

A CELEBRATION OF ASCENSION, GRADUATION & HOLY COMMUNION

NOTE: bring bread and juice, and noise makers for graduation

PRELUDE “All Hail the Power of Jesus Name” (KL Baptist Church Choir, Nagaland, India)

WELCOME - Grace Wallace, COSSO Coordinator

INTRODUCTION – Rebeka Maples, Director of Spiritual Formation

OPENING RESPONSES

LEADER: God of the past, who has created and nurtured us,

ALL: We are here to give you thanks and praise.

God of the future, who is always ahead of us,

We are here to learn to follow you.

God of the present, who is here in the midst of us,

We are here to give you thanks and praise.

God of life, who is beyond us and within us,

We are here to rejoice in your glory and love!

God of community, we gather here in your presence.

We come to hear the story of Love, expressed in death on a cross, resurrection and ascension. We gather to remember and to pray. May we know your presence in the sharing of the story, in the praying and the singing. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 24:44-53

REFLECTION “Ascension: The End of the Beginning” **DR. BRAD BINAU**

Dr. Binau received his M.Div. from Trinity Lutheran Seminary and his Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary. He is Professor of Pastoral Theology at Trinity Lutheran Seminary.

HYMN “Crown Him With Many Crowns”

UMH 327

GRADUATION & BLESSING OF GRADUATES

REFLECTION MOMENTS (intro words by Rebeka)

FROM SOME OF OUR GRADUATES:

Bay Allen, Western Pennsylvania

Deb Cole, Michigan

Alex Fernandez, Michigan

Matt Kreh, Michigan

Shirley Reed, West Virginia

Dick Smith, East Ohio

ALSO GRADUATING:

Doug Pummell, West Ohio

REV. DR. JOON-SIK PARK, Director of COSSO

Director: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

Director: Let us pray together:

Eternal God, by your grace you have brought us together in your Church, which is the body of Christ. Grant your continuing grace to all who are called to leadership in your Church, that they may with diligence and faithfulness fulfill their ministries; and grant that we your people may follow where you lead, and serve you faithfully in the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Director: Who are presented for graduation?

Coordinator: Bay Allen, Deb Cole, Alex Fernandez, Matt Kreh, Doug Pummell, Shirley Reed, and Dick Smith are presented for graduation from the Course of Study.

Director: Now let us offer them our blessings and prayers:

(blessing each graduate):

In the name of Almighty God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, we celebrate your graduation from the Course of Study. We commend you to your ministry as a Local Pastor in The United Methodist Church and pledge our continued prayers.

Spiritual Director: May the Holy Spirit strengthen and guide you, that in all things you may do God's will in service to the church, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

(service continues after blessing each graduate)

COS Coordinator: Our congratulations and prayers go with you. Your certificate and gift for graduation will be sent to you.

Director: I invite everyone to offer your prayers and blessings for our graduates -

(you may type your prayers in Chat)

COS Coordinator: Let us pray together,

Gracious God, we thank you for calling faithful servants to be Local Pastors in your Church. We humbly place these graduates in your care. Give them courage, patience, and vision, and bless them with caring communities; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Director: And now, remember your call. Preach the Good News. Shepherd the flock of Christ. And in all things, give God the glory, now and always.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I declare that you have graduated from the Course of Study.

(everyone unmutes themselves and cheers with gusto)

GRADUATION HYMN

"Here I Am, Lord"

UMH 593

HOLY COMMUNION

(prayers adapted from various sources, including Bay Allen, COS graduate)
Our communion service is a remembrance of communion for virtual time. Since communion itself is a memorial service that honors Jesus' life, death and resurrection, our remembrance is an act of remembering all that we have been given and all that we have received. Let us honor this by re-membering ourselves to each other and to the One who remembers us:

Invitation

LEADER: God, in the beginning, you were already there. Your Spirit hovered over the waters,

ALL: And you spoke, and at the sound of your voice, light shone in the world.

We remember Jesus' ascension into heaven, who was made lower than the angels, and now is crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for us. (Heb. 2:9)

Crown him with many crowns! Now eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. (1 Tim. 1:17)

Prayer of thanksgiving

God seated Christ at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body. (from Eph. 1:20b-23)

Come, Holy Spirit, come to us in this time and place. Come to us when we sit in silence and when we are moving too fast. Surprise us, revive us, and shape us into the Body of Christ that we may learn to walk the road he walked and drink the cup he drank.

So, God of hope and mercy, we give you thanks for these ordinary gifts of your amazing grace – bread of life given for us and forgiveness poured out.

(lift bread and juice)

May they speak to us of every day made holy, of oppression turned to freedom and justice, of new life from living bread. Even as we cling to what is past, may we look joyfully to the ascension and live the risen life in the world you have created in your love for us.

(all eat the bread and drink the juice)

Amen.

Post-communion prayer

O God, we give you thanks for all you offer us in this sacred remembrance. May our lives show signs that new life is possible, that the gospel is believable, and that peace is our way in the world. This we pray through your forgiveness and love. **Amen.**

BLESSING

LEADER: Lord beyond our mortal sight,

ALL: Alleluia

Raise our hearts to reach thy height,

Alleluia

There thy face unclouded see,

Alleluia

Find our heaven of heavens in thee,

Alleluia.

(Charles Wesley 1707-1788, 3rd verse of "Hail the day that sees him rise")

(Our worship now ends; please remain to listen to the music or leave the Zoom session as needed.)

POSTLUDE "On Our Way Rejoicing"