Moved

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Preacher: Pastor Cathy Hall Stengel

[0:00] Father Jesus Christ Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Is she done? Good morning. Not that I want to interrupt your greeting, but the peace of Christ be with you.

And here's this. If you would feel so moved, you may stand up and greet your neighbors. You just have to come back when I say so.

When I look in your direction, can you just play some chords to get their attention back? Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

[2:40] Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Thank you for responding to my invitation for you to return to your seats. Wasn't that a wonderful thing? You could probably do that for the whole service, but then you would miss so much.

It is good to see you. For those of you I have not met, my name is Kathy Hall Stengel, and I'm one of the pastors here on this team at Pendleton Center.

We greet not only those of you who are here, but those who are watching online and are so grateful that you can be here with us. We have been journeying through a series of words, moved, today's moved, just a minute, and lifted, poured, formed, et cetera.

[3:54] And I want, we're going to watch a video. Now, you could say, come on Kathy, you're using a public venue to show your own grandson.

Oh, well, maybe just a little. But the reality is, is that what he did fits into a part of what we're going to be speaking of this morning, which is that decision to park yourself and not respond to any indication that you should do anything otherwise.

Anybody ever done that? A football game, a movie, just tired, whatever. Does anybody ever find themselves in that place where you just decide, I'm not doing anything?

Well, thanks be to God, because sometimes that's what God wants us to do. But God wants us also to move, not even just our bodies, because some of our bodies don't move the way that they used to or maybe ever the way we would want them to.

But we can still move in the spirit. So I invite us to have that in our hearts and our minds as we walk through this worship service this morning. So let us join in prayer.

[5:21] Wonderful God, we are grateful for the light of day, for being here and having the freedom to worship and sing and greet one another.

Oh, thank you, Jesus, for such a day as this. We have already moved in your spirit. May we continue to move and be moved.

In Jesus name. Amen. I think you're going to have to move now. I was reading this morning and in my reading, I came across 1 John 3.16.

And most of us are probably familiar with John 3.16, for God so loved the world. But I invite you to read 1 John 3.16 because it gets to how we are to love the world.

And I thought, wow, that's kind of a neat kind of coincidence. Well, probably not in God's eyes. He knew what he was doing, but I found it really interesting. So I invite you to stand as we sing the gift of love.

[6:33] I'll sing the gift of love. I'll sing the gift of love. God. I'll sing the gift of love. God. I'll sing the gift of love. Let me sing the gift of love.

Let me sing the gift of love. You can sing the gift of love.

You will sing the gift of love. For you, Lord. The gift of love midst of love. My words are vain, astounding grass, and all my pain.

Though I may give all I possess, and striving so my love to bless, but I may give all I love within.

The prophet soon turns strangely thin. Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control.

[8:00] Our spirit's all to be made whole. When in our love card every deed, by this we worship and are freed.

You may be seated. I would like to invite Louisa to bring her family up here, godparents.

Whoever would like to be up here to be or be closer is fine, but godparents, parents, and Louisa all the way up here.

It's a challenge course. If you can find your way, then there we go.

Yeah, here we are. You made it. So here we are. And we come together in this community.

[9:30] Here we are. Yeah, and there's water over there. That's for later. Brothers and sisters in Christ, through the sacrament of baptism, we are initiated into Christ's holy church, which is not simply the here and now, but wherever, whatever Christian church or faith we find ourselves in.

We are incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation and given new birth through water and the spirit. In the United Methodist Church, we believe baptism is one of the two sacraments and the means of grace, which means that in baptism something mysterious happens that just fills her with God's grace, even though she doesn't, well, we don't know if she doesn't know.

That is a mystery. But we come together as Louisa's family, godparents, and friends to celebrate in the sacrament of holy baptism. So let us pray.

Gracious God, every child is a miracle of love. And today we thank you for the miracle of Louisa. Hold her in the gentleness of your hands and her family in the bonds of patient love.

May she grow in the way of faith and grow to be close to you, close to her grandparents, godparents, family, and forever close to her mother and father. Let her be aware of your tender care and your righteous calling in her life.

[10:56] In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen. Joshua, Nina, and Louisa have an amazing support system. And I want to thank all of them, the support system for being here.

Grandparents, godparents, family, and those who might not even be able to be with us here in person, make up an incredible support system for their family.

You have prayed for, supported, comforted, and encouraged Joshua and Nina as they have become parents. Love them through hope, times of anxiety, lack of sleep, and celebration.

Most recently, we have all prayed for and supported them as they come to this place. And here she is, beautiful and thriving.

For all of that, know that God has used all of our prayer and love and that God has needed all of us to be messengers of encouragement and hope. That journey will forever be a part of Louisa's story and her family and friends.

[12:06] So, we come to this place where we ask all of you, will you, who are gathered here and godparents, support them, their family, their family as it is, their family as it may become.

Will you support them in their marriage and in all that it takes to be a family? Maybe that even means, hmm, borrowing Louisa so her parents can have some time out.

If you will do whatever you can to support this, support them and fulfill this awesome calling, will you say yes? Yes.

Very good. Now, to the four of you grown-ups, as you each stand here, I ask you to answer these questions. Because your own personal faith has an effect on how you raise a child or how you godparent a child.

And we are honored to participate in this sacrament that's today and forever, but it's the four of you who are now up here taking on this role. So, on behalf of the whole Christian church, I ask you, do you reject all that is evil in the world and do you come before God, your family, your children, these witnesses, and people of faith, who will become part of your lives with your heart and with what you bring?

[13:33] If so, then say we do. Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist all that is evil, all injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?

If so, then say we do. Do you confess that you believe in God, Jesus Christ, God's Son and our Savior, and to the best of your ability, put your trust in God's grace and promise to be faithful to God?

If so, then say we do. Do you. Will you, as Louisa's parents and godparents, nurture her in Christ's holy church, that by your teaching and your example, she may be guided to the point in her life whereby she accepts God's grace for herself, professes her own faith openly, and agrees to live a Christian life?

If so, then say we will. We will. Will you make every attempt to provide a Christian upbringing, giving her the opportunity when she's old enough to learn about God, the Bible, and Christ's holy church?

If so, then say we will. We will. So, water is what we use for baptism. And we come to this because throughout the whole Bible, we hear about water.

[14:48] God made water. God made streams and oceans and rivers and all kinds of water, and it's used as an image for many things throughout the Bible.

And we talk about baptism by water, baptism by spirit, and we believe it's all together. And so, let's pray over this water.

Oh, Lord, pour out your Holy Spirit to bless this water and Louisa, who will be baptized with it. Clothe her in righteousness throughout her whole life, that this day being claimed by you as part of this household of faith, she'll be marked forever with the sign of eternal life.

All praise to you, eternal Father, through your Son, Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns forever. Amen. Hey, Louisa.

Hey, let's go see the water. See the water. You want to touch it? Oh, it's not too cold.

[15:53] So, what name is given this child? Louisa Marie. Louisa Marie. Louisa Marie. That's you. Yeah? So, here, I'm going to put some water on you.

Are you okay with that? You ready? Just a little. My thumb. Louisa Marie, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

May you always be blessed to know that God loves you forever and ever and always. I know. You have to wipe it off like that.

Oh! Do I have water on my glasses? Uh-oh. So, my friends, I present to you the newest member of this household of faith, blessed by baptism and brought to you for your care and joy and celebration.

Would you greet her with applause? Yay! That's for you. I have a couple of books for you.

[16:58] Here, you can have the important piece, the baptismal certificate. And, you get your own Bible. Yay!

And then this book, which is What is God Like? And it'll teach you about how much God loves you. And it says in here, to Louisa, love Pastor Kathy.

Remember, God always loves you, no matter what. Okay? So, let's step down here and he'll get our picture. And I'll give her back when I...

This is the best.

Yay! Thank you. Yay! Thank you. Yay! Thank you. I imagine she would have rather stayed with me, but...

[18:13] I'm smarter than that. Hi, my name is Dee Finch, and I'm the pastor at Seneca Street, United Methodist Church, down on Seneca Street in South Buffalo.

I have the wonderful opportunity to serve the community there and have followed Brian and Cheryl Rotach, who have been at that church for 23 years.

It's a joy to serve in the city. I'm not a city girl. I grew up in Hamburg, but I grew up in a church that helped me understand how we are called to help the least and the lost, and to love.

As the church, we host worship on Sunday afternoon at 4 o'clock, but we appreciate churches like Pendleton Center, who come down to serve a hot meal every Sunday. About 60 to 70 people come to receive a fellowship, community, and a good meal.

Our church provides a place for people to come, where people know them by name or we get to know them quickly. Sometimes I think we're a MASH unit, where we're there to help the souls and pick up people off the ground or as people get out of jail or whatever situation they are in.

[19:26] People are coming needing love, needing support, needing things. But we couldn't do it without churches like Pendleton Center and other churches in our district and conference.

100% of the income needs to be brought in from the outside. People give an offering on Sunday morning that's usually about \$10, unless we have guests sitting with us.

But people bring their quarters, nickels, dimes, pennies, folded up dollar bills, because they do want to give something back. We're busy doing weddings and memorial services and worship as a spiritual place that the church is.

But it really is about healing, giving people second chances. And we just thank the churches who are supporting us and the individuals who support us. Thank you for all that you are and all that you are yet to become.

And we're grateful that we have the opportunity to serve many at Seneca Street and also to provide an opportunity for everyone to come down and visit us. Thank you.

[20:38] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Let us come before God with our hearts open and with our hearts and minds and lives and gifts generous in the giving and doing and serving and speaking.

And you are about to hear a gift and may it move your spirit and your soul. Thank you. I love you, Lord.

Oh, your mercy never fails me. All my tears I've been held in your hands.

[22:02] From the moment that I wake up until I lay my head, oh, I will sing of the goodness of God.

Because all my life you have been faithful. And all my life you have been so, so good.

With every breath that I am able, oh, I will sing of the goodness of God.

I love your voice. You have led me through the fire. In darkest nights, you are close like no other.

I've known you as a father. I've known you as a friend. And I have lived in the goodness of God

[23:22] And all my life you have been faithful. All my life you have been so, so good.

Every breath that I am able, oh, I will sing of the goodness of God.

Your goodness is running after me. Your goodness is running after me.

It's running after me. With my life laid down, I'll surrender now. I give you everything.

Your goodness is running after me.

[24:49] I give you everything. Your goodness is running after me. It's running after me.

In all my life you have been faithful.

In all my life you have been so, so good.

With every breath that I am able, oh, I'm going to sing of the goodness of God.

I'm going to sing of the goodness of God. In all my life you have been faithful. In all my life you have been faithful.

[25:52] In all my life you have been so, so good. Every breath that I have made for you I will sing of the goodness of God I will sing of the goodness of God Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. We hear the water running and imagine your Holy Spirit running over us fresh, clean, full of life, full of growth we give you thanks for the life within us and the life around us help us to know how it is we use all of that to honor your name we pray in Jesus name amen you may be seated good morning church it is always a joy to come together as we go before God in prayer nothing like opening our hearts to the movement in the presence of God as we have already experienced some this morning but now we go even closer go even deeper as we seek God's will and try to walk in God's way so let's open our heart and go to God in prayer together gracious and loving God your people gather this morning amazed by grace grace that continues to pour out over us grace that gives us the blessing to see this day to experience its warmth its color and its joy to experience the laughter and presence of friends to know that you are working working to build the kingdom among us and around us working to build the kingdom through us and in us Lord we come amazed by the grace that continues to flow in spite of the ways we may fall short for we know that we continue to try to walk in all of your will to try and walk in all of your teaching and sometimes we do not live up to that but Lord your grace finds us your grace carries us and your grace welcomes us back again

Lord we are also aware of all the ways in which we know we need your help for the challenges of the world sometimes sometimes capture us the challenges of the world sometimes overrun us and we feel burdened we feel weighed down and Lord we still come to you seeking that grace the grace that allows us to let those burdens go the grace that allows us to simply give them to you trusting that your plan and your power are enough we know that there are those who need healing so we come to the author of our healing we need to we know there are those who are struggling with decisions and need wisdom and guidance and so we come to the one who knows all things we know there are those who are in need deep real need and so we come to our provider the one who creates the one who gives all things so Lord we stand this morning amazed by grace because it is grace that finds us no matter what we need to do we know there are those who are in need and we come to the one who can heal truly heal the broken heart we know that there are those who are in need deep real need and so we come to our provider our provider and so we are in need so Lord we stand this morning amazed by grace because it is grace that finds us no matter the circumstance no matter what we think we have done or what we know we have done no matter how weak or insufficient we feel we come to the one whose grace is truly truly and always sufficient so Lord we give you thanks today for you know what we need better than we know ourselves you know our desires better than we know ourselves and so we come seeking that oneness with you and amazed by the grace that hears knows and receives our prayer this morning in the name of Jesus we pray

Amen Amen Good morning Today's scripture comes from Matthew chapter 25 verses 31 through 40 When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him then he will sit on the throne of his glory all the nations will be gathered before him and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left then the king will say to those at his right hand come you that are blessed by my father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world for I was hungry and you gave me food

I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink I was a stranger and you welcomed me I was naked and you gave me clothing I was sick and you took care of me I was in prison and you visited me then the righteous will answer him Lord when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink and when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing and when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you and the king will answer them truly I tell you just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family you did it to me this is the word of the Lord thanks be to God Thank you Bill this scripture passage often pushes us into that place where we're thinking sheep and goats sheep and goats sheep and goats who wants to be a sheep who wants to be a goat and we're not going to do that we're not going to do that because how do we know if we imagine that God is choosing one righteous and the other unrighteous then God can do that but not me so I can't know who the sheep and the goats are and I can't tell you which side you should sit on the left or the right alright so we got that out of the way

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God's job is God's job and we as the people of God are gathered to hear how do we live this life that God has called us to live wait did God tell us did God tell us in this scripture reading about how we should live our lives I hear the words let's see gave gave gave welcome gave me sick took care of me visited those are at least in some level those are action words and if I take you back to the little very short video of Charlie and I trying to take a walk the dog that we met went the other way Charlie didn't want to go the way I was going Charlie wanted to follow the dog so what did Charlie do he plopped himself down and there he was of course it could have been because grandma couldn't find his shoes and he was barefoot so was grandma so we as people of faith if we say we're people of faith if we have at some place in our life acknowledged that we believe in God in whatever that means sometimes people maybe are rocked to sleep or soothed by someone singing Jesus loves me this I know you know so that's where their belief begins and then it begins by maybe going to Sunday school or maybe just coming to church and be exposed to the word of God just as we begin with Louisa with baptism so if we can say in our hearts I believe then what do we do like Charlie and just plop ourselves down and say yep

I believe I believe I believe just in case you wondered I believe I believe I know you see God invites us when we answer that question do you believe which is between you and God unless you choose to answer it in some way out loud the response is yes and when Jesus went through his ministry and he taught and he healed and he claimed and proclaimed and did all kinds of things like that there was always in and now you know yourself this is Jesus not me but you know yourself to be a sinner you are healed you are forgiven now go and what sin no more it's not possible for us to sin no more because we're human but Jesus is asking whether it's the prostitute or the adulterer or the person who's been married five times or whatever the case might be the ones with the stones he says we've acknowledged the fact that we can be forgiven we've acknowledged when the blind man sees in the lame man walks and the lepers are cleansed there is an acknowledgement of healing and and we often in this era don't get to see experiences of healing and often it's because we don't really know what we're looking for sometimes the healing comes the first day after a terrible loss whether it's car accident or a job loss or a divorce or the death of a loved one the first day we find ourselves getting out of bed with a a little lift like we talked about being lifted last week the first day that we realize that we are still alive that we have not died with the loss that we have not perished in the chaos so then the response is move the response is that God wants our hearts to be moved and then God wants us to move and so we think about how it is that we should live this life and sometimes when people say

I believe and we don't know what God wants me to do sometimes the response is just move just try maybe you don't know what your ministry is or your gift is or your opportunity to share your faith you don't know what that is and sometimes I think that God is saying just move just put one foot in front of the other sometimes it's just make a decision is it yes or no and not stand in the middle of sort of the teetering back and forth between well maybe yes Sunday mornings but maybe later I'm busy and maybe yes in this ministry but not so much in that one and that's the way it should be we should be figuring out what it is that God has called us to do in some ways we can't decide all in or all out and I asked this question last night and found out there weren't many bills fans in the room how many bills fans do we have here today all right better better better more bills fans on Sunday morning than Saturday at 5 o'clock I didn't ask them who they were fans of but not so much the bills so if a person is a bills fan do they have to buy a season ticket to prove that they're fan no the people that are at the game right now or in the parking lot might say yes I don't know is it a one o'clock game no oh then never mind they're getting their bills they're getting their bills gear on and they're getting their snacks ready for later the doesn't matter whether it's the bills the question is in or out and when we talk about our faith are we in or are we out is it yes or is it no because sometimes people get stuck on the line of sometimes yes and sometimes I'm not going to say no but not much and that's part of each person's journey I know people who have found places desert places in their lives where they felt like I'm not sure I believe so many terrible things are happening I'm not sure I believe and that is a terrible terrible place for a person to be not because it's wrong mind you that is the journey of humanity that is the journey of sometimes life is like a desert and we don't see God anywhere in the scripture passage we are invited to see God in the feeding of the hungry we are we are invited to see God in the the

So then Elijah was being chased by an army in fear for his life. And he ran and ran and ran and ran.

[44:24] And he finally got to the point where that was it. He was done. He gave up and said, just God let me die. I'm done. God brought him to the shade under the broom tree.

God brought him water and food. The Holy Spirit brought him rest. And then after he had rested and eaten and had something to drink, up you go and let's go.

On to Mount Horeb. His job, his work, his ministry wasn't done. So the question might be, what does that mean for any one of us?

Not everybody is called to feed the hungry in the same way as people standing on the street feeding the hungry. Not everybody is called to shelter the homeless, as in working in a shelter or helping to build a shelter.

Not everybody is called to visit prisons. You might think that being a Christian we're supposed to do all those things. But the reality is we are all gifted, but only some are called to do these things.

[45:48] And the one who feels that they should do all of it is going to exhaust themselves and find themselves under the broom tree. God calls us just to do something.

Just to do something that says yes. Something that for us, maybe not for other people to even see, says, I do believe.

I do believe and this is how I'm going to move. Some of you might run marathons. Anybody?

Marathon runners? Yay! Some might teach. Some might sit in the seats of learners. Some might sing.

Singers? Little hands. Did you see that? Little hands of people are putting up. Come on, singers. Not me, but...

[46:52] All right. Sometimes I actually am a singer because you know what? I love to sing and praise God. Whether it's good or not, that's another story, and I'm not asking for opinions.

But the choice is to sing or be quiet. The choice is to say, I believe and...

Or, I believe but. I believe and. I believe but. Hmm. Hmm.

I think that throughout all of Scripture, Jesus has called us to the I believe and.

And I can't always tell you what that and is. I just know there is an and for everyone. No matter your ableness or your disabledness. No matter your gifts or your thought that maybe you got missed when it came to gifts.

[47:59] Because nobody did. It's I believe and. And God may stretch us, but God will not ask us for more than we can do.

So, if God says, if you imagine God says that you're called to preach, well, we can sign you up.

But think about it. The same as all the other gifts. God gifts us for what calls us, God calls us to do. God provides for us what we need to do the things that God needs us to do.

So, whether it's phone calls, cards, helping to fix a car, singing, building something, arranging something, organizing something, playing something, praying something.

It's all the ands. I know that God has called you to believe an and. And so, I believe that for myself.

[49:12] And I'm going to say, as I tie this on here, now you know why you have ribbons on your seats. Because I'm going to move that out there.

And I'm going to invite you to believe that having been fed through the sacrament of communion, where we receive the gift of grace in the bread and the cup.

A reminder always in our tradition that we are loved enough for Jesus to die for. And most of us are like, maybe my head believes.

I'm not always sure my heart believes. But we receive it, hoping and trying to believe and feel it. I believe and my hands are out.

Please give me the bread and the cup. But having received that, having moved up here, or having received in your seats, you have moved.

[50:15] In your mind and in your heart. Because there is nobody with an ejector seat under your chair. Other than God.

So may God move you to receive the sacrament of communion. And then I invite you, as you leave, to take that tie and say, I believe and I want to be a part of the difference that God makes in the world.

I don't know how always. And I don't know where. And I don't know when. But I want to move to be a part of what God wants to do in this world. Because God wants to do mighty things.

And mighty things are made of a lot of small things. So that choice will be yours. Let's pray. Lord, feed us.

Inspire us. Give us the strength, Lord, to sometimes lay down under the broom tree and rest while you feed us and nourish us and keep us in the shade.

[51:28] And then, Lord, may we rise up once again and know what our answer is. Still yes.

No, but hopeful. Somewhere in the middle. May we all be fed in the spirit of Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen. One of the great joys of our faith is that we get to be fed, quite literally and spiritually, at the Lord's table.

So I invite you all to prepare your hearts as we come before God today to be fed, as you just heard Pastor Kathy discuss. 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 be our thanks and praise. It is right and a good and joyful thing.

Always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, the creator of heaven and earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.

[52:54] You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets, who looked for the day when justice would roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

When nation would not lift up sword against nation, and neither would they study 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, 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. 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. And on the night Jesus gave himself for us, he took bread.

He gave thanks to you, and 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.

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

[55:21] And so in remembrance of these, your mighty acts 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 has risen. Christ will come again. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and cup. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

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 God, now and forever.

Amen. And now let's pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

[56:36] 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.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Would those who are serving please join us. Thank you.

[58:53] Thank you.

Thank you.

So the table is set and the table is open. One of the gifts of the United Methodist Church is we believe that communion is about who our God is and not who we are, which means all are welcome to come and receive.

It doesn't mean you have to be in a particular relationship. It doesn't mean you have to feel worthy. It just means you have to want to receive what God has freely given.

And so as the Spirit leads, you are invited to come down the center aisles and exit via the sides. Communion is a gift from God. And so we ask that as you come forward that you receive.

[60:30] If you prepare to receive prepackaged elements, your servers will give those to you as well. There's a gluten-free station here on my far left, the right side of the sanctuary.

Please come as the Spirit leads and you'll see starting from the front and it moves to the back of the sanctuary. Come as God calls. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[63:19] Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Love is an action verb.

And however God calls each of us to move, I am so very grateful that he does not ask us to do it in our own power, but in his power, by his love.

So I invite you to stand as we sing the last song, The Power of Your Love. Amen. Amen.

Even if you sing the last song, Lord, I've come to know the weaknesses I see. We will be stripped away by the power of your love.

[66:13] Hold me close, let your love surround me.

Bring me near, draw me to your side.

And as I wait, I'll rise up like people. And I will show in you, your spirit leads me on.

In the power of your love. Lord, unveil my eyes.

Let me see you face to face. The knowledge of your love. As you live in me.

[67:26] Lord, renew my mind. As your will unfolds in my life.

In living every day. By the power of your love.

Hold me close, let your love surround me.

Bring me near, draw me to your side. And as I wait, I'll rise up like people.

And I will show with you, your spirit leads me on. And the power of your love.

[68:42] Hold me close, let your love surround me.

And I will show with you, your spirit leads me on. And the power of your love. And the power of your love. And the power of your love. A fight.

Oh, so Wales I save you. And as I wait, I'll rise up like people. With my love.

And I will show with you, your spirit leads me on. God already holds you close.

The question is, do you know it? Do you feel it? And do you decide? Yes. Yes, may you decide. And may you go in the peace and the comfort of knowing you are exactly where God wants you to be.

[69:57] For the moment. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Go in peace and serve the Lord. Amen. What shall you say?

I'm free.

I'm free.