

The High Way

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Preacher: Pastor Scott Johnson

[0 : 0 0] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Good morning. Good morning. Happy spring.

Good morning. Today's the first day of spring and I don't see snow because I can't see the ground, so it must be spring. It is good to be in worship and for those of you watching online, welcome.

I'm Kathy Stengel, one of the pastors here and I'm here, up here right now for announcements. I feel like I should come over here singing announcements, announcements, except, yeah, there you go, announcements.

[1 : 3 9] We'll start with the fish fry, big success, 518 dinners sold and that was great.

Yay. Today is the last day to order your Easter flowers. So there's something in your bulletin, you can do it online, but the request is please don't ask after today because today is the last day to order Easter flowers and after that, it's between you and Mr. Adrian.

We are having an Easter celebration, egg hunt, everything like that on the 9th of April and there are bags of eggs and things back there for people to fill and bring back for that Easter egg hunt and so that's that announcement.

The United Methodist Church Trinity on the Boulevard made some Ukrainian flags if people want them.

You know, we, our support is for the people who are being ravaged by war, regardless of their country. So they might be Russian, they might be Ukrainian, they might be, they might be, but we want to be mindful of the fact that there are people in the world who are struggling.

[3 : 1 3] So those are back there if you'd like. One of the children who's been a part of our Hot Chocolate with God in Vacation Bible School, her name is Abby, and some of you know about Abby, who was diagnosed with a very aggressive form of cancer.

She's how old? Nine. Nine. She's best friends with Elizabeth Geary and so there's going to be a benefit for her and if you're interested in tickets.

Woohoo! That's the, you said enough, Kathy, it's time to sit down. You can see Jennifer, she has tickets and flyers for that benefit which is to help the family with all that is going on.

So those are my announcements but I want to invite Elizabeth Valentine to come and share about a ministry that she's a part of.

And that we are a part of, right? Right. Hi, just, yeah. We've heard to go green.

[4 : 2 9] Go green. Good morning. For those of you that don't know me, my name is Elizabeth Valentine and I've been a member of this church about 22 years.

Oh, thank you, Adrian. You did find the pictures. So I'm here to talk this morning about a program we did, I think it was in 2018. It was before COVID. It was called Journeys End Home Again.

And what we did was furnished an apartment for a refugee family. And with everything that's going on in this world, we thought it would be a great time to do this again. So Liz Fisher and I are spearheading this program.

And what we have to do is first we have to collect the items to furnish an apartment. We ask for gently used or new or clean items. Please don't give us something you wouldn't want in your house because we have to then dispose of it.

So first we collect the items. Once we have all the items collected, then we let them know, I have a contact woman, and she will give us a date on when the family will be moving in.

[5 : 34] At that point, I'll need a cleaning crew, a moving crew, and a set-up crew. And last year, as you can see by the pictures, last time we did this, there were probably about 20, 25 people. It was a wonderful, wonderful project we did and a lot of support.

So what I'm asking is if you have donations that you could donate, that would be wonderful. If you could purchase new items like toiletries, there's a, I have sign-up sheets in the back of the church.

You could look it over. You could donate anything you have that you might want to be getting rid of. If you can't, or you don't have anything to donate, and you can't get out to the stores, and you'd like to make a financial contribution, we could use that money to purchase something that you can't get out to the stores.

Or we could give it directly to the family, and they can use it for food, their first month's rent, whatever they might need it for. So I'm just asking for your help in this. It's a wonderful project, and I'm very happy and excited to be spearheading it again.

And whatever your heart will tell you to do, please do. But the sign-up sheets are in the back, and there's a whole list. And if you're an online person and you haven't been coming to church, or you're unable to come to church, Adrian is nice enough to put a sign-up genius like he did for me for the angel tree, so you can also sign up that way.

[6 : 52] So thank you very much. Thank you for doing that. Thank you for doing that. Thank you. Thank you.

Morning church. My name is Scott. I'm also one of your pastoral team, and I'm excited that as we go into our worship time today, we are ready to continue our journey on the way.

You know that during this Lenten season, we have been using this series called The Way, which is inspired by a film with the same title. And so we'll be talking about that story as we get into worship, but for now, I would just start with our usual greeting.

May the peace of the risen Christ be with you. And also be with you. Let's say this prayer together as we praise our God. Generous God, guardian of the wild spaces, of feasts on mountain tops and of flasks of tea and snow, of cloud-covered beaches and headlights at midnight on the motorway, thank you that we find in the bread and the wine a space to be with you.

Throw us the compass of who we are and whose we are. Let your hope be a big sky within us. Let your presence be sand in our pockets.

[8 : 18] Amen. Good morning, church.

Good morning to our online family. I'm going to invite you to stand as we open with our hymn, We Gather Together. We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing.

Thank you, God. The governments who are precious has taken as it is. Thank you. Good morning. Thank you to God. Guet, what is the best? Thank you to all you may hear, is in honour to our host and funder. And as weuly know it.

Thank you to God, you'reularity. You haven't lost you. The wicked oppressing Fucking. Now cease from distressing, sing praise. To his name he forget to attend. Big hit, povo diventer Sh killing and former and magma, God I thank you today's more and beyond.

Every day be calling, we're living by the pantry who can see him. not his own. Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining, ordaining, maintaining his kingdom divine.

[9 : 42] So from the beginning the fight we were winning, thou Lord was at our side of glory behind.

We all do extol thee, thou leader triumphant, and pray that thou still your defender wilt be.

Let thy congregation discapade tribulation thy name be ever praised, O Lord, make us free.

You may be seated. Before we do our offering this morning, I'd like to invite Kelly Putney and Jennifer up here to be with me.

One of the things, one of the things that happened this week was that Jennifer was interviewed to be for local pastors licensing status, and she was approved.

[11 : 30] And so we welcome, we don't know when the official UR clergy now will come, but she has passed through all of the gates, and I assure you there are many.

And it has been a wonderful journey and wonderful for us to be such an integral part of this journey with her. So we celebrate that, and on behalf of the church, we have flowers.

I have a congregation, we love you, and we're glad that you're here ministering with us, and look forward to all of your gifts to come. And unless you feel left out, you'll know when you open it.

We get lots of gifts in the mail that are advertising, and this one is a little notebook that's got Pendleton Center United Methodist Church on it and a free pen. We want to mark the day.

So we'll celebrate again when it becomes official, and she becomes officially appointed here instead of hired here. So we just celebrate and say thank you, God.

[12 : 48] Thank you, Jennifer. Thank you. As we gather our hearts and our minds before God, I want to share.

On Friday, I had the chance to go to the Casting Crowns concert, and one of the things that one of the bands shared was imagine this.

Imagine coming into the presence of God, and all God wants from you is your love and your belief.

Imagine that we who are collecting all kinds of things and we who are taking an offering to support the ministries of our church say, but you know what?

You know what matters most of all is that God loved you before you ever did anything related to faith. You don't owe God anything.

[13 : 58] You don't have to prove yourself to God because God already loved you. Everything else we do is a response to that love because God loved you first.

And so, whatever you bring, whatever you do, may it be from your heart and because God motivates you to serve, to give, to be.

May we come to this time honoring a God who said, I loved you before you were even named, before you were born. Let's give thanks to God. Amen.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[15 : 36] Thank you. Thank you.

We are all equal. Don't be afraid. Come as you are. At the table of grace, the cup's never empty.

The plate's always full and it's never too late. To come and be filled with love never ending.

And you're always welcome at the table of grace. Thank you.

Thank you.

[17 : 07] So let the first become the last And let the poor put kings to shame Their willing hearts will be their treasure By the power of Jesus' name At the table of grace The cups never empty The plates are restored And it's never too late To come and be filled The life never ended

And you're always welcome At the table of grace And you're always welcome At the table of grace Thank you, Jesus Thank you Amen Oh Lord for receiving our hearts

We give you thanks For loving us no matter what we've done Haven't done or where we've been and haven't been We give you thanks And for the gifts that we offer Out of our love and our care and our thanksgiving We do give you thanks May we be responsible and good stewards of all we have Especially Lord The things we are given in your name In Jesus' name we pray Amen You may be seated This week truly has been a week of joys and celebrations Do you have any joys or concerns that you would like to raise up today?

Carl I don't know if anyone knows about Gertz had surgery on Thursday So Tom Gertz had surgery Thursday And Emily Thompson has an upcoming surgery Will you please pray with me?

Heavenly Father We thank you for the ability to be on our walk Our life with you That you watch over each and every one of us That your love for us is so strong Help us to carry that love out to others And share it with the world We pray for Abby We pray for those that are traveling this week For those who are having upcoming surgeries We pray for the people of Ukraine May you be with them each and every day We pray for the families of the military And all of those Who are worried We pray for the families of our church And this congregation And our leadership That they may know the right things to do But most of all God We thank you We thank you for allowing us

[21 : 45] And bringing us together That we are truly able to walk The life that you've chosen for us In your name we pray Amen Good morning Good morning Hope everybody's doing good On the first day of spring Winter's behind us Today's scripture reading Is taken from the book of Isaiah Chapter 55 Verses 1 through 9 Come all you who are thirsty Come to the waters And you who have no money Come buy and eat

Come buy wine and milk Without money and without cost Why spend money on what is not bread And your labor on what does not satisfy Listen Listen to me And eat what is good And you will delight In the richest of fare Give ear and come to me Listen that you may live I will make an everlasting covenant with you My faithful love promised to David See I have made him a witness to the peoples A ruler and commander of the peoples Surely you will summon nations you know not And nations you do not know Will come running to you Because of the Lord your God The Holy One of Israel For he has endowed you with splendor Seek the Lord while he may be found Call on him while he is near Let the wicked forsake their ways And the unrighteous their thoughts Let them turn to the Lord And he will have mercy on them And to our God

For he will freely pardon For my thoughts are not your thoughts Neither are your ways my ways Declares the Lord As the heavens are higher than the earth So are my ways higher than your ways And my thoughts than your thoughts This is the word of our Lord Thanks be to God I'm done for the day, Joost I'm staying here tonight Here? In this village?

Yeah Pamplona is a stone throw away My feet are killing me I gotta get out of these shoes I'm sorry, but not me, man Pamplona beckons Okay It's been a pleasure, Tom I've got a good feed I have good food And Julie Good out to you Good a while Good bar Just■■■■ Good Make now Good Well, all right How are you?

Good How are you?gehen Good Good Good Go Good Guys Good Good Good Good
Good Happy Ah!

[25 : 06] I don't speak Spanish. We were expecting you. Expecting you. You are pilgrims, eh? Yes.
We are always expecting pilgrims.

Come, we have plenty of pets and your foot is still warm. Hey, the Americans are here.
Well, well, well, well. Come on.

Come on. The truth of the matter is confused. No, Charlemagne had other ideas.

To extend his empire. He crossed the Pyrenees, but nothing worked out as he intended.
This is Spain. This is Basque Spain. He tortured the Basques of Pamplona and allowed
his men to have a little too much rest and relaxation with our women.

When the Basque shepherds who lived around here heard what happened in Pamplona,
they slipped into the woods. Then we, we Basques, killed them. Sorry, Monsieur.

[26 : 10] But based on what I have read here, that is complete crap. D'accord? You won't find much
truth in this book. Charlemagne. Roland, not Roland.

Roland. This is part of French history, okay? No, not Basque. No, not Basque. The
French, the French don't want to admit that the death of Roland was because of
Charlemagne's and Christian intentions.

Come on. Allez, bonne nuit tout le monde. Ah. Wait a minute, wait a minute. Night. Wait a
minute, señor, señor. I thought it was the Arabs that killed Roland.

Oh, bueno, bueno, bueno. Otra vez, otra vez. ¿Te lo explico o con qué? Eh, pasa.
Hombre. Estás dormido. Bachelard. Te lo voy a explicar.

Vamos a dormir. Bachelard. Bachelard. Frens, would you join me for a word of prayer,
please?

[27 : 08] Loving and gracious God, we are so thankful for this moment. And as we come for you
today, come before you at this moment, with our hearts open after having prayed
together, sung together, and heard your word, we're praying that you will move gently, yet
so powerfully and gracefully among us, giving each of us what we need, planting that
seed that will grow and bear fruit, for the honor and the glory of your name.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray. Amen. That was a great moment, isn't it? We
can think back to all the fun times we have around tables like that, where people are just
having a good time, engaged in some sort of debate, and everybody's just smiling and
laughing, and it's good.

We all love that, right? At least most of us love that. And as we see that played out on the
screen here, as you heard me say during our greeting, that this is from a film called The
Way.

And the main character you saw there, played by Martin Sheen, is going through a difficult
time. He's recently lost his son.

His son has passed away. And his son was taking this pilgrimage. It's a journey through
parts of France and Spain, where you go to several sacred sites.

[28 : 31] And his son was intending to take that journey. But since his son didn't do it, he's inspired
to do it himself. And so where you meet him is that he's kind of into the journey now.

It's still pretty new. But he's into the journey now, and he's encountered this other
character named Yost. And that's where we entered the clip. Because he and Yost have
been having this back and forth as they've been walking together.

And Yost is this big kind of in-your-face guy who wants to party a lot. And that's kind of the
conversation you see happening. Tom is the name of Martin Sheen's character.

He's kind of worn out. And Yost, you heard him say, look, the big city, Pamplona, where we can go and have a good time is over there. You don't want to stay here. Right? There's nothing here.

But he says, no, no, I'm done. I need to turn in. So he heads on up to the village. And he gets there and he finds the table and that's where we are.

[29 : 33] But it's an interesting moment for him. Tom, this character. Because he's experiencing exactly what Pastor Kathy was talking about in her prayer before the altar.

He's coming. He's coming. Because he's headed up that path that you see. And he comes and he has no expectations. He's just tired. He's done. And he just knows that he needs to take care of himself.

And yet, what does he find? The host comes out and says, we were expecting. He's like, how? That's not. You didn't know I was coming. And exactly what he needs is there.

He says, we have plenty of beds. Food is still warm. And we got a seat for you here at the table. And similarly to what Pastor Kathy was saying, there's no expectation from him.

Just come and join us. It's a strange thing to encounter love like that. It's a strange thing to encounter a moment like that.

[30 : 43] When you're feeling worn out. When you're feeling done. And all of a sudden, here is this wonderful experience just waiting for you. The reason why we want to talk about that is because we're in this place now as we are on this Lenten journey.

And you heard read for us today. This idea of God's ways being better than our ways.

God's ways being better than our ways. See, that's interesting with this particular character. Because Tom, if you weren't here for the past couple of weeks, you may have missed some of this storytelling.

But Tom essentially has everything the world says he's supposed to have. He's a successful doctor. He's materially wealthy. He's got a little group of friends around him.

And they collect, get together, and they play golf. And from the outside looking in, there's nothing missing. Right? Right? Right?

[31 : 48] But Tom knows something isn't right. Like all of us, Tom's had a story. Now what we find out is that his wife has passed away. And in many ways, he hasn't dealt with that.

And his son comes and tells him, you know what? I can't walk the same path as you. That Tom kind of had this normal expectation.

The world said, this is the way your life's supposed to look. These are the things you're supposed to do. And even though he's gotten to this place where by the outside looking in, everything is right.

Tom knows in his heart, something's not right. And Daniel, his son, knows that too.

And he says, there's got to be more to this experience. There's got to be more to this thing we call life than just finding the right job, doing these things, and continuing to just move this machine along.

[32 : 59] So he decides that he's going to take this pilgrimage. And of course, dad can't process it. Makes no sense to him.

But when he finds out that Daniel's passed away, it puts him back in touch with some places that he doesn't want to go.

Because Tom evinces this thing that I've certainly experienced on my journey, and I know many people have experienced on that journey, that usually we talk about this thing sort of as this uniquely God-sized hole in your spirit.

That you can do so much right according to the world. You can look just fine to the world. But there's this uniquely God-sized hole that the world can't touch.

That even if everything is going right according to what the culture says you should do, according to the way the culture says you should act, you've got the house, the car, the job, the things, all of that stuff is there, but you know that that hole is there.

[34 : 18] And it's like a void that keeps gnawing at you. No matter how you try and fill it. And we've all probably known people and we've all probably tried to fill it in our own wrong ways.

But nothing fills it. As I said, it's a uniquely God-sized space. And what that means is only God can fill it.

And if you don't realize that, if you don't recognize that, you continue chasing things, you continue trying things, because nothing can touch that unique space in your soul.

And so, as Tom the character is on this journey, he's starting to encounter it. But see, the thing that hits him that he wasn't prepared for is that he said he's exhausted and he's kind of not even sure how this thing's supposed to work.

But you saw him at the table, right? That as they were doing their back and forth and giving each other a hard time having this debate about history from their different places, points of view.

[35 : 30] But see, the thing, it was a debate and everybody was smiling and it was the perfect vibe. And you saw, I don't know if you caught this, but it was subtle. That while he's sitting at the table, he sort of cracks this smile and he realizes, yeah, this is a good time.

Now, that's kind of the point. Because when you hear this passage from Scripture, you know, it's one that kind of hits us hard and it's one that's easy for us to pass by.

But the message is there. Not only do we hear this message here, we hear this message in different ways throughout Scripture. Jesus talks about this and you hear it in other places as well. But here in Isaiah, hear the words again.

And I'm just going to read the first two verses. Come, all you who are thirsty. Come to the waters. And you who have no money, come buy and eat.

Come buy wine and milk, money without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread and your labor on what does not satisfy?

[36 : 48] See, that's that hole. It's that idea of you're out here scratching, working, grinding, and you're doing all these things, and it's not touching that space.

Because you're trying to do it and trying to fill it with the wrong things. And then, what Tom catches on to is that maybe this is what it's about.

These relationships, these kinds of moments, these kinds of experiences. You know, when we've shown those pictures of people on vacation, right? That those are the stories we tell.

Those are the memories that make our life, right? We don't just talk about going to work. We talk about those moments. Those are the things that set our hearts on fire.

Those are the things that we say yes when I tell a story. And even if you do tell a story about going to work, right? It's usually because something exceptional happened there. And you want to invite someone in. You want to connect over it.

[37 : 53] Not to just simply show off that you had a work thing. That's the difference. A friend of mine taught me something that I still use, because I think about it sometimes.

What he said to me was, he's like, my job is not my life. And now he likes his job. He says, my job is not my life. I have a job so I can pay for my life.

And that's a really different way to think about it. When you let your stuff, that stuff just consume you and it becomes who you are. And most people realize that, you know, if you're blessed to really like what you do, if you're blessed to love what you do, that's a good thing.

And you can live your ministry through your occupation. That's a much deeper conversation. I don't want to, we don't want to go there yet. But I do want you to appreciate something though.

It's those moments that make your story uniquely your story. Even if they take place in the context of what you do for a living.

[39 : 04] That's usually not the sum total of your life. When you think of what is your life, you think of times like that. You think of those times when you were connected to the people who you love.

You think of those times when God did something with you, showed you something and took your breath away. Those times that make you laugh and feel the highest. Those times when you were at your very lowest, but somehow God brought you through it, brought you out of it.

And people were there on the journey with you. And you tell those stories. That's what this is about. You see, in many ways, I think that sometimes we, and clearly this character Tom, commit what's called a user error.

Now see, I have a lot of friends who are IT professionals. And they're the ones who taught me this phrase because I kept making this many user errors. But real world example.

I bought a laptop last year and anybody who knows me and knows me, you know, pretty well knows I live on my computer. I mean, I just have to because that's how my work is done. And if I'm not on my laptop, I'm usually on my phone, which is a different part and a different kind of computer.

[40 : 17] But so I buy this new laptop and it works differently than the one I had before. So I turn it on and I hit the button and everything does what it does.

So I set it up and then this one has, and some of you probably have one like this too, the power button is actually has this fingerprint scanner on it so that it keeps your computer more secure.

Now, me not paying attention to the directions. The second time I want to turn my computer on. I open it up and I'm pushing the button.

Because that's what I had to do on the other one. So I'm pushing the button. I'm pushing it and it doesn't come on. Hello. And so I'm mad at the computer.

Yeah, I'm ready to call Dell. I'm ready to do all these things. I'm pushing the button and I'm doing this, saying things I can't say, especially standing here. So then I don't know what happened.

[41 : 19] Maybe it was just one of those guardian angel, grace of God kind of moments, but my fingertips kind of sat there for more than half a second. And then it came on. And you know the point I'm trying to make here is there's absolutely nothing wrong with the computer.

I'm just not using it correctly. And as mad as I am about the computer, this is my thing. The reason why I say this is because, as I said, the character Tom does what I think many of us have done.

Because God has given this unique thing that we call life. And we get into it and we start thinking it's supposed to work a certain way because that's what the world has told us.

Yet we end up unhappy and we keep banging the button wanting it to do something else. And when God said, you know, I really wanted life to work like this.

And yet we're the ones who are unhappy. And that's not God's fault. We're not using it right. And that's the thing.

[42 : 34] Adrian children what we were talking about. There's this great moment in the scene that sometimes people blow by. And it's kind of the point. When Tom, the character played by Martin Sheen is sitting at the table and he's sort of enjoying this moment.

That he looks up and he sees his son at the table. And his son has this smile, same way as dad has this smile.

And when they exchange this glance, that face is telling him, do you get it now? That this is what it's about. This is why you wanted to be here.

This is the point that I was trying to make. That this is what we're trying to get. Not just simply keep checking the boxes and acquiring more things.

This is the way it's supposed to work. Why do you think, church, that everybody was so excited to get back to the fish fries?

[43 : 40] When we couldn't have them and we couldn't do them the way that people were used to doing them. And then they were back. What is it that's so unique about those moments? Because everybody can't wait to be in that moment together.

It's a lot of work. Y'all don't need me to tell you that. But everybody's done and when they're done, everybody feels good. Everybody's smiling.

Everybody's at tables when you're eating with each other or if you're serving people, meeting new people. We leave and everybody's flying high. Because it's not just about dinner.

It's about our shared experience. That's the key. And so when you hear God saying, my ways are higher than your ways.

This is what we're getting at. This is what God is trying to tell us all along. That we're out here trying to chase the machine.

[44 : 45] And he said, that's not what I built you for. That's not how I designed the program. My ways are higher than your ways.

And not only do we need to reset that, but there's two other points here that we want to make sure we don't miss. The first goes to what we said before. That God gives this to us for nothing.

For nothing. You don't have to earn it. You don't have to work for it. Just like Tom did in the video. You show up and it's right there waiting for you.

Right there waiting for you. He didn't cook anything. He didn't bring anything. He didn't bring anything. All they said was, come on and sit down. Same way God says that to us.

You don't have to impress me. You don't owe me something. I've taken care of the problem. Everything is handled. Just say yes. Second piece.

[46 : 01] Is to remember, when we are out here in the world, who are you being for the rest of the world? When we encounter people we know who have made that mistake and are still scratching the same way, who will you be for them?

Are you prepared to be one of these people at the table who just says, welcome. We've been expecting you. Come sit down. Let's create this space for someone who we know needs it.

Because we know what it means. We know what it meant to us. What it means to us to have that safe space. Will we, in our own unique ways, be those who offer that to a world that is hurting so much?

That the light that shines through us is so warm, so bright, so gentle. That that's what people say, yes, I need more of that.

Because that's not our light. It's that we've actually let God into that God-sized space. And that's what shines through. And that's what people want to be near.

[47 : 21] That's what people want to touch. That's the key. God's ways are higher than our ways. Let's take the highway.

Let's be God's people for the world. Amen? And amen. Loving and gracious God, thank you. Thank you for the gift that is your wisdom.

Thank you for showing us that as the world takes us one way, there is a more excellent way. There is your way. Your ways are higher than our ways.

Help us to see you. Help us to listen for you. Help us to live in love like you. As we have come to understand your gifts. Help us to share them with others.

So that your world and all your children might be transformed. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen. In the song we shared this morning, the very last line is, Everyone is welcome at the table of grace.

[48 : 46] And I want you to think about that for a minute. In a world of limits, maximum capacities, sold out concerts, sold out venues. We have a God who makes room for everyone.

So I invite you to stand as we worship. Singing, come share the Lord. We gather here in Jesus' name.

His love is burning in our hearts like living clay. For through His loving Son, the Father makes us one.

Come take the bread, come drink the wine, come share the Lord. No one is a stranger here.

Everyone belongs. He joins us here. He brings the bread. The Lord who pours the cup is risen from the dead. The one we love the most. The Lord who pours the cup is risen from the dead. The one we love the most.

[50 : 08] Is now our gracious host. Come take the bread. The Lord who pours the cup is risen from the dead. Come take the bread. Come take the bread, come drink the wine. Come share the Lord.

He breaks the bread. The Lord who pours the cup is risen from the dead. The one we love the most is now our gracious host.

Come take the bread, come drink the wine, come share the Lord. You may be seated. Come to the table we've been expecting you.

We are, as we sit here preparing to receive this gift, this bread, this cup, we are mindful of how blessed we are that we get to share in bread, in juice.

Not everyone has that opportunity. Not everyone has a table that they are welcome at. Not everyone has food to eat. So as we prepare to be here, we also prepare our hearts in prayer for those who aren't and those who cannot.

[51 : 47] We also prepare our hearts by offering our prayers of confession or just a connection with God before we come to the table.

So let us take a moment of silence and offer ourselves to God. Hear this good news that God has loved you from the very beginning, whether you are ready or not, whether you're ready today or not.

The invitation to receive at this table is never ending. You go back and there is no beginning except for with Christ and there will never be an end.

The Holy Spirit transforms us if we come, if we open. And so know this, in the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. Glory to God. Amen. The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts.

[53 : 01] Lift them up to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise. It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, almighty God, creator of all that was and is and is to come.

You formed us in your image, in goodness, asking us to walk with you in love. When we held back from your invitation, you came looking.

You sought us out, encouraging us on our way, time and time again. You led those who could not see by a road they did not know.

You have turned nighttime before them into light. You have smoothed out the rough places and made them plain. You have released the prisoners from dungeons.

You have made all things new. And so with your people on earth and the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn.

[54 : 10] 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. Hosanna in the highest.

God of newness of life and renewed covenants of love by water and the spirit. And on the night, he gave himself up for all. He was at the table with his friends.

He invited them and he invites us to pause in our quest for getting to the destination. to pause and to savor the company of one another.

He took the bread which was already on the table and he gave thanks to God for it and he broke it and he offered it to them and said, Take this, eat it in remembrance of me.

[55 : 45] And he took the cup, he gave thanks for the fruit of the vine and he offered to them and he said, Take and drink from this all of you in remembrance of my blood which is shed for you.

He invited them, he invites us all to keep walking together, to keep offering this bread, to remember his body in the breaking and sharing, to invite each other and all as we receive a cup that is designed to be given for forgiveness.

For us and for all. And so in remembrance of God's mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves 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. Oh God, pour out your Holy Spirit on all of us gathered here and on these gifts of bread and cup.

Make them be for us, the body and blood of Christ, so that we may be for the world, the body of Christ redeemed by his blood. By your spirit, make us one with Christ, one on this Lenten journey with one another, until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

[57 : 23] 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. Let us pray together the prayer that Jesus taught. 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 and ever.

Amen. As we prepare to receive this gift, know that each and every one of you are welcome. No matter your age, your background, you are welcome.

[58 : 25] We talk about wine, but we use grape juice. And we have gluten-free bread available for people over here. And we have prepackaged communion for anyone who would like it or who would like to take it to someone that you love.

As soon as we serve the servers, then they will turn and you are invited to come through the center and back around to your seats.

And so, just know, it's not a United Methodist table. It's the table of Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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

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

[59 : 30] Amen.

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

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

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. The table is prepared. Please come.

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

[61 : 26] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Enjoy yourself and remember that place you had. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[64 : 52] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. The last line of our closing song pretty much says it all. We will go forth in grace alone.

I invite you to stand for the closing song, Grace Alone. And I will sing in grace. Thank you. Amen. Amen.

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

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

[66 : 08] only by His grace Every mountain we will find Every ray of hope we shine Every blessing
hefty mind is only by His grace Praise the Lord, which heart supplies Strength alone, He
will provide Christ in us, our Lord's hope We will go more in grace alone Every soul we
long to reach

Every heart we hope to teach Everywhere we share His peace Is only by His grace Every
loving good we say Every tear we wipe away Every sorrow turned to grace Is only by His
grace Praise the Lord, which heart supplies Strength alone, He will provide Christ in us,
our Lord's hope We will go more in grace alone

Grace alone, if God supplies Strength alone, we will provide Christ in us, our Lord's hope
We will go more in grace alone We will go more in grace alone Grace alone is what gives
us the table Grace alone is what makes all things possible Grace alone shows us that His
ways are higher than what the world teaches us Rest in that truth and let it make a
difference for you In all you encounter Now in the name of God, our Creator and King

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and our Savior And in the name of the Holy Spirit, our Comforter and our Sustainer May God bless us now as we leave to love and serve God And all God's children Amen Amen Naim Naim Naim Naim Naim Naim Naim Naim Naim Naim Thank you.

Thank you.

[71 : 03] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[73 : 33] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.