

Anointed

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Preacher: Pastor Cathy Hall Stengel

[0 : 00] Music Community pianoing gânger phonetically Amen.

Good morning.

Good morning. It is good to see you. And if we haven't met, I'm Kathy Stengel, one of the pastors here at Pendleton Center. If you're watching online, welcome to worship.

It's good to be here. We have been moving through a series, The Tie That Binds.

And so I, our display back there, we have added to, tied to, connected to.

[1 : 54] And in a few minutes, we will sing, Blessed Be the Tie That Binds. And so I braided this piece, these three pieces of cloth.

They're nothing alike, completely different. You would likely never wear these things together. And yet, here they are. Being bound together in the life and ministry and love of Jesus Christ in a local church is something that cannot be compared to many things.

My children grew up wondering, where do you get dinner when something bad happens if you don't go to church?

See, food is really big in the United Methodist Church. Where do people, when they're kids, where do they find friends that go to other schools?

Church. Church. There's so much more to it. But in our scripture reading today, which is short and simple about being anointed and blessed and what a pleasant and good experience it is to be a part of the body of Christ.

[3 : 06] The hope is that it will never be a tie that is bound at both ends with no way to get in.

The idea of anointing historically was one of the ways that people were welcomed into a home, a ceremony, a ritual, a time of worship and learning, a time for healing, a time for dying, a time when people are marked with a sense of how they belong to a community that wants to love them, hold them, hold them, and make sure that to the last day that they are with us on this physical place where we live, that they know they will always be welcomed in the body of Christ, blessed by the tie that binds us all in faith.

Let's pray. Oh Lord, you are the tie that binds us together. We come from many places and many thoughts and many feelings.

Some are strong and out loud. Some are quiet and barely whispered. Some of us come from a background of great and deep and profound faith and others find themselves tiptoeing into it.

Oh Lord, for those who are not able to say I believe and those who shout to the mountaintops, may we come together in this time of worship and know that the tie that binds us is so very blessed.

[4 : 59] You are Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen. Church, I invite you to stand as we sing our first song that celebrates connections new and old.

Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.

The fellowship of hindered minds is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne, we pour our heart and prayers.

Our fears, our hopes, our aims, our won, our confidence, our cares.

[6 : 27] We share each other's bones, our mutual burdens bear.

And often for each other's bones, our sympathizing tear.

When we are so underpart, it is a sinner's pain.

But we shall still be joined in heart and hope to meet again.

You may be seated. Good morning.

[7 : 43] Good morning. Good morning. It's fall, and it started fish fry season here. And if you were here on Friday, you know that we sold about 300 dinners, and it was fantastic.

And the people that were here were so glad to be back and so glad to be in person. And I want to invite you, if you didn't come, you have two more weeks, two more opportunities to come.

You can volunteer. You can come and eat dinner. Carl, they did a fantastic job. So I invite you to come and spend that time with us. We also, it's the season to start thinking about Operation Christmas Child.

And I want to ask Anna to come up here and share with us. Good morning.

Some of you may know me, but for those who don't, my name is Anna Smith, and I have taken over the Operation Christmas Child Ministry here at PCMC. Today is our shoebox kickoff, and if you'd like any information regarding the shoeboxes or would like to help in any way, you can find me at our display table out in the hallway as you leave the sanctuary.

[8 : 54] I have two announcements. Our first announcement is we are teaming up with our Angel Wings Youth Group to put on our very first packing pizza party on November 7th.

That event will take place after the late service. We are looking for donations to help fill the shoeboxes and sponsors for each shoebox. If you feel God calling you to help, you can find a list of items and a sign-up sheet in the back of the sanctuary.

Lastly, our Shoebox Sunday is able to take place this year, happening on November 21st after the late service. I don't know about you, but I'm excited to see all the shoebox piled up in front of the sanctuary again.

We need a lot of hands to help count, pack, and load the shoeboxes to make this event successful. If you would like to help, you can sign up at the PCMC website. Again, if anybody would like to volunteer, has questions, or needs information, someone at the display table to talk to.

Thank you. Will you pray with me, please?

[10 : 02] Heavenly Father, we thank you for the opportunity. We thank you to be a people that are guided, called, and sustained by the Holy Spirit.

Our journey and experience of your life helps us keep a closer connection with you. Spiritual encounters, solitude, retreat, prayer, and meditation help guide this connection.

You were touched through personal and meaningful connections with other people. And these connections were experienced through receiving, sharing, touching, healing, teaching, proclaiming, and justice-making.

Please allow your model to be the experience that shows us how to be faithful disciples and follow those who have gone before us.

Being stewards and the challenges that balance our journeys lead us to more, less material lives.

[11 : 07] Touched by the ever-present Holy Spirit, may our journey of disciple formation strengthen our understanding of you, our shapes, our attitudes, our behaviors, and our actions.

Father, we're going to use this time to thank you for the many gifts that we received in life. Allow our hearts to grow aligned with you while we gratefully and faithfully receive your offering.

In your name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

[13 : 02] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Heavenly Father, everything we have and everything we are comes from you.

We offer you our gifts, our talents, our service, and our lives so that we may grow your kingdom. In your name we pray.

[16 : 02] Amen. You may be seated. And we just want to thank the men of hymns this morning for being back. And that was beautiful. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Good morning again, church. Thank you. It is indeed a joy to celebrate how we are indeed bound together, bound to God by God's love and our love for God, bound to each other by our love for each other.

And it is something to celebrate. One of the ways in which we live that blessing, one of the ways in which we live that relationship is in our conversation with God.

And so let us open our hearts as we discern movement in the presence of God in prayer. Let's pray together. Blessed be the most holy name, God.

Blessed be your most holy name. We come to you today knowing you as our beloved Father. We come to you today knowing you as our true provider. We come to you today knowing you as our best healer.

[17 : 10] We come to you today knowing you as our almighty creator. Blessed indeed be your holy name. We come this morning because we celebrate the ways in which you are moving in our lives.

We have known you to touch us, to bring us joy. We have known you to open doors when ways seem to be closed. We have known you to make a way when it felt there was no way.

And so we celebrate the one who does these things for us. And no matter what is on our hearts today, the joy we share, the praises because we have known so many good things.

Or the challenges before us that weigh us down. Whether it's because we have loved ones who are suffering or we might be suffering ourselves. Those who are ill or injured.

Those who may be distressed because there is a problem or circumstance before them. And they're not clear on the way. Those who may be suffering because of violence and oppression around the world.

[18 : 18] Those who may be in deep and real need. Hunger, shelter, and other forms of human need. Lord God, we know that you know all things.

But we gather today as your people. Seeking to understand the ways in which you are moving and working. To appeal on those who are hurting. Lord God, your name is to be praised.

Your name and your name alone is worthy. Because we know we do not do these things by ourselves. That you go before us. That you walk beside us and you stay behind.

To make sure that things are according to the ways you would have them. Always working to build the kingdom. Always working to open our minds and hearts. Lord, we come because we seek to walk in the ways that you have prepared.

Because we celebrate all the ways in which you have brought us this far. So we come as a people of hope. We come as a people of love. And we come as a people in worship of a God who is worthy to be praised.

[19 : 28] Indeed, blessed be your name. We offer this prayer in the name of the one who makes all things possible. Our Lord and our Savior, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen vous Ord sjouz peu. Amen.

Good morning.

Today's scripture is from Psalm 133. Look at how good and pleasing it is when families live together as one. It is like expensive oil poured over the head, running down onto the beard, Aaron's beard, which extended over the collar of his robes.

It is like the dew on Mount Hermon, streaming down onto the mountains of Zion, because it is there that the Lord has commanded the blessing, everlasting life.

[20 : 43] This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Thank you, Elizabeth. A family as one that feels so good and pleasant like expensive oil pouring over your head, through your beard or over your face and onto your clothing.

How does that sound? Probably not all that appealing. Let's put it in perspective that in the days in which this scripture was sung and lifted up as words of praise and thanksgiving, anointing was much more a part of the culture.

The use of oils and oils with scents in them, scent, S-C-E-N-T, in them, were far more common to be used as a way of blessing someone, a way of offering prayer for healing, a way for even we talk about on Good Friday when Jesus died, and the women were going to prepare his body for burial, and part of that meant using oils and things on his body.

Now, you can look at all the scientific reasons for that, but the bottom line is that whether you were welcomed into a home for a dinner or welcomed into a worship experience for a ritual, people sang this hymn.

That's what this is. It's a hymn. It's 14 of 15 of the songs of ascent, and people sang it as they headed into Jerusalem for weeks of festivals, Passover, a variety of really high holy days in the life of the Jewish community.

[23 : 00] And as they walked, they sang, and this would have been one of the psalms that they sang, and it brought them a sense of this is what God is like.

God is like, and you can fill in something that isn't oil all over your face and your clothing, but the idea is that it is the most wonderful and good and pleasant experience to have this oil used on you, claiming you to be a part of the community, to be a part of this ritual, to be a part of this festival, to be a part of Passover, or the Feast of the Tabernacle.

People throughout generations have used anointing as a part of sacred life together. Protestants historically have not used anointing the way that Episcopalians and Roman Catholics, some of the Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, places at churches like that have a far more solid place for anointing in their life together.

I think that part of the reason that Protestant churches have not had it as a part of their life together is in that separation from the Roman Catholic Church.

That this is, in fact, some people will feel the sense that anointing is a Catholic thing to do. I'd like to invite people to understand it as Catholic, like the Apostles' Creed, where we say it with a small C and not a big C, which means that it's a part of the church universal and can mean anything that you want it to mean in terms of, marked with the love and the blessing and the goodness and the pleasantness that God sent us to have.

[25 : 13] Water. The dew in the grass is lifted up as another good and pleasant, and it talks about running to Mount Hermon.

Well, the reality is there was no rain. There was no rain. So in the cool of the night when the dew would form on the plants and trees and leaves, what there were, then in the morning would water that very plant.

That's how that plant got watered, was with the dew that came in the night. And there were those who would collect the water from the leaves and the trees.

And the water would go into the earth through the plants and come as it came down the hills. So when you think about oil and water, and we talk about how they don't mix, but the reality is that they are two parts of some of the most sacred experiences that people have in the life of the Christian faith.

Good and pleasant. I don't know that some of our really preaching gangbusters, rousing the crowd kind of songs, kind of we think of good, pleasant.

[26 : 37] If we think about the men of him, well, that was pleasant. That doesn't feel like necessarily the kind of affirmation with which it is meant in this scripture.

The way that it was originally written is that good and pleasant is a way of feeling, a way of being that fills your whole body with a sense of the goodness of God.

Not just, that was pleasant. It's more of a through your whole body kind of feeling. We often, when you look at rituals of birthing and dying, one of the things that happens right away when a baby is born, well, not right away, but they are washed.

And that has been true whether born at home or in tents or in reservations or in hospitals. Babies are washed when they are born.

And then at some point, given the faith of the family, they are brought before the family of God and baptized with water. However, I have not always known what to do with anointing because of being a Protestant, a late Christian.

[27 : 59] What is this? And what does it mean? And what would I do? And there was an awkwardness. There was also an awkwardness the first time that someone said, can we lay hands on you and pray?

And I was like, whoa. Whoa. You're going to touch me? I don't, I think I just met you, didn't I? And there's a sense of a little bit of uncomfortableness.

And so where I began with anointing was with babies born in the hospital. When I would be called and told that a baby had been born in the hospital, my first response is, would you like me to come?

Yes, please, can I come? And there was a sense that there was desired a blessing for this baby. And knowing that a family may bring a baby for baptism.

It's not baptism. It's a blessing. It's a recognition that this child has arrived and is named.

[28 : 59] And then using oil. Now let me explain. Oil, everything from baby oil to lotion. Baby lotion is what I have used throughout the years.

Not anointing oil that often has scents in it that actually can burn your skin if you're really sensitive. So one time with a tube of Aveeno baby lotion squeezed out onto Big Sister's hand.

So then we could anoint her twin little sisters soon after they were born by putting a little bit of the lotion on and putting the sign of the cross, naming them, proclaiming their name out loud.

Here they are. Because before that they were a mystery. And now here they are. So there's a marking that comes with anointing. When people come to the end of their lives has been the other time when I have grown accustomed to using anointing.

That when someone is in the hospital or hospice or at home and we're gathered around that person just like, thank God, we can sometimes be around them now.

[30 : 18] We can anoint them. From the time you were born until now when you pass in to this next life. From God you came and to God you return.

And so I anoint you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And a blessing for the journey into the arms of Jesus. And so this whole section in the middle, anointing can be everything from a broken heart, a prayer for healing, a prayer of naming and claiming and belonging.

A sense of knowing that God knows what's in your heart and in your life. And that this anointing can be an example of what it means and might feel that the Spirit might come to you in this making of the cross on your forehead.

And so at the end of the service when we share in communion, we are gifted with the food of Jesus Christ to bless us and strengthen us.

And then we will invite you to come to any one of us to be anointed should you choose. And should you not choose, you just walk right on back to your seat. There's no pressure here.

[31 : 42] It's an invitation. It's an invitation to be marked once again or maybe for the first time with the blessing of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Would you pray with me? Lord, we ask you. Sometimes we plead. Sometimes we laugh and sometimes we beg.

Be near us. Be in us. Bind us together. Make us one in a space where we are more different than sometimes we even know.

Bind us with the sign of your cross. Bind us with the breaking of bread and the dipping into the cup and the being fed for the journey.

Lord, bind us together. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen. Amen. I want to add before Scott begins with communion that the oil that we are using is one of the purest that's available.

[32 : 57] No scent. It's sunflower oil. It's just that. So I just wanted to reassure people who have allergies and can't tolerate scents and things like that.

So thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

As you heard, Pastor Kathy, you have a unique opportunity to experience God in these special ways today, not only in the gift of God's table, but also in the gift of anointing.

So let us ready our hearts as we prepare to experience the gift of Christ, that is, communion. 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, for Almighty God, the creator of heaven and earth, you formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.

[34 : 04] 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 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 learn war anymore. And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we lift your name and join their unending hymn.

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. 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.

[35 : 39] At his ascension, you exalted him to sit and reign with you at your right hand. And on the night Jesus gave himself up for us, he took bread, he gave thanks to you, and he broke the bread, and he gave it to his disciples, saying, take and eat, for this is my body which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me. And when the supper was over, he took the cup, he gave thanks to you, and he gave it to his disciples, saying, drink from this, all of you, for this is my blood, poured out for you and for many, sign of the new covenant, for the forgiveness of sin.

Every time you drink it, do it in remembrance of me. 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, 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.

[37 : 28] Through your son, Jesus Christ, with your Holy Spirit, and in your Holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.

And now let's pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

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

Amen. Would you like to be in on it? Please come forward.

[39 : 33] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Counselor, comforter, keeper, spirit we long to embrace.

[43 : 16] You offer hope when our hearts are hopelessly lost away.

Oh, we hopelessly lost away. You are the one that we praise.

You are the one we adore. You give the healing and grace.

Our hearts always hunger for. Oh, our hearts always hunger for.

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

[44 : 18] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Almighty, infinite Father Faithfully loving your Lord Here in our weakness
you find us Falling before your throne Oh, we're falling before your throne You are the one
that we praise You are the one we adore You give the healing and grace Our hearts
always hunger for Oh, our hearts always hunger for

You are the one that we praise You are the one we adore You give the healing and grace
Our hearts always hunger for Oh, our hearts always hunger for Oh, our hearts always
hunger for Thank you

Thank you Thank you Thank you Thank you Thank you Thank you Thank you Thank you
Thank you Thank you Thank you Thank you Thank you Thank you Thank you Thank you
Good and pleasant.

We hope that will be your experience of our final song, that it just fills you with the love of
God and expresses your love to God, because this is a celebration song that we sing to
God.

[48 : 12] So I invite you to stand as we sing, Awesome is the Lord Most High. There is a disclaimer.
You may find yourselves wanting to move your body as you lift your heart and maybe
even lift your hands.

We'll see. We are you, Lord, mighty and strength.

You are faithful. You will offer me. We will praise you in all of our names.

For your glory, we offer everything. Raise your hands, all you nations. Shout to God,
creation.

Now awesome is the Lord Most High. We will trust you. God, we will go.

[49 : 29] You're the answer. We want the world to know. We will trust you.

You call our name. Where you lead us. We'll follow all the way. Raise your hand, all your
nations.

Shout to God, creation. How awesome is the Lord Most High. We will praise you together.

For now and forever. How awesome is the Lord most high Hallelujah, hallelujah How
awesome is the Lord most high Hallelujah, hallelujah How awesome is the Lord most high
Praise your hands, all your nations Church, you love your creation How awesome is the
Lord most high We will praise you together For now and forever How awesome is the Lord
most high

How awesome is the Lord most high Lost the time Lost the time Amen Now there's a song
to carry you down the roads of life To praise the Lord who gathers you here even when we
are apart Who calls you beloved Who anoints you In mind, body, or spirit Or all of the
above With the love of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

[52 : 16] Go in that peace Amen God bless you Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen
Amen Amen Amen Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.