 a.m. on Saturday here at the church.

And then we have a young child, Natalie, who is in ICU. She has some respiratory issues, so we'd like to keep her in our prayers also. So will you join your hearts with mine and pray, please?

Oh God, our creator, we are in awe of your imagination. You reveal yourself to us in the sunshine, the rain, the turning leaves, and the mountains.

But most of all, you show your creativity in the variety of people that you created, and you show love. We thank you for your ongoing creation and the splendor and promises of each new day, for the hope of each new thing that you create in our midst, and the grace for which you created us anew when we feel tired and sometimes old.

[18 : 25] We marvel at the mercy by which you, who sent galaxies whirling in the heavens. You still come. You still listen to our cares.

You care about our struggles, our uncertainties. Our hearts are full as we come to you today. We ask that you watch over those that we've named aloud, or those that are in our hearts.

We ask especially that you look over our youth and watch over them this week, as our second week of Vacation Bible School starts. Help the leaders show the youth your mercy, your power, and your greatness.

In your name we pray. Amen. Good morning.

Today's scripture comes from 1 Corinthians 12, verses 12-19. 1 Corinthians 12, verses 12-19.

[20 : 29] 1 Corinthians 12, verses 12-19.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God. Thank you, Bill. This may be one of those examples where sometimes we're trying to do the best thing, but we might bump it.

This particular scripture passage is something that probably many, if not all of you have heard preached on before. Am I right? You know, the one body, many parts, and how important all the different parts are, not just the whole thing.

So I want to start by saying if you were to read 1 Corinthians, which is a letter from Paul to the people at Corinth, you would discover that he's a little finger-pointing and teaching, because this was a church that he helped to create, the church at Corinth.

[22 : 28] He taught them. He helped them to find leaders. He helped them to understand what it meant to be a community of faith. He helped them to dream, do the soul-searching, take the risk of making it happen, listen, maybe, for what God was teaching them.

And now he's in this particular chapter talking about one body, many parts. Why? Because the church at Corinth, most importantly for some of this, he left.

He went on to his next missionary part of his journey, because he trusted that everything was in place. And when he left, well, things began to fall apart.

And the church at Corinth began to act in ways that maybe they shouldn't. They started acting like instead of following Jesus, they were going to follow Paul.

But Paul wasn't Jesus. They thought maybe they'd follow Apollos. But Apollos was a Christian, but not Jesus. Or maybe Peter, also a Christian, but not Jesus.

[23 : 44] Now, there's nothing wrong with following those people unless you put them in the place where Jesus is supposed to be. And if you look in just the chapter before this, in chapter 11, you read how they kind of twisted the Lord's table into something different, unrecognizable from what we would be thinking.

So, I want us to give that some thought. And I want to tell you the brief version of a story colleagues told me about a factory where he worked.

He was working in a salmon canning factory in Valdez, Alaska. And in order to make this happen, the previous year they created the building, the infrastructure, the power, the water, the lights, all of that kind of stuff.

But now, it was time to actually bring all the equipment in and make it work. So that 225 cans a minute of canned salmon could be created and out into the delivery, shipping, packing.

So, in Chicago, they did the dreaming. And in Chicago, they did the soul searching. What is this going to look like?

[25 : 19] And how are we going to get it to work on the ground? The risk was that they took all their plans and went to Alaska and started putting it into place.

All the things that you need. And if you've ever been inside of a factory, you know it's a lot. And every piece depends on the one before it. So, they started the first set of cans down through the equipment.

They got to a certain place and they all, like, flew up into the air and everything was chaos. So, they made some revisions. They tried it again.

Same thing, same place. So, they spent days trying to figure out. They got the people from Chicago and the people in Alaska talking and figuring. All right.

So, then it worked. But all the cans were dented. So, finally, they got it done and they got the cans running at their 225 a minute.

[26 : 21] And there we go with canned salmon. Because there were bumps in this path, it didn't for a minute mean that there was somebody in the creation, in the dreaming, in the soul searching, in the risking, and even in the listening, that didn't know what they were doing.

It wasn't. We had smart people probably all along the way. The difference is, is that what is an idea in Chicago is different than flipping the switch and making it all work.

Does that make sense? Now, if we want to look at that from our personal perspectives, if you live in family or you have family but you don't live together or maybe you used to, if you work in a place of business or you used to, or if you just know yourself, when things go wrong, when there's a kabam and the cans are flying all over, how is it that we sometimes respond?

Does everybody in here know how they respond when something that they're involved with goes wrong? Like, we have the panickers.

We have the, you're bad, you've got to get it right. We have the looking around to see what happened and why it happened and whose fault it was.

[27 : 53] We have the, okay, everybody, let's have a huddle and we'll figure this out. Parents know what this feels like when our children go too close to danger.

Grandparents, you multiply it times 10 if you're watching your grandchild and they go towards danger because now you're responsible for not only is it your child but your child's child and you know nothing can happen on grandma or grandpa's watch.

We sometimes, though, when, let's say, our child, not that I would be speaking of one of my own, driving on, here's the road, here's the little piece of pavement, here's the grass, here's the sidewalk.

He's riding his bike on that little slip of cement. So, he slips, he goes into the road, we're in the house, we hear screeching of brakes and, of course, we run outside to see what happens and there's a two-fold reaction.

There's the, get yourself over here, what were you doing? The panic, which comes from where? The panicky feeling that maybe they wouldn't have been okay.

[29 : 20] Maybe we might have seen, instead of just the bike laying in the street, we might have seen our child laying in the street. And that sense of, I'm mad at you because I'm so afraid you're going to get hurt.

Does that sound familiar to people, that sometimes we get a little bit of angry when kids, not because we're actually angry at them, they're being kids, but our worry and our pain sometimes comes out in that way, like we're looking at them, you know better.

But in the heart of hearts, we're saying, oh, gosh, thank God he didn't get hit by a car. We, they say in developmental psychology, when we hit bumps, like if we're the person at the place in the canning line where they start to jump off, we jump into fight or flight, we jump into our least mature self.

It's been proven that when we get into conflict, trouble, chaos, crisis, you name it, we sometimes begin to be the youngest part of ourselves.

So the mature part of ourselves that says, okay, the cans are jumping off. I think it's time to figure out what's going on here. Hey, guys, like could we all gather around?

[30 : 51] Let's see. What do you think? What's going on here? Sometimes the person who's standing at that place in the canning line might be like, you, this was your fault.

This is your fault. That's not the mature response. The mature response is to figure out how do we come up with a solution.

And this is true in our personal lives and in our journey. And it's true in this place where we are one body, many parts. Whether that one body looks like your family or your workplace, looks like a congregation, looks like this community of faith that we serve in so many different ways.

The way that Paul intended for the church at Corinth to move forward was to move forward as followers, not of this person, this person, this person, this person, but just one person, Jesus.

He taught them to follow the rules that Jesus had left. The primary one being love the Lord your God with all your heart, your soul, your strength, your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.

[32 : 11] And so in this one body, many parts, he did not intend for them to divide up and pick up arms and start arguing and fighting with one another.

But people back when the church was being built, they're human beings. You've probably seen it in workplaces, in school, in government, all kinds of things.

There's always a way to respond where we can pause and not say the first thing that comes to our mind. Take a breath.

But remember, you know, there wasn't anything wrong with those bracelets that said, what would Jesus do? So when panic, when fear, when stress ends up in your place of life, of work, of faith, no matter where you find yourself, there will be upset.

Because just as with the body of Christ, if we're going to follow God's dream, if we're going to respond to the call of God on our lives and dream and search, what is the path you would have for me, and take a risk to try it and listen to God and hope we hear what God says, I'll tell you, we're going to stumble around a bit.

[33 : 49] If you're going to choose to hike a steep path that has sandy and rocky soil, I can almost guarantee there'll be a place where your foot will begin to reach for solid ground and maybe slip a little bit.

Sometimes it's not going up, but my experience in the Rocky Mountains was it was coming down. When you're tired and your feet are kind of not as sturdy and strong as they were going up because you went up.

You come down and it's gravelly and your foot starts to slip and your whole body, not just one part of you, your whole body looks, feels, moves, transition to find the solid ground.

To get back to safety. So you have your foot, your legs, your hips, your arms, and your eyes, and so much more. Get to safety so that you don't fall.

Sometimes when you're going up a steep hill, the best thing is, if you're a skier or a snowboarder, sometimes the best thing is to sit your butt in the snow or on your snowboard and slide as opposed to falling or running into a tree.

[35 : 06] This faith that we have, not one of us knows it all, does it all perfectly, has all the answers.

It is when we are bound together in one Lord, one God, one Spirit, that we are most true to ourselves.

Sometimes stumbling, sometimes awkward, because when you're trying to follow all of that, I don't know about you, but it might take you in a different path than you were thinking, and sometimes we stumble around.

Sometimes we don't get it all right. You know, we sometimes misinterpret some of the things that we think we hear or we think we know.

And, you know, as you may know or not know, we're going through some transitions with our choir and our accompanist for the choir.

[36 : 15] And some people think they hear, well, if, oh, then we're not going to have a choir. We're just going to have all band music. That's not where we are.

We're just praying for the right people to come and we will be looking and finding people to come and accompany the choir and take on the next role, the next step of ministry with the choir.

It's not gone. So let's not think that it's not important. It's just not yet. So sometimes our walk in faith, your walk in faith, we might, as this part, we may hear something over here like the fact that after many years of sacrificial service, Sue Mayer and Kelly are stepping away from the choir.

Not for a bad reason. God's calling them to something next. So, but if people kind of round about wonder, well, where's the church going? What are we doing?

What's going to happen? It's the whole body that says, we're working on it. Pray with us.

[37 : 32] Look with us. And I use that as an example partly because you just heard it from my lips to your ears that this is important. The ministries of the church are important.

But sometimes they have to be paused until we figure out what the next step is. It's a stumbling place and it's not because we're not being faithful.

It's because we're adapting as we dream and search and risk and listen and remember that we're all different but we're a part of one body.

You can take that to any part of your life and be reminded it is about me and it's not about me.

When I was raising teenagers and they were in a youth group, one of the parents in the youth group taught us because she did this with her kids, what that meant was, oh wait, did I tell you the world doesn't revolve around you?

[38 : 43] And so all she had to do when they were like, now it didn't mean they liked it because it's not as though what they wanted or thought they needed wasn't important.

you know, when you have one child in your family that wants to go to an expensive school and have his parents pay through the whole thing when there's no job and no participation, no work, no shared money, you've got two more siblings who haven't gone to college yet.

I didn't mention that I have three children, did I? So our Christianity and our faith journey are much like what Paul was trying to help the Corinthians with.

we sometimes hear something but we hear it and we're not always sure where does that come from? So in community we discover, wait, is that from God or is that from Apollos?

Is this what Jesus would have us do and is this about Jesus or is this about Paul, the teacher, the apostle, but not Jesus?

[40 : 11] Is this what the swirling, who knows what's going to happen next life that we have in this country, in our town, in all that's happening?

But where is Jesus? Where is the one body, many parts? that's what the church is for.

That's where we come to check out what we think God is guiding us to. This is where we come to give our ideas and be willing to wrestle with them, whether it's the older youth wrestling together about what to do with younger youth, whether it's the teachers and the children, whether it's the parents, whether it's the music ministry, this is where we come to figure out, are we listening?

In my personal life, is it Jesus I'm listening to or could it possibly be what's comfortable or what I want because maybe there's less conflict or maybe it's easier.

I've never really been known to take the easy road, but it doesn't mean that I haven't stumbled around and made mistakes or stumbled around and been supported and lifted up by people like you, people of faith, who say, we're in this together and we'll help everybody as best we can find the Jesus that we all hope and pray we follow.

[41 : 57] it's not easy. But if together we bring our dreams, we bring the answers, what we think are the answers to our soul searching, we take the risk of being vulnerable and we listen to God.

We listen to our faith community. We listen to our friends. We listen to ourselves when we find the space and then we remember we're in this together.

As followers of Christ, we're in this together with people all around this world that God gave us and we are different. God knows we're different. But the hope and the prayer is that we follow the teachings, one body, many parts.

and that's why we come to this table week after week after week because we stumble. We get lost in the dark. We fall down. We forget why we're here and what we're doing.

We lose our way. We lose our friends. We lose the place that we belong. Whatever it might be in any one of your lives, we all do it.

[43 : 16] but through the Holy Spirit, through the Holy Spirit, through the music that swells with us, through the prayers that hold us and lift us, through the people that work throughout all of this space and out in our communities, we discover I am not alone.

You are not alone. We are but parts of one body. So may we find hope and comfort and guidance in that because on the days when you've got nothing, in the days when you're trying to listen to what God has to say and you don't hear anything, come along next to someone else and maybe they'll hear with you.

That's the way God created us. So Paul wrote to the people in Corinth and he asked them to remember. Remember who you are.

Remember what I taught you. Remember that you are not like popcorn following anything shiny that comes along. You are followers of one God, one Savior, and one Holy Spirit.

and when you can't find it, go back to where you started. The place when you first believed that there even is a God at all.

[44 : 52] May it be so with us. May we be reminded that we are the hands and feet of Christ, the mouth, the ears of Christ with one another, and sometimes even may we be the heart of Jesus for ourselves.

Reminding us you are forgiven, you are known, you are loved, you are held, you will be guided, you can rest when you need it.

We'll listen together for the word of God. One body and many parts. One body is indeed a gift to remember that we are part of one larger body.

As you just heard Pastor Kathy explain where we sometimes forget, we can come together and be one at the table with the Lord. And so let's ready our hearts as we prepare to receive his gift this morning.

One of the most courageous things, one of the most creative things that Jesus did in his ministry was to draw people together around a table for a meal.

[46 : 35] His actions were not what people were expecting and they were not what they were used to. Perhaps he sensed that when we are being filled by the meal itself, we're able to come together as one in that shared piece of satisfaction.

It's a good model for us to remember how to reach out to our neighbors and perhaps share one table with them.

So we come to be reminded of this radical, hospitable, creative Jesus that we follow. And we follow his example welcoming all who are hungry for God's love, for fellowship, for connection, for inspiration, and for everlasting life in Christ.

The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

It is right to hear our thanks and praise. God set in motion the grandest creativity project of all. Light where there was no light, water, and land, creatures on foot and on wing, beauty and laughter, and God called it good.

[48 : 08] Out of that goodness we came, each blessed with the gifts of the Creator. We're invited to begin lives of creating, making, building, fashioning, planting, crafting, crafting.

But sometimes we forget. We destroy instead of building up. But you, God, keep rebuilding our lives, calling us again and again into the joy of relationship with you.

and so we proclaim our praise with the saints of all time and place, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Christ. Your creativity knows no bounds and in the fullness of time you came to us fashioned in our own flesh and blood.

In Jesus you created human and holy connection and showed us what love looks like in public, preaching good news to the poor, proclaiming release to the captive, recovering sight to the blind, and setting at liberty those who are oppressed.

[49 : 40] Jesus promised to continue this work through a new covenant of creativity, sending his spirit to remain in and move through us.

And on the night in which he gave himself up for us, Jesus took bread, he gave thanks to you, he broke the bread, and he gave it to his disciples and he said, take and eat, for this is my body which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me. When the supper was over, he took the cup, he gave thanks to you, and he gave it to his disciples, and he said, take and drink from this, all of you.

This is my blood, sign of the new covenant which is poured out for the forgiveness of sin for you and for many. Every time you drink this, do it in remembrance of me.

And so, what will we do? We will proclaim the mystery of faith. Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

[50 : 59] Pour out your spirit on us in this moment so that we might know your presence and power in our lives. Make us one so that we can be used to create your reign on earth as it is in heaven.

Let this bread and the fruit of the vine fill us with your spirit for the work and play of loving creation and one another more fully. And now, with the confidence of children of God, let's pray together the prayer that 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 and the power and the glory forever. Amen. for thine is the kingdom of heaven.

[52 : 49] Would those who are serving this morning please come forward. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

The table is set and God's great gift is here for you. Please understand that it is indeed a gift. It is one of the manifestations of God's grace in your life.

So as you come to the table be prepared to receive. The table is open. There are no special requirements and if you do not feel worthy understand it has nothing to do with your worth.

It has to do with who our Lord is. So when you come to the front make sure that you receive. If you would prefer one of the prepackaged sets make sure that you ask one of the servers and they will give it to you.

[55 : 14] Come as the spirit moves and receive God's gift. When you are operating... ..
... Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[57 : 29] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[59 : 59] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[64 : 09] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.