



First United Methodist Church of Hanford
Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.



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Sunday, September 6th 2020

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

Living God, we thank you for the gift of being able to speak directly to you through prayer. In the midst of this pandemic, when life feels more and more like an uphill battle, we pray for perseverance and that we would not grow weary of doing good. O God, be present with us always and dwell within our hearts. With your light and Spirit, guide our souls, our thoughts, and all our actions, that we may teach your Word, that your healing power may be in us and in your church universal. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Hymn: "Bind Us Together"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRwfTS_Ne0o

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together
With cords that cannot be broken.
Bind us together, Lord, bind us together, Lord,
Bind us together in love.

There is only one God, there is only one King,
There is only one Body, that is why we sing:

Though there are many branches, there is
only one vine, We are one in Christ Jesus, that
is why we sing:

One with Christ in his death that, as one, we
might rise.
So we are but one people, that is why we

sing: There is only one table, Christ alone is
our host. He invites us together, that is why
we sing:

Let us pray together

Loving and generous God, on this the first
Sunday on September we are aware that so
many people are still unable to gather in a
church or chapel to worship you. We know
you hear our prayers from wherever we are,
but for many our desire is to gather together
for mutual support and to praise your name.

Hear the prayers of our hearts as we long for
a better world. Hear the prayers of our minds
as we try to find new ways to worship you.
Hear the prayer of our souls as we long to
draw closer to you.

On this day, we thank you once again for the
gift of your Son, Jesus Christ. How he
modelled a way for us to live, and how he
showed us that there is nothing in earth or
heaven that can separate us from your love.

Forgive us Lord in the times when we doubt
you. Give us strength when we feel weak.
Hold us close, until the day finally comes
when we might all gather as one to praise
your name. Amen.

Today's Gospel Reading: Matthew 18: 15-20

Time to Reflect

At the beginning of the COVID19 pandemic – when we began producing these worship at home sheets, I thought they might be needed for a few weeks. Now, 7 months in, I realise how naïve I was!

To begin people were grateful for the acts of worship. Then, quite quickly, a few people began to write in to offer advice or to obviously tell me what I was doing wrong! Can, I wonder, the worship of God be wrong? Of course, liturgically we can all do things that might not suit everyone, but if your heart and my heart are in the right place, surely God will accept what we offer. My general response was they are offered in good faith, by a sibling in Christ – adapt them as you will.

In the trauma of dealing with the pandemic we have moved the phase when we declared, “we are all in this together” to a more destructive phase. A time of disappointment, where nothing anyone does seems to be quite good enough for anyone else.

Jesus knew people all too well. The emotional roller coasters we travel in life. Which is why, I suggest, he recommended that if you have a problem with someone you should go to him or her directly, before dragging in the wider community (which today would include the online communities many of us belong to).

We all make mistakes. (For the mistakes we have made on these sheets I apologise). We will all need at some point to point a mistake out to another person or to apologise for something we have done wrong. Let us do this graciously with love and care for another. As we move into the last 4 months of the year 2020, let us all commit to reviewing not what

might we do to please humankind but what we might do to the glory of God.

I pray may all our mistakes be made in good faith, and may our reprimands be smothered in the love of God. Amen

Thoughts for Reflection

1. Identify a person who has sinned against you and write down the specific sin.
2. Have you gone to this person to have the sin corrected? If not, what would it take for you to do so?
3. What feelings come up when you think about confronting the person's behavior or treatment? Do these feelings keep you from addressing the issue?
4. Think about and consider the value of gaining this person's admission and apology. What would that feel like? How would it change things for you?
5. What is God's role in bringing about this engagement? Pray for his guidance.

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

Loving God we pray for those we love:

For those who mourn...

For those who have been ill...

For frontline workers.

For those struggling to find work.

For those who have started or who are about to start school.

For those suffering because the wildfires.

For those who had lost everything because the wildfires.

We pray for your world:

For those our country and others devastated by COVID19.

For refugees and those living in fear.

We pray for ourselves – in a moment of quiet hold before God what is on your heart today. Binding all our prayers together we say:

A Service of Holy Communion

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn: "They'll Know We are Christians"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7E7lARwUYw>

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord. We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord. And we pray that our unity will one day be restored And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love Yeah they'll know we are Christians by our love

We will work with each other, we will work side by side. We will work with each other, we will work side by side. And we'll guard each man's dignity and save each man's pride. And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love. Yeah, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

A prayer of blessing

May the Grace of the Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God our Father and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, for evermore, Amen

Based on Liturgy by Revd Paul Wood
Adaptation Rev. Pablo Róvere
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505 N. Redington St, Hanford, CA 93230

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<https://onrealm.org/fumchanford/-/give/now>

If you have a praise or concern you would like lifted in prayer this week, please submit it to us in any of this ways:

EMAIL:

office@fumchanford.org

pastorpablo@fumchanford.org

**PHONE: Leave message
(559) 584 4075**

Matthew 18: 15-20 (NIV)

"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector. "Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. "Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."