

GATHERING PRAYER:

Begin this Sunday's worship with a time of silence. Our lives are far noisier than wind, fire, or earthquake. In a great paradox, God speaks to us in sheer silence. Use this chance to listen as you pray.

Wellspring of eternal life, we come to you this day having drunk deeply the waters of anxiety and despair. Bring to us your living water. Quench our thirsting souls, for we offer this prayer in Your Name. Amen.

PASTORAL WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY:

❖ During my second year of nursing school our professor gave us a quiz. I breezed through the questions until I read the last one: "What is the first name of the woman who cleans the school?" Surely this was a joke. I had seen the cleaning woman several times, but how would I know her name? I handed in my paper, leaving the last question blank. Before the class ended, one student asked if the last question would count toward our grade. "Absolutely," the professor said. "In your careers, you will meet many people. All are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all you do is smile and say hello." I've never forgotten that lesson. I also learned her name was Dorothy.

- JoAnn C. Jones, *Guideposts*, January 1996

❖ If someone were to pay you ten cents for every kind word you said about people and collect five cents for every unkind word, would you be rich or poor?

- Author unknown, quoted by Jacob M. Braude

❖ Kindness is just love with its workboots on.

- Author unknown

CALL TO WORSHIP:

One: The work of our hands, **All: Our labor of care.**

One: Our open hand,

All: Our tender embrace,

One: Loving God,

All: By loving the world,

One: Caring for all people,

All: Especially the poor, the young, the forgotten.

One: We serve God not by being right,

All: But by being loving.

One: By this they will know we are your disciples.

All: May our love glorify our Savior.

PRAISE SONG: "All Are Welcome" (music at end of bulletin)

CONFESSION:

All: Holy God, when Jesus knew he was about to be crucified, he left his disciples with one command: Love one another as I have loved you. How simple it seems, and yet how hard it is to do what he asked. Instead of love, our hearts harbor self-righteousness, resentment, self-sufficiency and envy. We wish to be better than others rather than one with them. You know our hearts, and you know the many ways we violate your command to love. Forgive us for how often and how far we fall short. Teach us what love truly is so that by your grace, we may show ourselves to be the disciples we want to be. Amen.

THE CONFESSION RESPONSE: "Hearts Full of Gratitude" (music at end of bulletin)

THE READING Hebrews 13:1-3

¹⁻³ Stay on good terms with each other, held together by love. Be ready with a meal or a bed when it's needed. Why, some have extended hospitality to angels without ever knowing it! Regard prisoners as if you were in prison with them. Look on victims of abuse as if what happened to them had happened to you.

THE GOSPEL:

Mark 12:28-34

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Then the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that 'he is one, and besides him there is no other'; and 'to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength,' and 'to love one's neighbor as oneself,'—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that no one dared to ask him any question.

MESSAGE: "Places Everyone" - Pastor Cristy School

MESSAGE RESPONSE: "Build A Longer Table" (music at end of bulletin)

THE PRAYERS

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, and the power, and the glory are Yours now and forever. Amen.

THE SENDING OUT:

Leader: Go, in the love of Jesus Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit and the peace of

God. Share God's love with the world.

People: Amen.

THE SENDING SONG: "All My Relatives" (music at end of bulletin)

THE DISMISSAL:

Leader: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

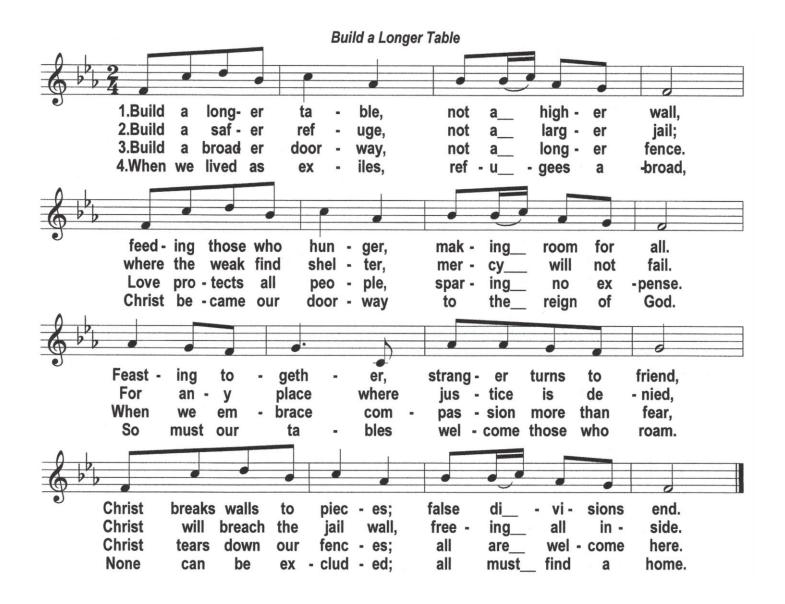
People: Thanks be to God.













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