

Better Together

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Preacher: Pastor Cathy Hall Stengel

[0 : 0 0] Satsang with Mooji Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[3 : 0 0] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. I'd like to invite you all to stand if you're able for the song, Mighty to Save.

Everyone needs compassion Love that's never failing Let mercy fall on me Everyone needs forgiveness The kindness of a Savior The hope of nations Savior, we can't live from mountains My God is mighty to save He is mighty to save

[5 : 4 7] Forever, author of salvation He grows and conquered the grave Jesus, conquered the grave Take me as you find me All my fears and failures Fill my life again Live my life to follow Everything I believe in Now I surrender Now I surrender I surrender Savior, we can't live from mountains My God is mighty to save

He is mighty to save Forever, author of salvation He grows and conquered the grave Jesus, conquered the grave Jesus, conquered the grave Shine your light and let the whole world see We're singing for the glory of the risen King Jesus, shine your light and let the whole world see He's mercy on me For the glory of the risen King Savior, Savior, we can't live from mountains My God is mighty to save He is mighty to save Forever, author of salvation He grows and conquered the grave

Jesus, conquered the grave Jesus, conquered the grave Jesus, conquered the grave Jesus, conquered the grave Jesus, conquered the grave Jesus, conquered the grave Jesus, conquered the grave Jesus, conquered the grave Amen. Please be seated.

Amen. It is a time of Thanksgiving in so many different ways.

How many found out if their heat works this weekend? Kind of an important thing. I want to share a great gift of Thanksgiving. Tim and Jean Prendergast, they write this.

[9 : 2 5] Tim and I have a blessing. We have a new grandson. John, who will be called Jack, Mark Prendergast, born September 22nd to John and Melissa Prendergast, and he was born at home, and everyone's doing great.

Thanks be to God. We just rejoice with them, and we certainly celebrate and rejoice with all that is going on in your world that you give thanks for.

I often want to be reminded that to wake up and take a breath is enough to give thanks to God for life yet again another day.

We have a mission moment for something that you might find. Well, why would the church be involved with that?

But as you can see, feeding the homeless. Can you imagine? Would that be controversial in a church? No. That's something we are all called to be a part of, and Scripture tells us.

[10 : 28] Feed the hungry. Shelter the homeless. Help the poor. Visit those who are in prison. And so we invite you to continue to support this ministry of feeding the homeless.

There are offering envelopes specifically for this ministry out by the boxes, and you can give online. If you follow, go to our website, and you can follow the special offering online, pendletonchurch.org.

Give. If I was talking to someone who found themselves to be in a very generous place, some of it was money, but some of it was a meal.

A person I know who was making a stew, a whole bunch of it, more than they could ever eat. And she took some to her daughter and husband and children, and then she was thinking, okay, now what am I going to do with the rest of this?

And she read actually on Facebook that a friend of hers from high school had fallen and broken her wrist and lived in the area, and this friend said, I've had a broken wrist, and I know what it feels like to have your dominant hand incapacitated and not be able to cook or sometimes even easily feed yourself.

[12 : 07] So she called her up and said, I'm so sorry. Would you like some stew? And there was so much more than that involved. She noticed that something was wrong.

She reached out to the person who was injured, and then she did something simple like drop off some stew at her house. There are so many ways that any one of us, any one of us, every one of us, can return our thanks to God for all the blessings.

And it looks so different in so many ways. And as you can see on the screen, there are many ways for you to give to the ministries here at Pendleton Center.

And I am just so grateful for your hearts and your time and your gifts. Let us continue to give glory to God. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[13 : 46] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[16 : 16] Thank you. Amen.

Amen. Almighty God, we thank you for the many gifts that you have bestowed upon us, all that flows freely from you, as we give just a portion of which you have shared with us back to the honor and glory of your name.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray. Amen. Amen. Morning, church.

As we know, it is indeed a gift to be able to come to our God in conversation and in prayer, to open our hearts to discern how God is moving among us. And so as we come today, I received a special request before service for a young student, I believe in eighth grade, who had open heart surgery and is in pretty serious, maybe even grave condition at Children's Hospital as we speak.

His name is Davey. So I would ask that we keep him in your prayers as we go through the week. Let's also be mindful of all those who need God's healing touch as we come to God now together in prayer.

[17 : 47] Amen. Amen. Loving God, your children gathered this morning. We gather this morning seeking your face.

Seeking your face because our hearts are full with gratitude for all the things that you give. Our love for you overflows as we gather around your throne this morning.

We know that it is indeed a gift to be worshiping together, whether here physically or whether across space over the Internet.

Your spirit unites us and we are so uplifted. We are so excited. We are so rejuvenated at the thought of the ways in which we are before you together this morning.

Lord, your children gather today seeking your heart, seeking that which would restore ours as we face challenges in our world, seeking that closeness with you that would help us understand our next step, our next move, our next way to be in ministry to the world.

[19 : 01] Lord, we know that there are ways in which we may have disappointed you, ways in which we have fallen short, but we also know that the grace pours into our lives and we are thankful.

Lord, we come this morning also seeking the movement of your hand, moving over those who need your healing touch like young Dave and all of those who may be suffering from COVID and other conditions that have weakened their bodies.

Restore them, Lord. Help them be back at their best, that they may indeed know life at that particular level of joy and health. Lord, we also would seek your hand among those who are in physical need, however you choose to move, whether it be by extraordinary means or through the hands of your people, to help those receive that which they need in order to be able to function day to day.

And Lord, for those who are suffering according through many natural challenges, fires that still burn, storms that still rage, and recoveries that are still ongoing.

Help them understand that you are indeed with them. Let your presence be known by the ways in which your children show love in real ways and also in the stillness and the peace that they know in their hearts.

[20 : 39] And Lord, that we as a people are able to love our neighbors, to have the conversations we need to have, the ways in which we work and walk together during the season in which there is so much rancor and back and forth.

Let your children gathered here be salt and light. Let us model the love that Jesus taught us. All of this we ask as we gather in his mighty name.

Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Good morning. The scripture this morning is from 1 Corinthians 12, verses 12 through 27.

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one spirit, so as to form one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free.

[22 : 11] And we are all given the one spirit to drink. Even so, the body is not made up of one part, but of many. Now, if the foot should say, because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body, it would not for that reason stop being part of the body.

And if the ear should say, because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body, it would not for that reason stop being part of the body.

If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact, God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, I don't need you.

And the head cannot say to the feet, I don't need you. On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable. And the parts that we think are less honorable, we treat with special honor.

[23 : 28] And the parts that are unrepresentable are treated with special modesty. While our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it.

So that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it.

If one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God. It's been a number of weeks since we started this series called Outside My Own Little World, which is why we have our globe here.

And I just want to kind of remind you for a minute about some of the words of the song that this title came from, which is Matthew West, Outside My Own Little World.

[24 : 46] And he says, It goes on to talk about a variety of things, but one of the things, one of the lines that's specifically pertains this morning is the line, Father, break my heart for what breaks yours.

There are labels and names for the different kind of people we are when it comes to our feelings.

One of them, you may have heard about people who are empathic, and they talk about empathic people suffering when so many people are suffering because they so readily feel what other people are feeling.

They even talk about the exhaustion that comes with feeling what other people are feeling if you're a person who has empathy in a very tender way for other people.

I want to talk about this passage a little bit differently because I'm pretty sure that most of those of you who have been to church, been around communities of faith, have heard about one body, many parts, every part's important, the things we call the least important are the most important, and a reminder that we can't do without each other.

[26 : 35] That is a wonderful and absolutely true way of looking at this passage. I want to invite us to consider, and I want to ask you a question.

Have you ever heard the term fight or flight? Anybody ever heard that term, fight or flight? Fight. The term fight or flight is used in a variety of ways, but one of the ways it's used is if we perceive ourselves to be in any physical danger, we have a choice.

We can either fight or run. If we see our children who are in any danger, then we have a choice. We can either jump in and fight, or we can grab them and run.

I wonder if some of what Paul was talking about in this message to the people in Corinth was this challenge of what is the church in Corinth doing?

How are people interacting with each other? Why would there be a need for Paul to tell the people that God made the body, and the body of Christ is what we call the church or our faith community?

[27 : 55] It doesn't have to be the people in the building. And why would Paul need to remind us how important it is that we remember that the person who cleans, the person who prints, the person who runs all of these equipment, the person who turns on the lights when they come in the morning, and the person who turns out the lights at the end of the day, along with musicians and teachers and preachers.

And in this era, we have people that greet you in a different way than you've ever been greeted in other seasons. It makes sense that Paul would want to tell them that all of those gifts are important, that this body, the church, cannot function without all of the parts.

But why would a congregation need to hear that? The parallel that I'd like to make between where we are now and what was going on then goes back to this fight-or-flight idea.

We have lived in and are living in and will be living in a season where we understand that nothing is the same as it used to be. The roles that we have in the church, we recently had a meeting with the CLMs, and we talked certified lay ministers, and we talked about what has been your role in the church because Pastor Scott and I, we weren't here.

We didn't know. And so the CLMs were telling us, this is what I used to do, this is what I used to do, this is what I used to do, and it involved things like services in nursing homes and music and a variety of outreach and ministries and things here in the church, Bible studies, things like that.

[29 : 52] Things that they shared with us are mostly not happening. There are people who worked with, ran fundraisers like the Fish Fries.

How many of you have been involved in the Fish Fries over the years? I've heard it's pretty much everybody. And then they can't happen. So if your gift is to do a service in a nursing home, or if your gift is to run a fish fry, or if your gift is to do something else that, you know, lead the choir, sing in the choir, those kinds of things, and then you can't, what happens?

What happens when the thing we name is our gift, all of a sudden there isn't like even a place to go to use it?

It's kind of like being given, you know, an outdoor portable fire pit, but you live in an apartment. If it was at my apartment out in Colorado, it would have had to find a place to live because there was no outside to use a fire pit.

What do we do when what we always did isn't available to us? And again, we go back to this fight or flight. How do people respond when what they used to do they can't do, or what they used to have they don't have, or sometimes it's what they used to do that now somebody else is doing?

[31 : 44] The church is sometimes inclined to do the fight or flight thing. I served a church where one of the ways that I described it as I struggled to figure out how things were and how things worked was after I offered to run a dinner.

Don't get any ideas. We served dinner once a month, and it was a meal that was designed for largely for the parents and the daycare families who were leaving at 5 o'clock or 5.30.

And we figured if we offered dinner right then and there, then they wouldn't have to leave, they wouldn't come back if they did go home, and people who could would come and join us.

And there was some question about, well, who's going to run the dinners? Who's going to, the daycare staff had been making the food, doing the shopping, things like that. So I said, I'll do it.

We were going to have breakfast for dinner. I love breakfast for dinner. I'll do that. And so I kind of had fun with the congregation and said, well, you know, you've probably never had my cooking before.

[33 : 00] You might want to come and help because maybe you won't trust what I'm going to cook. No response. I said, well, you know, this is kind of what we need.

No response. I did all the shopping. I cooked all the food. And people came.

And people ate. And people went home. And I cleaned up. And people brought me money. Let's not skip that. People brought me money to help pay for the food that I had bought.

And I thought, my heart was broken because I thought, wait, what? I thought we were a body.

I thought we were all part of the body. What part of the body says, you know, you do all the work. But I'll be glad to come and share in the meal.

[33 : 59] And that's kind of how I was thinking and feeling. And one of the things that I realized was that this particular church had forgotten.

They had forgotten what it meant to be the church where people showed up. And maybe they didn't do anything. Maybe they just, like, talked with the people in the kitchen and talked with the people in the dining room and, you know, kind of used that as their social time.

Other people wanted to sit at a table and be served because that's all they could do. One of the things that I missed about that church was that in every church I've ever visited or served, someone was in charge of that kitchen.

Someone was in charge of where the silverware went, where the pans were stored, how things were in the cupboards, how things were in the refrigerator. Does Pendleton Center have somebody like that?

No? You mean we can do whatever we want in the kitchen? Oh, I see people saying no, and I hear the not yet. Yes, I understand that. This church that I'm describing didn't have anyone who got upset if you put things in the wrong place.

[35 : 23] They had, when it comes to that whole idea of the body of Christ, they forgot that they were a part.

They forgot, wait, this is my family of faith. This is my community. I should show up. I should help.

I should do whatever. And so we began together to remember. to remember that it's not my church.

It's not Pastor Scott's church. It's not Pastor Sherry's church. And what might we respond when people say it's your church? Might say, ew. And when somebody says, well, no, it's not my church, I say, thank you, Jesus.

Because it's our church. It's our body. And it's not just the building. It's not just the kitchen. But when things are different, when the world is different, when coming to church is not the same as it used to be because we have masks and we're not supposed to sing and we're not supposed to gather and talk in small groups and we take communion differently, what is sometimes our response?

[36 : 54] Sometimes our response is fight or flight. We rebel and we think, I can't do this. I can't come. I can't participate.

I can't give because it makes me so sad that it's not what it used to be. And so I'm just going to turn. That's the flight part.

Sometimes the fight part is to rage against the decisions, to stop coming, stop giving, stop offering to help or be a part of the ministries as we find them.

I wonder if back in the days of Paul, when he says, you are the body of Christ and parts of each other.

Is there an expiration date to God's word? Is it ever outdated or not important? There may be parts of it that are culturally different.

[38 : 05] But I'm pretty sure that the word here for me and the word for you and the word for us stays vital and gives us power.

power to serve, power to serve, power to be a part of the body of Christ, power to work together for the glory of God and the love and joy and justice and peace in this world.

Fight or flight isn't a bad thing. I don't want you to hear that there's a value judgment on that. Because any one of us, if we feel threatened or afraid or God forbid our children or our grandchildren feel threatened or afraid or if our position is at risk in our workplace or our home is at risk because our workplace is at risk or, or, or, or it makes sense for us to sometimes close up because it's too hard.

It makes sense when we used to be on a sports team and we can't do that. It makes sense when we used to be in something that doesn't exist anymore.

It makes sense to be upset and feel distress. If one part of the body hurts, the whole body hurts. And so how a body, how the body of Christ responds to one who feels in that fight or flight, I won't come or I don't like the way things are, how should the rest of the body respond?

[39 : 53] My sense of what God's word tells us is that the body of Christ is called to reach out arms, reach out arms and gather all of those we cannot see or cannot hear who are of the body of Christ and say, how can we support you?

How can we live with you? Is there anything that we as a church can do to support you? Is there anything that I can do or any one of us can do?

Not because doing fixes it. No matter what I do, singing is the way it is.

But how can I acknowledge the discomfort, the frustration, the anger, the withdrawal from what people used to know as the church?

I hope together we will be prayerful about that. And I hope that together we'll understand that it's a part of the call to look at the body.

[41 : 19] Imagine yourself like you haven't seen your foot in a while. Well, there might be some physical reasons why somebody might not have seen their foot in a while, but what if your foot just disappeared and you couldn't see it?

Your life would be difficult. Imagine, you can imagine some of how you might take that on. Break my heart for what breaks yours, oh God.

Sometimes that means it's okay to be angry. It's okay to be frustrated. it's okay to feel disappointment.

It's okay to struggle with new pastors and new ways of doing things. But nothing shall ever separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Not life, not death, not powers, not principalities, not evil, not a pandemic shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

[42 : 25] So let's remember that that is the same for this body of Christ. Whether a person's here or not here, whether a family is here or not here, we are the body of Christ.

And my prayer is that we can sometimes step out of our own little world and remind people this is where you belong.

And I'm not just speaking about this church, I'm speaking about any community of faith, any neighborhood, any family that we might know that we are better together.

We are better together. we are stronger together. We are encouraged together. Because you know what? Your foot doesn't go missing.

It might go hurting, but it doesn't go missing. So what do you do when it hurts? You take care of it. You take the, have the doctor look at it. You get a cane, you get a wheelchair, you get it surgery, whatever it is, if you're, there's a part of you that's broken.

[43 : 40] We live in a broken world. We always have. I believe that the call for us is to be outside of our own little world to recognize that if we realize we're gifted, then we live for others.

When we realize how blessed we are, then we live for others. When we realize how much God has given us, then we can give to others. And so on the days when you need to receive, I can give.

And on the days that I need to receive, you can give. Parts of the body. Parts of the body.

And I give thanks to God every day for the ways that we continue to be the body of Christ tending to one another, owning the salvation and the love that we have and being good news in the world in this day.

Don't, don't break yourself from the body of Christ.

[45 : 01] don't stop looking for others who might be separated from the body of Christ.

Don't stop inviting people to become a part of the body of Christ because you are here. You are blessed. And I give thanks to God for you.

Let's pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Lord, as Paul taught the people of Corinth, I wonder, did he look out over the people and see them with their gifts that had been named saying, I have this and I have that?

Lord, was Paul hoping that maybe the people would look around at each other and say, we have this and together we can do that with all the gifts and all the parts.

May our hearts be warmed to one another. May there be healing inside of us and in this land and may it because we believe and you believe in us.

[46 : 25] We give thanks to you in Jesus' name. Amen. The table of grace is set and offered to everyone, everyone who seeks to be in relationship with Jesus Christ, whether this is your first time here, you've been here all along, no matter what, God says, I love you.

Come and be with me. The Lord be with you. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

you formed us and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.

You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God and spoke to us through your prophets who looked for that day when justice shall roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream, when nations shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn. Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

[48 : 11] Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Holy are you and blessed is your Son, Jesus Christ.

Your Spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed and to announce that the time had come when you would save your people.

He healed the sick, fed the hungry and ate with sinners. by the baptism of his suffering, death and resurrection, you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

At his ascension, you exalted him to sit and reign with you at your right hand. On the night in which Jesus was betrayed, he took the bread, he gave thanks to you and he broke the bread and he gave it to his disciples and he said, take and eat.

This is my body given for you. Eat of this, remembering me. And when the supper was over, he took the cup and he gave thanks to you and he gave it to the disciples and said, drink from this, all of you.

[49 : 34] This is the blood of the new covenant, my blood poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of this often, remembering me.

And so in remembrance of these, your mighty act in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice in union with Christ's offering for us as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again. pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here and on these gifts of bread and wine.

Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ redeemed by his blood. By your Spirit, make us one with Christ, one with each other and one in ministry to all the world until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever. Amen. And now let us pray the prayer that Jesus taught us, saying, Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

[50 : 57] 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 and ever.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. God of all, one cup of blessing which we bless, and we know many throughout the earth.

We are one body in this one Lord.

[52 : 35] Chantel or two, servant or free, woman or man no more.

One breath, one body, one Lord of all. One cup of blessing which we bless, and we know many throughout the earth.

We are one body in this one Lord.

One cup of blessing which we bless, and we know many throughout the earth.

We are one body in this one Lord. One cup of blessing which we bless, and we know many throughout the earth.

[54 : 36] May you remember you belong.

May you remember that you are loved. May you remember that you are enough. You are enough because God has given you what you need to do what you are called to do.

May we go and live in that comfort and peace in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen. I invite you to be seated. We will go to the doors and we will offer you communion on your way out.

We have these little cups if you haven't done this before. And on one side is a little gluten free cracker, and on the other side is grape juice.

And we invite you to take these when you are leaving. You can eat them in the parking lot, drink, you can take them home. If you would like to take one for somebody else or more, please let us know and we will give you what you need.

[56 : 07] God, the Lord.

Timothy, Lord, talk to Yes. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[58 : 06] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.