

## **Welcome**

## **Announcements**

Special Offering for August-The Arc, Men's Coffee resumes this Tuesday at 7:30AM, Potluck to Welcome Timote Piukala on August 17 after worship.

## **Fellowship of Love**

### **Song**

### **Call to Worship**

L: Give thanks to God,

**P: for God's steadfast love lasts forever.**

L: God accompanies us in our distress,

**P: as we cross the threshold to worship's blessings.**

L: Give thanks to our God,

**P: for God's steadfast love abides with us.**

L: Let us enter this space for worship,

**P: celebrating God's works for humankind.**

## **Unison Prayer**

**Spirit of hope and renewal, as the dawn nudges us awake, summon us with your presence.**

**Wrap us with the cloak of your wisdom and grace. As your light breaks the horizon of this day, help us see the love revealed in your realm.**

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**Nourish us with your wisdom and guide us with your hope, for we hunger to know you better. Amen.**

## **Offering Lead In**

L: As we come to this time of offering, let us remember that giving is an opportunity to respond to God's generosity with our own.

## **Special Music-Del Vogel - “Why Me?”**

### **Scripture: Colossians 3: 1-11**

**3** So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

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**2** Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth,

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**3** for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

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**4** When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

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**5** Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry).

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**6** On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient.

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**7** These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life.

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**8** But now you must get rid of all such things: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth.

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**9** Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices

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**10** and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator.

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<sup>11</sup> In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, enslaved and free, but Christ is all and in all!

L: The word of God, for the people of God.

**P: Thanks be to God.**

Meditation: Living Faithfully in the Present

It is typical for me on a communion Sunday to remind myself that what I am going to give you is a meditation, not a sermon. I always remind myself of that because I want to keep the message on the shorter end so that the entire service doesn't go too long. That sometimes creates a problem, especially when we read this passage today. This passage, while only being 12 verses, is massive in its potential for preaching. This is a passage that you can dissect and go into great detail that could take us several weeks. Fortunately for you- I only have an hour.

There are two movements in this passage. The very beginning of it is a connection passage between the first two chapters of the book and the last bit. Simply put, this connection series of verses reinforces the topic of the kingdom of God and how we are members of the kingdom of God.

Following those verses, 1-4, verses 5-11 take a decidedly more practical tone. Describing specific sins and actions that we need to avoid, this list of course is not exhaustive but unfortunately has a history of being applied in ways that are not to the standard that scripture would have us live.

Verses 1-4 remind us of some of the scripture from last week. That we are members of the kingdom of God, that nothing we can do justifies our place in God's kingdom. It also, perhaps more importantly, tells us in verse 3 that your life is hidden in God. Now hear me out. The context of the church of Colossi would be one where the future for the

average Christian believer was uncertain. This is hardly the state religion of the Roman Empire, nor is it the Christian nationalism of modern-day America. This is the church persecuted and scared. Wanting comfort for the future, and here Paul does not deliver.

Paul tell us and them that the future is hidden. What he does know, and by extension we should all know is that we have died and have risen with Christ. Knowing that means that while you cannot know the future or what the future holds, you can know that God is the one who holds it no matter what. This isn't a promise of good things for the believer. It is the promise of God with us, Emmanuel.

Now how does this go with latter half of our scripture reading? This seeming list of do not dos. Simply put, for brevity, this is about being the Christian's that Christ calls us to be. It is not an exhaustive list of what to avoid. Frankly, the definition of some of these words change with context and with time. Everyone thinks they know the right answer to what greed is, that is until they pay attention to the little side note, idolatry. Greed is putting money, or the economy before helping or caring for people. That is greed. Now some of you heard that definition I just gave and thought, no that's not what I learned. I thought greed was trying to take things from others...well no that's theft. Greed is placing your hope in something else, be that a full pantry of food, a large bank account, a thriving stock market, or a president. Part of being a Christian is not putting other things before God.

This passage also has a short list of things to "get rid of" in verse 8. Anger, Malice, etc. Of course, this deserves a deeper dive than I am doing right now. But it's not as simple as saying "anger is a sin." If that were the case, then Jesus was sinful because I don't know about you, but I don't think I could whip anyone unless I was angry, and Jesus did that to the money changers in the temple. This part of the list is less about being something different than you are, and more about thinking about why you do things. Being angry for the right reasons is important, being angry at the wrong thing is a whole other matter.

What I want you to walk away with today comes primarily from the first part of the passage. Our behavior toward others is most important. I think we need to remember that the future is not written in stone. That we don't know the future of any of us, but we do know that God is our God in the now. That God is present now, and calls us to live in the present now. As we join together in communion let us remember it as a call to live the way God wants us to, in the comfort of a God who knows and loves us. Amen.

### Communion Litany

L: The Lord be with you.

**P: And also with you**

L: Lift up your hearts.

**P: We lift them up to the Lord**

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L: Let us give thanks to the Lord Our God.

**P: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

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L: O God, you created the universe with a shout of joy, a word of delight, and a big bang. You made gravity holes and antimatter, swirling electrons and dancing quarks, shooting stars and sapphire blue planets.

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You filled the ocean with clown fish and sharks, with dolphins and killer whales.

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You filled the air with doves and hawks, songbirds, and hummingbirds. You covered the land with shimmering aspen and weathered pine. And You blessed all the creatures of the earth:

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The bugs, snakes, lizards, the lions, tigers and bears, the puppies and the hippos, the zebras, and the penguins.

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And You blessed all the children of the earth every shape and size, every color and complexion, every makeup and mood, every style and substance.

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But we, O God, preferred to go our own way. We messed things up. We wanted to be in charge. We wanted to be in control.

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We thought everything belonged to us. We polluted the environment. We destroyed each other.

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We turned playgrounds into battlefields, school yards into mine fields, hospitals into death camps, and children into killers.

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But God, you never gave up on us. You never walked away or walked out. You always honored your promises even when we broke ours.

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You always welcomed us home with open arms and a warm heart even when our fists were clenched and our minds still closed.

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When we walk through sorrow and chaos, You are with us. When we live through moments of war and acts of terror, You walk with us.

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When our homes are destroyed, You help us to build new homes and finally lead us home to you.

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And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise Your name and join their unending hymn:

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**P: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory,  
Hosanna in the highest.**

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

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L: In the right time, in the fullness of your time, In the nick of time, you sent your Son to bring us back to life. He opened a window into your new creation.

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HE showed us a vision of your way: where every child has enough to eat, and can sleep safely all through the night,

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where every graveyard is a front porch of heaven, where the untouchable and unlovable are given the seats of honor, where tears of mourning become tears of laughter,

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where grievous wrongs and horrid suffering are made right and fair, where children hunt Easter eggs on playgrounds made from battlefields, and where everyone is welcomed and loved.

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L: In the dead ends of our lives,  
Jesus clears a way ahead.

In the dead spots of our relationships, Jesus speaks words of hope and renewal. In the dead zones of our cities, Jesus calls forth a new kingdom.

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L: When we are dead tired, Jesus picks us up and carries us to a place of rest. When we are dead wrong, Jesus confronts us with the truth.

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When we are dead last, Jesus tells us that he has won us for eternal life.

And so, on the night in which he gave himself up for us...

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L: Jesus took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said,

*"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."*

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L: When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said,

*"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."*

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L: And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**P: Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again.**

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L: Pour out Your Holy spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by His blood.

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L: Renew our communion with all your saints, especially those who now live with you. Since you have refreshed our souls from the waters of life. Help us refresh and renew others. Since you have given us strength for the journey, Help us to strengthen others on their journey.

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**P: Send your Spirit to renew our faith and transform our souls so that we may hear your music, work for justice, delight in heavenly food, and strengthen one another in love and grace. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**Communion and Music**

**Benediction**

**Song /Goodbye**