

For All the Children (Sing)

Call to Worship – Darlene Alfred

Scripture Romans 8:18-27 – Janna Elliot

Sermon/Witness: “Just How Wide is God’s Circle?” Rev. Diane McGehee, Senior Pastor
Bering Memorial United Church of Christ

For Everyone Born (sing)

Prayer of Confession

Darlene Alfred

For our resistance to being all that You created us to be and for our actions and attitudes that have hindered others from being all that You created them to be; for our actions and attitudes that deny life and that more abundantly to others, including the earth and its creatures and all whom we judge unworthy; for the places that we construct rather than tear down walls, bring discord rather than peace, we ask Your forgiveness, O God.

Hear this Good News: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. Glory to God. Amen!

The Great Thanksgiving

Christ is here.

The Spirit is with us.

Open your hearts.

We offer them to God.

Let us give thanks and praise to the Infinite One.

We rejoice to give our thanks and praise.

It is a right and good and joyful thing in all ways and everywhere to give thanks to You, O God. Therefore, we join in the chorus of praise that rings throughout eternity, with angels and archangels, prophets and martyrs, creatures of earth, sea, and sky and all Your rainbow people, made in your image, by your creative imagination and choice, diverse and unique; together with rocks, hills, waters, mountains, suns, moons, and stars, we magnify You as we say:

**Holy, holy, holy, God of love and power,
All Creation speaks of your glory, O God-with-us.
Blessed are we who come in the name of our God!
Hosanna, Hosanna from our hearts!
Thanks be to our Creator!**

We thank You, O God, that You have always made Your home with the poor and the powerless. With Your hand, You led Your people Israel out of bondage in Egypt. Through Your prophets, You taught Your people to do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly in Your Spirit. In Jesus of Nazareth, You made Your home with us, and taught us that it is the meek who shall inherit the earth; that those who suffer for what is right are blessed in Your eyes. Through Him, You lived and

died as one of us, preaching the Good News of liberation to the poor and the oppressed. Even now, You embrace us in love and give us strength to bring this Good News to all.

Remembering Christ

At the feast of Passover, Jesus and his friends met to celebrate their ritual meal. According to tradition, Jesus picked up the unleavened bread to bless it, and surprised them instead with new words. Likening the bread to His own body about to be broken, he broke the bread, and passed it around the circle. When the time came for the final cup of wine to be shared, Jesus again spoke new words, and likened the wine to his own blood about to be spilled.

Consecration

In the same way, therefore, we offer to You, O holy God, this simple bread, and this fruit of the vine: Bless them now that they may become for us symbols of love and liberation, even Your body and blood, as we praise You saying:

Breaking of Bread and Blessing of the Cup

Blessed are You, Eternal Sustainer of the Universe; for through Your miraculous creation, You bring forth grain from the earth. As these kernels were scattered upon the mountains and were gathered and made one loaf, even so, Make us one, for we are ALL Your beloved children and partake of one bread. Therefore, when the bodies, spirits, and homes of others are broken, we are broken.

(Presider lift the cup)

Blessed are You, Eternal Sustainer of the Universe; for through your miraculous creation, You bring forth the fruit of the vine. As the fruit of many vines is put into one press to be crafted into one vintage, even so You have made us all one family, a rainbow of diversity. Therefore, when the lifeblood of any creature spills, our blood is spilled.

Today, we break bread and offer this cup for the suffering of the earth and its creatures, for those whose habitats have been destroyed, for those who struggle for justice, who have paid the price for freedom with their own flesh and blood, and for the millions who suffer oppression, sickness, and distress. And we break bread and offer this cup for those we love, especially

(You are invited to name aloud or silently those you wish to lift in prayer.)

The Prayer of Jesus

Present with each other, and all the world in spirit, we share this simple meal together as one family, offering this bread and this cup in solidarity with Christ's offering for us and as signs of struggle and hope for all creatures, praying as Jesus taught us:

**God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,
Holy are ALL Your names.
May Your community be realized,
and Your desires manifested
in Earth even as in the heavens.
Grant us this day all that we require,**

and as we have been forgiven by You,
help us to forgive others.
Walk with us through the paths of adversity,
stand firm with us in our times of suffering.
For Yours are grace, justice,
and love, now and forever. Amen.

The Invitation

All are invited to share this family meal; for we are all one people and each of us is needed to fully reflect the rainbow face of God. Come to the feast prepared for you from the foundation of the world and claim your seat at the family table of God.

Post-Communion Covenant

Having found our place at God's table and shared this holy meal, we covenant with one another to work together until bodies are broken no more, to act until blood is spilled no more, to stand for inclusion until all are "othered" no more, to practice peace until all can dance on the land beneath the sun, feasting together in joy. One day there shall be peace! One day all -- ALL -- will rejoice together as one family around Your table!

Blessing

Friends, continue your journey walking in love, care for one another, care for the earth, seek justice, make peace, and draw the circle ever wider! Christ goes before you: live boldly, celebrate, and sing!
Thanks be to God!

Thanks be to God! AMEN!

ALL SING: Draw the Circle Wide

adapted from Festival Liturgies <http://www.apocryphile.org>