

Worship Leader Guide

DATE: Sunday, April 6, 2025

SERIES TITLE: Drink From the Fountain of Grace

Preacher: Pastor Amy

Liturgist: Stacy C:

Accompanist: Leigh Ann C

Greeters/Ushers:

Media Technicians: Tammy M

Nursery Attendant: Shirley C

[9:55 AM]

PRELUDE "Deep River" by Stevens Scott

[10:00 AM]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME & WORDS OF GRACE

Amy: The Lord be with you!

What a joy to see you all today. My name is Amy Sell, I use she/her pronouns and am the pastor here at Grace UMC. It is a joy to welcome you today whether you are here in our sanctuary today or joining us on livestream. We know we have a wonderful, diverse group of folks that come to worship with us online.

Friends, no matter where you come from today, or where you go at the close of this service, no matter what you believe or doubt, no matter what you feel or don't feel today, no matter your immigration status, no matter whom you love, you're welcome to come just as you are to be met by our God who knows you by name and who loves you and who wants to have an ever closer relationship with you. You are welcome here.

Let's pray: Righteous and compassionate God, thank you for the gift of forgiveness. May we reflect Jesus' righteousness in our lives by acting fairly and justly to everyone with whom we interact. May our we be living vessels of honor and evidence that Christ lives in us. Amen.

Liturgist: Please stand as you are able in body or spirit and join me in the Call to Worship.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Praise the Lord! God shows compassion by putting things right.

Many: We are blessed by God to be Jesus' hands and feet – feeding, giving, visiting, clothing, sheltering.

One: When did we feed Jesus, give Jesus a drink, clothe Jesus, and give him a place to stay?

Many: Feeding the hungry, caring for the suffering, clothing the naked, visiting those in prison – whatever we did for one of the least of these, we did for Jesus.

One: God holds compassion and justice together! Our love for God is shown by how we love and treat the stranger.

Many: Praise the Lord! Jesus has freed us from sin to love and serve.

Liturgist: Please join me as we lift our voices together in our opening hymn found in the red hymnal on page 140, Great Is Thy Faithfulness.

***OPENING HYMN:** UMH #140 Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;
as thou hast been, thou forever wilt be.

Refrain:

Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed thy hand hath provided;
great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
join with all nature in manifold witness
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. [Refrain]

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! [Refrain]

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

SCRIPTURE READING Deuteronomy 24:10-22

Today's first lesson is from the book of Deuteronomy.

When you make a loan of any kind to your neighbor, do not go into their house to get what is offered to you as a pledge. ¹¹ Stay outside and let the neighbor to whom you are making the loan bring the pledge out to you. ¹² If the neighbor is poor, do not go to sleep with their pledge in your possession. ¹³ Return their cloak by sunset so that your neighbor may sleep in it. Then they will thank you, and it will be regarded as a righteous act in the sight of the Lord your God.

¹⁴ Do not take advantage of a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether that worker is a fellow Israelite or a foreigner residing in one of your towns. ¹⁵ Pay them their wages each day before sunset, because they are poor and are counting on it. Otherwise they may cry to the Lord against you, and you will be guilty of sin.

¹⁶ Parents are not to be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their parents; each will die for their own sin.

¹⁷ Do not deprive the foreigner or the fatherless of justice, or take the cloak of the widow as a pledge. ¹⁸ Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there. That is why I command you to do this.

¹⁹ When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf, do not go back to get it. Leave it for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. ²⁰ When you beat the olives from your trees, do not go over the branches a second time. Leave what remains for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow. ²¹ When you harvest the grapes in your vineyard, do not go over the vines again. Leave what remains for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow. ²² Remember that you were slaves in Egypt. That is why I command you to do this.

One: This is the word of God for the people of God.

Many: Thanks be to God.

CHOIR ANTHEM - "The Prayer" by Foster & Sager

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Amy: The need for God's peace is crucial, now more than ever. In this place, we encounter the embodied presence of God's peace with each smile, hug, handshake, and high-five. From this place, we take God's peace out into the world. And so as a forgiven and reconciled people let us share the peace of Christ with one another.

GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 25:34-40

³⁴ "Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who will receive good things from my Father. Inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you before the world began. ³⁵ I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. ³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothes to wear. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.'

³⁷ "Then those who are righteous will reply to him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? ³⁸ When did we see you as a stranger and welcome you, or naked and give you clothes to wear? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?'

⁴⁰ "Then the king will reply to them, 'I assure you that when you have done it for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you have done it for me.'

One: This is the word of God for the people of God.

Many: Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE "Drink From the Fountain of Grace: The Cup of Compassion"

Pastor Amy

Prayer Hymn: W&S #3149 A Place at the Table

For everyone born, a place at the table,
for everyone born, clean water and bread,
a shelter, a space, a safe place for growing,
for everyone born, a star overhead.

Refrain:

And God will delight when we are creators
of justice and joy,
Yes, God will delight when we are creators
of justice, justice, and joy.

For woman and man, a place at the table,
revising the roles, deciding the share,
with wisdom and grace, dividing the power,
for woman and man, a system that's fair. [Refrain]

For young and for old, a place at the table,
a voice to be heard, a part in the song,
the hands of a child in hands that are wrinkled,
for young and for old, the right to belong. [Refrain]

For just and unjust, a place at the table.
abuser, abused, with need to forgive,
in anger, in hurt, a mind-set of mercy,
for just and unjust, a new way to live. [Refrain]

For everyone born, a place at the table,
to live without fear, and simply to be,
to work, to speak out, to witness and worship,
for everyone born, the right to be free. [Refrain]

JOYS & CONCERNS

Amy: As we make our way back to our seats, we will move into a time of prayer. Are there joys and concerns that you would like to lift, so that we can be in prayer and praise with each other today and in this coming week?

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND PARDON

**Compassionate God,
True justice is right relationship.
Help us see the forces that get in the way
of our having truly caring, respectful, healing relationships with other people.
Help us own our vulnerability to prejudice, judgment, and self-righteousness.**

**We seek your righteousness, which we see in Jesus, the Word made flesh,
who reconciles and renews,
who rebuilds and redeems,
who brings us into restored relationship with God,
and who points the way to restored relationship with our neighbor.
Forgive us, quench us, make us whole, all in the name of Jesus. Amen.**

PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD

Amy:

OFFERING OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES -

“When you have done it to the least of these you have done it to me” -- is more than an invitation, it is an admonition. Our faith compels us to put love into action. To follow Jesus of Nazareth is to take to heart his call to care for his children, which we do now through the giving of our gifts.

Let's Pray: A drink of water. A visit. A meal. May the gifts we give extend to others the blessings we ourselves have received: welcome, nourishment, liberation. Amen.

“White As Snow” arr by Gary Rhodes, Judy T, Organ & Leigh Ann C, Piano

DOXOLOGY UMH #95

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Beloved friends, this table is open to all—
not just those who look a certain way,
are from a certain place,
or love a certain person.

All.

You.

Our neighbors.

Me.

All of us.

Come and be transformed.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

One: God be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your fears, your hopes, your heart.

All: We lift them up to God.

One: Let us give thanks to our transformed and transforming God.

All: We joyfully give our thanks and praise.

It is a joyous occasion when we come and give thanks to you, O God.

You see all that we are and call us beloved.

You formed us, all of us, in your image.

Even in our doubt and amidst the other messages we receive, your steadfast love endures.

You came to heal the sick, give hope to the weary, and redeem the oppressed.

One: And so, with your people on earth and all the saints who have gone before us, we praise your name and join the unending hymn:

All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you, and blessed is your name.

You, O God, do not abandon the hurting, confused, or disoriented.

You, who came to model a new kind of power using mercy and not might,
love and not hate, can reorient us and restore our foundation once more.

You, who did not let authorities strip your son of his dignity and worth,
recognize and honor the dignity and worth of all humankind.

We remember you.

We remember the night you gathered your friends to eat together in the midst of their fear and yours. What started as a common meal transformed into elements of grace to be shared, remembered, and celebrated by generations upon generations.

You took a simple loaf of bread.

Blessed it.

Broke it.

Shared it.

You encouraged your friends to eat, letting the bread nourish and sustain them for what was to come. You offered your hope that nourishes and sustains.

Then you took a cup of wine.

Blessed it.

Passed it.

And said to drink from it, letting the warmth trickle down, reminding them of your ever-present love.

Because of these simple and remarkable acts, we offer ourselves to be your hands and feet, and we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Christ was executed.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Let us pray:

Holy God,

we have seen and heard the examples of Moses and Elijah.

We have witnessed the power-defying acts of Jesus.

Thank you for this abundant feast with enough for all to come and be fed.

We ask that you transform these gifts of bread and cup

to be the sustaining nourishment of your mercy and hope.

With confidence, we pray the prayer you taught us to pray, saying:

Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kin-dom 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 kin(g)dom,

and the power,

and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Amy: Prayer after Communion

Creator God, may the gifts we have just received embolden us to do your work in the world.

May the bread and cup fill us. May our diverse reflections of you inspire us.

And may we celebrate our true, authentic identities by radiating joy and love.

CLOSING HYMN

Amy will introduce at the end of communion.

UMH #419 I am Thine O Lord

I am thine, O Lord, I have heard thy voice,

and it told thy love to me;

but I long to rise in the arms of faith

and be closer drawn to thee.

Refrain:

Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,

to the cross where thou hast died.

Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
to thy precious, bleeding side.

Consecrate me now to thy service, Lord,
by the power of grace divine;
let my soul look up with a steadfast hope,
and my will be lost in thine. [Refrain]

O the pure delight of a single hour
that before thy throne I spend,
when I kneel in prayer, and with thee, my God,
I commune as friend with friend! [Refrain]

There are depths of love that I cannot know
till I cross the narrow sea;
there are heights of joy that I may not reach
till I rest in peace with thee. [Refrain]

CHORAL BENEDICTION “Light of Grace” by Amy Beck - Grace UMC Choir

Postlude: “The Lovely Name of Jesus” by Eric Lewis

Leigh Ann Corcoran, Minister of Music