



UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST  
a just world for all

## Worship with the Council of Conference Ministers

*Fall 2020*  
*Read-Only Service*

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### **Words of Welcome**

*Written by David Popham (Hawaii Conference UCC)*

*Read by Brigit Stevens (Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota UCC Conferences) and Shana Johnson (Illinois South Conference UCC)*

Welcome to this service of worship, created by Conference Ministers and the General Minister & President of the United Church of Christ. We offer this as nourishment for your soul. Hear our prayer for this time together:

God of Life prepare our hands for a new and different touch;  
A touch of meeting, of awakening, of hope, of feeling.

God of Life prepare our feet for a new and different path;  
A path of happenstance, of awareness, of courage, of mood.

God of Life prepare our speaking for a new and different voice;  
A voice of engagement, of recognition, of potential, of regard.

God of Life prepare our living for a new and different life;  
A live of gathering, of beginnings, of expectations, of import.

Give us daring as you create within us and among us the community that explores meaningful ways to move into your realm of kin-dom closeness.

Amen.

## **Call to Worship**

*Written by Mike Denton (Pacific Northwest Conference UCC)*

*Read by Mike Denton and Gordon Rankin (New Hampshire Conference UCC)*

Gather near you gifted people; you beautiful people; you wonderful people. Gather near for you are Beloved. (Gather even closer if you feel you are not.) Come gather in this place / no place sanctuary so that we can celebrate and honor the God of every place. We are both near and far; close and distant; together and apart yet known and loved and treasured and held and blessed by a God who created us as a gift to the world. Gathered in this time of sanctuary, may we recognize and celebrate the gifts that are present here and ask for God's guidance as we discern how to share them. Gather near you gifted people; you beautiful people; you wonderful people. Gather near for you are Beloved. (Gather even closer if you feel you are not because the good news for today is that you are).

## **Musical Offering: “We Are Not Alone”**

*Words and Music by Pepper Choplin*

*Performed by the Southwestern Conference Virtual Choir*

Choir: We are not alone, God is with us (repeated).

Descant: We are never alone, for God is with us.

We, we are never alone, for God is with us.

Now, through all our days, always.

Forever and ever: we are never alone.

And God will make us strong, for God is with us.

We, we will press on, for God is with us.

Now, through all our days, always.

Forever and ever, we are never alone.

Our God is with us now.

## **Time Especially for Children**

*Written by John Dorhauer, UCC General Minister and President*

*Read by John Dorhauer, Jonna Jensen (Maine Conference UCC), and Chad Abbott (Indiana-Kentucky Conference UCC)*

Jonna: I want to welcome all children who are joining us in worship today. I'm really very glad that you are here with us.

Chad: Oh yes, we are so lucky to have so many beautiful children with us today. Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world.

John: And we're aware that this virus has been hard on all of us. We can sometimes forget that it has also been hard on our children.

Jonna: Yes, so many have not been able to play with their friends and classmates for a very long time.

Chad: That is very sad. And I know that some of the children who are joining us have not been able to even see or visit their grandparents in a very long time.

John: Yeah, that makes me sad. I'm a grandparent, and I've only been able to visit my two grandchildren three times in almost a year. And I do miss them so very much.

Jonna: And one more thing we should realize, some of the children we are worshiping with today may have friends or loved ones who got sick from the virus.

Chad: And that must be very hard for them. I've had so many friends who've gotten sick. Most of them are better now, but you know, I'm happy for that, but it's hard.

John: I wonder if any of the children with us in worship here know someone who has died during this time.

Jonna: Yes, I expect that some of them do know someone who has died, maybe even members of their family.

Chad: Well, that has to make them feel kind of sad. Well, what can we say to make them feel better, friends?

John: Well, that's a good question. I remember something Paul said in the Bible in one of his letters. He wrote something like, when we are sad, our sadness is different, because of what we know about Jesus.

Jonna: Yes, I remember that. Paul was telling us that we know Jesus died, and then rose from the dead. We celebrate that every year at Easter.

Chad: Right, and the Bible tells us that Jesus rose from the dead as a way of showing us that we too will be alive in God again after we die. Wow, Jesus told us that he would go to prepare a place for us in God's heavenly house.

John: That's right. And so when we think of someone that we know who has died, of course we are sad. Well, we're sad in a different way, because we know that they will live again in their heavenly home with Jesus.

Jonna: Does that mean we'll get to see them again?

Chad: Well, I think so, but that might not be for a long time. There is another way that we will get to see them again soon though.

John: Yes, there is another way we can see them again. You know, not long ago, my dad died. And I take up pictures and I look at him all the time. And I remember all the fun we had together. When I was a little child, he would play baseball with me. And when I was older, we would go for long walks together in the woods.

Jonna: I have a friend I loved very much who died. I have a book that she gave me to read, I keep a picture of her in the book. Every time I read it, I remember her. I think about her life in that heavenly room, but I also think about the fun we had together.

Chad: Oh, I do the same thing. When my sister died, I cried so hard for many days. I still sometimes cry when I think about her. But then I remember how she always told me to smile when I was sad. I can hear her voice now telling me all of these things. And I know that she is happy with Jesus. And even though I miss her and that makes me cry, I smile every time I think of her.

John: It's hard to remember people who have died, but I'm thankful for Jesus and the new life that he gives us.

Jonna: Me too, I can't wait for this virus to end so we can all go back outside and play with our friends and go for trips with our families.

Chad: Oh, I agree, this has been hard. But I know that every child in worship with us today can do hard things. They have been very brave. Every single one of you, very brave. And I'm so proud of all of you.

John: Me too, can we pray for them? Why don't we do that? Let us pray.

Jonna: God of all people, young and old alike, we ask you to bless our dear children.

Chad: We ask you to help us all be strong while we live inside and wait for this virus to go away.

John: And we pray for all who are sick and for the family and friends of all who have died. God, thank you for your love, amen.

## **UCC Statement of Faith - in the form of a doxology**

*Read by Justo González (Illinois Conference UCC), Sue Arts (Rocky Mountain Conference UCC), Tyler Connoley (Central Pacific Conference UCC), Shari Prestemon (Minnesota Conference UCC), Felix Villanueva (Southern California Nevada Conference UCC), Marc Stewart (Montana-Northern Wyoming Conference UCC), and Lynn Bujnak (Vermont Conference UCC)*

### **Español:**

Creemos en Dios, el Espíritu Eterno,  
Padre de nuestro Señor Jesucristo  
y nuestro Creador;  
y de sus obras testificamos:

Dios llama los mundos para que existan,  
creó al ser humano a su imagen y semejanza,  
y puso ante la humanidad  
los caminos de la vida y la muerte.

Busca en su santo amor  
salvar a todas las personas  
de su desorientación y pecado.

Dios juzga al ser humano y a las naciones  
por medio de su justa voluntad  
declarada a través de los profetas y los apóstoles.

En Jesucristo, el hombre de Nazaret,  
nuestro Señor crucificado y resucitado,  
Dios ha venido  
y ha compartido nuestra suerte,  
venció el pecado y la muerte  
y reconcilió al mundo para sí mismo.

Dios nos concedió el Espíritu Santo,

### **English:**

We believe in God the eternal Spirit  
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ  
and our Creator  
and to our deeds we testify

God calls the worlds into being  
create humans in his image and likeness  
and sets before humans  
the ways of life and death.

You seek in holy love  
to save all people  
From aimlessness and sin.

God judges all humanity and nations  
by your just will  
declared by the prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth  
our Lord crucified and risen,  
God has come to us  
and shared our common lot  
conquering sin and death  
and reconciling the world to himself.

God gives us the Holy Spirit creating

que crea y renueva la iglesia de Jesucristo  
y une en un pacto de fidelidad  
a personas de todas las edades,  
idiomas y razas.

Dios nos llama como iglesia  
para que aceptemos el costo y la alegría  
del discipulado,  
para que seamos sus servidores  
al servicio del ser humano,  
para proclamar el evangelio  
a todo el mundo  
y resistir los poderes del maligno,  
para compartir el bautismo de Cristo,  
comer en su mesa,  
y unirnos a Jesús en su pasión  
y victoria.

Dios promete a toda persona que confía en Jesús  
el perdón de los pecados  
y la plenitud de su gracia,  
valor en la lucha por la justicia y la paz,  
su presencia en las tristezas  
y en las alegrías, y vida eterna  
en su reino que no tiene fin.

Bendición y honor, gloria y poder  
sean dados a Dios. Amén.

and renewing the church of Jesus Christ  
and binds in faithful covenant  
people of all ages,  
languages, and races.

God calls into the church  
to accept the cost and the joy  
of discipleship  
to be his servants  
in service to all humanity  
to proclaim the gospel  
to all the world  
and resist the powers of evil,  
to share in Christ's baptism,  
eat at his table,  
and unite with Jesus in his passion  
and victory.

God promises to all who trust in Jesus  
pardon for sins  
and fullness of grace  
strength in the struggle for justice and peace,  
his presence in sadness  
and in rejoicing, and eternal life  
In his kingdom that has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power  
be given to God. Amen.

## A Prayer of Daily Thanksgiving

*Written and read by David Long-Higgins (Heartland Conference), September 2020*

I thank you Love,  
For the gift of this day,  
For its possibilities  
For its challenges  
For all that will draw me  
To You and your creation  
In the work and rest  
That is your gift to me.

I thank you  
That the breath of life  
Flows in and out of me  
As a gift not of my making  
But of your design,  
That I may remember  
Your inspiration and call  
In each moment  
Of each second,  
Of each hour.

Let me now attend  
With a thankful heart  
To Your forming work  
That I may be molded  
Into whatever expression  
Of love you desire.  
And in this  
May your highest hope  
Be my deepest desire  
Formed by You,  
O Love,  
For the healing  
Of the world...



## **Musical Offering: Dream God's Dream**

*Written by Bryan Sirchio*

*Performed by Rev. Christy Eckert, Tarrah Vaupel, and Dr. Phil Wilhelm*

(Chorus)

Dream God's dream

Holy Spirit, help us dream...

Of a world where there is justice, and where everyone is free

To build and grow and love

And to simply have enough

The world will change when we dream God's dream

I'm dreaming of a world where the color of one's skin

Will mean less than what's within the person's heart

A world where water's clean, and where air is safe to breathe

And every child born has enough to eat.

(Chorus)

I'm dreaming of the call God is offering to me

How to use my energy and my best gifts

To do the work of Christ -- to say, God please use my life

To spread Your healing love -- and to live your Truth

(Chorus)

I'm dreaming of the way that I want my life to go

I've got hopes and I've got goals I'd like to meet

I'm reaching for the stars, but I won't forget the scars

Of Christ who died to show that the Dream's for all...

(Chorus)



## **Scripture Reading – Matthew 25:14-30**

*Read by Diane Weible (Northern California Nevada Conference UCC) and Franz Rigert (Wisconsin Conference UCC)*

### **English:**

“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his servants and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents.

But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. After a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy servant; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’

And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy servant; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’

But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy servant! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless servant, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

### **Español:**

Parábola de los talentos

<sup>14</sup>»Sucederá también con el reino de los cielos como con un hombre que, estando a punto de irse a otro país, llamó a sus empleados y les encargó que le cuidaran su dinero.

<sup>15</sup>A uno de ellos le entregó cinco mil monedas, a otro dos mil y a otro mil: a cada uno según su capacidad. Entonces se fue de viaje.

<sup>16</sup>El empleado que recibió las cinco mil monedas hizo negocio con el dinero y ganó otras cinco mil monedas.

<sup>17</sup>Del mismo modo, el que recibió dos mil ganó otras dos mil.

<sup>18</sup>Pero el que recibió mil fue y escondió el dinero de su jefe en un hoyo que hizo en la tierra.

<sup>19</sup>»Mucho tiempo después volvió el jefe de aquellos empleados, y se puso a hacer cuentas con ellos.

<sup>20</sup>Primero llegó el que había recibido las cinco mil monedas, y entregó a su jefe otras cinco mil, diciéndole: "Señor, usted me dio cinco mil, y aquí tiene otras cinco mil que gané."

<sup>21</sup>El jefe le dijo: "Muy bien, eres un empleado bueno y fiel; ya que fuiste fiel en lo poco, te pondré a cargo de mucho más. Entra y alégrate conmigo."

<sup>22</sup>Después llegó el empleado que había recibido las dos mil monedas, y dijo: "Señor, usted me dio dos mil, y aquí tiene otras dos mil que gané."

<sup>23</sup>El jefe le dijo: "Muy bien, eres un empleado bueno y fiel; ya que fuiste fiel en lo poco, te pondré a cargo de mucho más. Entra y alégrate conmigo."

<sup>24</sup>»Pero cuando llegó el empleado que había recibido las mil monedas, le dijo a su jefe: "Señor, yo sabía que usted es un hombre duro, que cosecha donde no sembró y recoge donde no esparció."

<sup>25</sup>Por eso tuve miedo, y fui y escondí su dinero en la tierra. Pero aquí tiene lo que es suyo."

<sup>26</sup>El jefe le contestó: "Tú eres un empleado malo y perezoso, pues si sabías que yo cosecho donde no sembré y que recojo donde no esparcí,

<sup>27</sup>deberías haber llevado mi dinero al banco, y yo, al volver, habría recibido mi dinero más los intereses."

<sup>28</sup>Y dijo a los que estaban allí: "Quítenle las mil monedas, y dánselas al que tiene diez mil.

<sup>29</sup>Porque al que tiene, se le dará más, y tendrá de sobra; pero al que no tiene, hasta lo poco que tiene se le quitará.

<sup>30</sup>Y a este empleado inútil, échenlo fuera, a la oscuridad. Entonces vendrán el llanto y la desesperación."

## **Message: “Thank God for Our Talents”**

*By Marilyn B. Kendrix (Southern New England Conference)*

### **Introduction to the Scripture:**

Then the New Testament reading is from the Gospel of Matthew, known as the parable of the talents.

It has traditionally been interpreted as a message about responsible stewardship, since a talent was a rather large sum of money.

The theme of the departing and returning master was dear to the early Christian community because it reminded them of Jesus’ departure and expected return.

The story has undergone several transformations in its journey from Jesus’ original parable to the version that we now read in Matthew’s gospel.

A careful reading raises some disturbing elements that are often overlooked.

One such element is the character of the master in the story.

The absent master is called a “hard” or “severe” man.

We can tell in his treatment of the third servant.

I think this calls into question the understanding by some that the master represents God.

Also to the Torah-abiding Jews to whom this story would have originally been told, the master’s approval of receiving interest on loans would have characterized him as no respecter of God’s laws

– laws which strongly discouraged profit-making from loans.

There can be no doubt that when Jesus told the story, the morality of the absent master was questionable.

It is therefore not helpful to identify the master as either Jesus or God.

A more likely interpretation is that the “hard” master in the story is a characterization of the harsh social and economic realities that people faced.

The primary focus of this parable should be the behavior of the third servant who does nothing with the talents that he has been given.

What he does because of his fear is what is brought into question by Jesus’ story.

He is rebuked for not acting boldly, despite the danger.

Cautious maintenance of the status quo is not applauded here!

The early church would have found this story very meaningful because of the persecution they faced.

I think it must be just as meaningful today,

As we are called to think about how we worship together

While keeping the Body of Christ, the community healthy and safe.

The story is a call not to lose heart but to act boldly for Christ.

It provides both a social criticism of unjust times and a warning against being overly cautious,

and encourages boldness and creativity in the face of systemic injustice.

...

So listen for the Spirit to speak in the reading of the Word.

Matthew 25:14 – 30

...

Will you pray with me? May the words of my mouth and the meditations of all our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O God, our rock and our Redeemer.

...

I don't know about you but this parable by Jesus has always been one that left me scratching my head.

It seems to suggest some kind of investment crisis ..

the wealthy man gives each of three servants a very large amount of money – and believe me it was a whole lot of money.

A “talent” was a sum of money equivalent to roughly twenty-years of wages for a day laborer.

In today's currency, the sums granted to each servant would be somewhere about at least half a million dollars.

Like I said, a whole lot of money.

And the servant who is not seen as trustworthy is the one who simply buried the whole shebang and returned to the master exactly what he had been given to him.

The master calls him a “wicked and lazy.”

He did not do anything

with the talents that the master had provided him with.

So he is cast out “where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

...

Now, as I read this parable, I could not help but apply our modern definition of the word “talents” as gifts – not necessarily of cash, but rather of abilities – true gifts from God.

Perhaps we can think of our talents as God's own currency.

Reading the parable from that viewpoint,

it seems that the untrustworthy servant is the one who does nothing with the gifts that he has been given.

The first two servants take what they have been given and use it to increase the gift many times over.

...

As I was thinking about talents as gifts from God,

...

You know, I believe that all of us have gifts –

that each of us has talents that God has graced us with.

Maybe not as extraordinary as others but God given talents of our own.

And I think we are all called by God to use our gifts,

our God-given gifts to move this world just little bit toward the kind of world that God envisioned at creation.

...

It seems to me, today,  
that this reading that speaks to us of talents,  
gifts that we've been given by God ...  
I think they challenge us to look at what we are doing with our talents, with our gifts.  
So, I'd like you to take the piece of paper  
and write down what your gifts might be.  
And when you've got one or two listed,  
Hang it on your refrigerator and when you get a chance,  
talk about it with the person or people  
who share your COVID safe place or phone a friend.  
Perhaps the two of you might strategize about  
how your gift could be used to build up the kin-dom of God.  
How your gifts could be shared with the church  
in a way that would benefit this Body of Christ.  
I'd like you to remind yourselves daily that God has gifted you  
and that your gifts can be used to partner with God  
to create the Beloved Community.

... You know, it seems as if we are living in a time when  
God's kingdom seems so far away.  
You know, when things will be as the Prophet Isaiah envisioned them:  
When

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall  
lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the  
fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

When we won't need to worry about hunger or oppression or racism  
or senseless gun violence in the streets –  
perpetrated by our neighbors with too many guns  
or by the forces who take an oath to protect and serve.  
When all lives will matter because Black lives finally do.

...

You may think that what we do with our talents  
can't possibly make a difference in the world.  
But just imagine what the world would be if everyone used their God-given talent to make the  
world a better place,  
Isaiah's prophecy would not seem so fantastical.

..

In the coming week,  
as we see the note on our refrigerators,  
let us remember with thankful hearts, all that God has given to us,  
let us rededicate ourselves to the building  
of God's realm here on earth. AMEN.

## **Invitation to Generosity**

*Written and read by David Ackerman (Penn West Conference)*

We know that in the midst of these challenging times many people are facing different kinds of hardships. Among the difficulties that we are confronting amid our current global crises, job loss and financial distress loom large. Yet in the midst of it all, God blesses us. Sometimes in moments of pain, it's hard for us to see that. But the parable of the talents and many other stories in scripture remind us that God has indeed blessed us beyond our wildest imaginings.

Today, we invite you to consider those blessings and think of how deeply we are loved by God. In response to that love, we invite you to give. We invite you to support our local churches, which are working harder than ever to respond to the challenges of ministry in 2020. We also invite you to support our Conferences and our national setting, which are striving to walk with our local churches and equip them with the tools and resources they need to minister well in this time. We invite you to reach out to our communities to meet the needs that are present wherever there is poverty, hunger, injustice, and inequity. We invite you to be generous, as God is generous with us.

Out of the abundance, then, that we have received from the generous hand of God, God calls us to give, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful, even a hilarious, giver! In this moment of silence, we invite you pause and give, as together we give thanks to God, who has given us all that we have.

## **Musical Offering: “Let Us Break Bread Together”**

*Performed by Rev. Dr. Anthony L. D. Scott*

Let us break bread together on our knees  
Let us break bread together on our knees  
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,  
O Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us drink wine together on our knees  
Let us drink wine together on our knees  
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,  
O Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us praise God together on our knees  
Let us praise God together on our knees  
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,  
O Lord, have mercy on me.

## **Sacrament of Holy Communion**

*Written by Marc Stewart (Montana-Northern Wyoming Conference UCC) and Bonnie Bates (Penn Northeast Conference UCC)*

*Read by Marc Stewart, Bonnie Bates, Freeman Palmer (Central Atlantic Conference UCC), and Bill Worley (Southwestern Conference UCC)*

### **Invitation**

It is so blessed to be together however we can.

Even the limitations of this virtual form of communion

Are no impediment to knowing the spirit among us.

God will be where God needs to be,

and you are among those whom God has placed exactly where needed.

May the beloved community you are in know all the more how it is called to serve.

May your beloved community find that it feeds so many more than it can see among its own circles.

May beloved community everywhere share the blessings of the cup Jesus fills with life.

For there is no height nor depth that is beyond the reach of those called to be God's love to and with the world.

How so beautiful and so glorious is this place, known here in this life, and imagined into eternal perfection in the love of God, through Christ Jesus. Amen.

### **Institution**

Jesus calls us into community. As he gathered a community of believers and followers around him, he encouraged them to share in the simplicity of love and hope expressed through the gift of his life and spirit. Jesus sat a table with many people, those marginalized and disregarded, those lost and those of power and prestige. He called them all into this simple meal.

On the night he was to be betrayed and arrested, on the road to Emmaus, and again on the shores of the seas of Galilee, Jesus took bread, the simple everyday bread of the people. He asked that it be blessed. He broke it and he shared it with the beloved community he had gathered with his friends, and Jesus said, "Take this my friends and eat it. This is my body which is broken for you. Remember me when you eat it."

Jesus took the cup, filled with the fruit of the vine, the common drink of the people. He lifted the cup and asked that it be blessed. Jesus showed the cup to his beloved community, to his friends, and Jesus said, "Take this my friends, and drink it. This is a cup of promise, a cup of my life poured out for you so you will know forgiveness. Remember me when you drink it"

### **Consecration**

Come Holy Spirit and be in our midst.

Come Holy Spirit and be in our midst.

Come Holy Spirit and be in our midst.

Come Holy Spirit and be in our midst.

Bless these the gifts of Christ's table offered to us for strength,  
Offered to us in hope  
Offered to us in love  
That we may know the everlasting presence of Christ today and in all days.

This is the bread of life. Take and eat.  
This is the cup of life. Take and drink.

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

We have gathered as people of faith to celebrate our beloved community, to gather as people of faith following in the footsteps of Jesus.

May we be thankful for the opportunities to share together.  
May we be thankful for the gifts of grace and peace poured over and into us.  
May we be thankful for the faith we have been given that lights the path before us.

May we be grateful for this table, for this celebration, for this community, and for this time to share our lives, one with another.

Amen!

### **Musical Offering: "Take; This Is My Body"**

*Written by Rev. Cheryl Stewart, Singing Mountain, Billings MT*

*Performed by William Demaniow, Music Director, First UCC Billings MT*

Chorus:

Take; this is my body. Take; this is my blood.

Do this, in remembrance of me.

1. We remember, Jesus, that you fed the crowds. Before you suffered death.
2. We remember, Jesus, that you healed the sick. Before you suffered death.
3. We remember, Jesus, that you went to pray. Before you suffered death.



## **Benediction**

*Written and read by Lynn Bunjak (Vermont Conference UCC)*

*Read by Shari Prestemon (Minnesota Conference UCC)*

May we have grace to perceive the bounty of a generous God.

May we have open hands and open hearts to share this abundance with abandon.

May we have courage to see and not look away from the injustices that rob our siblings of their birthright as children of God.

May we have the will to make the changes you desire for all your people and for the healing of the earth.

Let us not grow weary and when we do, give us to one another so many hands make light work.

May the blessings of God, our creator redeemer and sustainer go with us always. Amen.