

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Thunder Bay

<http://standrewspres-tbay.ca> - Minister: Rev. Joyce Yanishewski

World Communion Sunday - October 4, 2026

Call to Worship

The voice of our God and King is heard in blessing,
as it echoes in its majestic powers over all creation.

**We come to worship our God, and to celebrate the
Mystery and Reality that is God's everlasting glory.**

The voice of God is heard in all creation – and it responds
with joy to the voice of its Creator, Sustainer and Renewer.

**We come to worship our God, and to celebrate God's
power and generosity towards all creation and all peoples.**

We come to worship our God, and to celebrate the
way we are welcomed into God's glorious presence.

**The voice of our Holy God is heard in the sacred
spaces, and God's grace is received as we worship.**

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Hymn

Blest be the tie that binds

481

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| 1. Blest be the tie that binds
our hearts in Christian love;
the fellowship of kindred minds
is like to that above. | 2. Before our Maker's throne
we pour our ardent prayers;
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
our comforts and our cares. |
| 3. We share each other's woes,
each other's burdens bear,
and often for each other flows
the sympathizing tear. | 4. When we asunder part,
it gives us keenest pain,
but we shall still be joined in heart,
and hope to meet again. |
| 5. This glorious hope revives
our courage on the way:
in perfect friendship we shall live
in God's eternal day. | |

"Blest be the tie that binds." Words by John Fawcett. Public domain.

Prayer of Adoration and Confession

Steadfast God,
as the seasons change, we know you to be ever-constant
and see that you are still at work in the world, transforming hearts and situations.
You have shown us the true face of love in Jesus Christ,
reaching out with healing and hope to touch desperate lives.
We praise you for your love that works for reconciliation

among neighbours and nations in this divided world.
May we see the face of Jesus as we break bread at his table.
Renew our hope by the gift of your Spirit at work among us,
so that we can live to praise you as one God now and always
with the whole Church that bears Jesus' name.

Confident of your grace and forgiveness, we confess to you our sins:

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World Communion Sunday. October 4, 2026. Year A.

**O God, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen:
You place us in your creation, and you command us to care for it.
Your works declare glory and splendor,
and you call us to praise and reverence.**

Where we have degraded or destroyed earth's bounty, forgive us.

Where we have taken beauty and majesty for granted, have mercy upon us.

**Where we have become estranged from the creatures with whom
we share this planet, grant us your peace.**

**Renew us in the waters of baptism, refresh us with the winds of your spirit,
and sustain us with the bread of life. In the name of Jesus Christ, and for the
sake of the new creation, we pray. Amen.**

— written by Rev. Ken Carter, pastor of Providence United Methodist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina.
Posted on the website of the [North Georgia United Methodist Conference](#).

Assurance of Forgiveness

Hear the good news! Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ – and Christ died for us; Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us. Believe the good news of the gospel. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven by God's renewing grace.

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World Communion Sunday. October 4, 2026. Year A.

Prayer for Understanding

Send us your Spirit of wisdom, O God, so that we may hear your Word speaking through the Scriptures with ears that understand and hearts that respond in love.

Amen.

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Scripture Readings

❖ 1 Corinthians 10:15-17

¹⁵⁻¹⁸ I assume I'm addressing believers now who are mature. Draw your own conclusions: When we drink the cup of blessing, aren't we taking into ourselves the blood, the very life, of Christ? And isn't it the same with the loaf of bread we break and eat? Don't we take into ourselves the body, the very life, of Christ? Because there is one loaf, our many-ness becomes one-ness—Christ doesn't become fragmented in us. Rather, we become unified in him. We don't reduce Christ to what we are; he raises us to what he is.

❖ 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

23-26 Let me go over with you again exactly what goes on in the Lord's Supper and why it is so centrally important. I received my instructions from the Master himself and passed them on to you. The Master, Jesus, on the night of his betrayal, took bread. Having given thanks, he broke it and said,

This is my body, broken for you.

Do this to remember me.

After supper, he did the same thing with the cup:

This cup is my blood, my new covenant with you.

Each time you drink this cup, remember me.

What you must solemnly realize is that every time you eat this bread and every time you drink this cup, you reenact in your words and actions the death of the Master. You will be drawn back to this meal again and again until the Master returns. You must never let familiarity breed contempt.

[The Message \(MSG\)](#) Copyright © 1993, 2002, 2018 by [Eugene H. Peterson](#)

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church. **Thanks be to God.**

Message "Never let familiarity breed contempt"

We are a week out from Thanksgiving, a time when many people gather together to have that big meal with turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, vegetables, and a salad that almost no one eats because there are too many carbs available. It is best served with good company and lots of love. The same goes for Christmas and Easter, or whenever people gather together for a meal. However, that is not always the case. Many meals together are spent trying not to say the wrong thing that will set someone in the family off or rife with painful reminders of who is not at the table.

I share this piece about meals because unlike the little piece of bread we have when we partake in communion or the itty-bitty glass of juice that we drink as part of our communion service, the earliest Christians shared their communion as part of a larger meal with full loaves of bread and bottles of wine. Somewhere along the line that meal became a small bit in the midst of a worship service, but that was not the case with the early church.

In that time, people would gather in a home to share a meal, and as part of that time together someone would take the bread and the cup and share the story of that last supper saying...

The Master, Jesus, on the night of his betrayal, took bread.

Having given thanks, he broke it and said,

This is my body, broken for you.

Do this to remember me.

After supper, he did the same thing with the cup:

This cup is my blood, my new covenant with you.

Each time you drink this cup, remember me.¹

Only, as people are so apt to do, they messed it up. This meal was meant to put everyone on equal footing. No one person was more important than another. This was a reminder that the gifts of God were for all the people of God.

The original meal, or what we have come to call the Last Supper with Jesus, took place after Jesus had washed the feet of the disciples, humbling himself to the place of a servant. Not only that he said these words to and shared this meal with people who themselves were imperfect. One of them was about to betray him, and he still said these words, still shared the meal with all of them.

Now many years later as this Corinthian church was doing what they had been taught to do by Paul, this sharing of the meal and remembering the words Jesus said, well, they were letting hierarchy and privilege, gluttony and carelessness, get in the way of partaking in the meal the way it was intended. They forgot that this was a shared meal, a shared experience.

Let me explain. This meal was one thing that all Christians did because in Jesus' words they were to do this. When gathered together they were to take bread, break it, and eat it, and when doing that, to remember Jesus' broken body ...to remember him.

Also, when taking the cup and drinking from it, they were to remember that in his dying there was going to be new life, that this was a new covenant. A covenant being a promise between God and God's people. The promise that God was with God's people, and now that was happening through Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and ascension. Not only that, it meant that people had made a promise to love and worship God, with the responsibility of living grace filled lives that blessed others. None of that has changed in our own time.

There is so much more to this act of remembrance, but getting back to the letter that Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, we learn that those who gathered as the church were not blessing others.

Again, may I remind you that this meal of remembrance, this communion meal, didn't take place in a church like we understand it, such as this grand sanctuary. Church was in someone's home. People brought or provided food for sharing, but we know from Paul's letter was that things were going sideways. Let me share what was said in that letter. Paul writes,

“Regarding this next item, I'm not at all pleased.” (There had already been a litany of things Paul had addressed in his letter that the Corinthian church was messed up about.) He continues, “I am getting the picture that when you meet together it brings out your worst side instead of your best!” ... “- you come

¹ [The Message](#) (MSG) Copyright © 1993, 2002, 2018 by [Eugene H. Peterson](#)

together, and instead of eating the Lord's Supper, you bring in a lot of food from the outside and make pigs of yourselves. Some are left out, and go home hungry. Others have to be carried out, too drunk to walk. I can't believe it! Don't you have your own homes to eat and drink in? Why would you stoop to desecrating God's church? Why would you actually shame God's poor? I never would have believed you would stoop to this. And I'm not going to stand by and say nothing."²

What we have come to know as communion or The Lord's Supper, was always meant to be the ultimate equalizer. Everyone was welcome. Everyone was meant to be able to come to know God's love for them through the sharing of this meal. Yet, in the way that society has always been, even back then, even with those earliest of Christians, there were those who forgot about welcome, about hospitality, about the love of Jesus for everyone regardless of social status, power or prestige, wealth, colour of skin, culture, race, or anything else that we might use to separate one another from God's love.

God's love is for everyone and this meal, that in the church has become symbolic in its little piece of bread and tiny glass of juice, is no less impactful when we remember the acts of love through Jesus, God's own son, and the power of the Holy Spirit still moving in us and in the world. It is not so much that we get this all right, with the right words, and the right actions, as professor Matthew Skinner says, "this meal is meant to be an act of love with everyone else in the room" and then asks, "How do we show love in the ways we gather in our ritual and everyday life?"

Look around you.... having this meal with each of us present is meant to remind us of God's love for us and for everyone in this place and beyond. This is especially impactful when we remember that this is World Communion Sunday and there are Christians around the globe who are partaking of this same meal, breaking the bread, taking the cup, and remembering Jesus.

This is not just done as an act of remembering like we do when we think of loved ones who have died, but rather it is like participating again and again in the meal with Jesus. Making this very moment present again, so that we can remember how we are to live, how we are to treat others by remembering how Jesus treated others. How we are to live with love and grace as we remember how Jesus handed himself over to be crucified so that we might have fuller more intimate access to God through the power of the Holy Spirit being the presence of God in our own time.

This meal was never meant to become routine, familiar, or rote, just going through the motions. As Eugene Peterson paraphrases the Apostle Paul's own words in this letter, "What you must solemnly realize is that every time you eat this bread and every time you drink this cup, you reenact in your words and actions the death of the Master. You

² Ibid.

will be drawn back to this meal again and again until the Master returns. You must never let familiarity breed contempt.”

You must never let familiarity breed contempt. Don’t ever let this meal become something less than what it is...a reminder of love, of grace, of forgiveness, and of what it means to live each day blessing others. Feeding those who are hungry. Loving those who feel unloved. Bringing water to the thirsty. Visiting those who are alone, and welcoming the stranger in our midst.

Each time you eat this break or drink this up, remember Jesus, all of Jesus, his life, his death, his resurrection, and that he now lives and reigns with God, sending the Holy Spirit to be with us, to remind us of all that Jesus taught while continuing to move in and with us today.

May the smell of bread, the taste and texture, the sweetness of the juice, and its refreshment continually remind you of Jesus’ love, God’s grace, and the power given to you to love God, yourself, and others. Amen.

Prayers of the People

God, you are a God of compassion and love.
Time after time we have experienced your care and provision.
Time after time You’ve answered our prayers and met our needs—
often in ways we could never have dreamed possible.
We praise You for Your faithful love toward us.

Because we have known Your love, we come to You with confidence,
offering our prayers for the world that You love.

We see so much pain and suffering; so much anger and frustration and despair.
It’s easy to feel overwhelmed by the needs around us. But we continue to bring our prayers to You in faith, because we know that nothing is impossible for You.
You are the God who rained down bread from heaven, and made water flow from a rock in the desert; the God who resurrected Jesus Christ from the dead, and who brings new life and hope to all who believe. For You, all things are possible.

We pray for those suffering the effects of recent natural disasters....

Because nothing is impossible for You, O God,
hear our prayer, and in Your love, answer.

We pray for the regions of our world caught up in violence and threats of violence:

Because nothing is impossible for You, O God,
hear our prayer, and in Your love, answer.

We pray for those who live with serious illness,
those with chronic pain,
those without access to proper medical care,

those for whom treatment is no longer an option.

Because nothing is impossible for You, O God,
hear our prayer, and in Your love, answer.

Merciful God,

You sent Your Son, Jesus Christ, to show us a different way to live—
the way of deep humility and obedience.

You've called us to love one another,
and to work together with one heart and mind,
balancing our needs with the needs of those around us.

Give us courage to follow faithfully, and with integrity—
with actions that bear witness to the words we speak,
and worship that overflows into our daily tasks and relationships—
so that our lives will bring glory and honour to You,
our Redeemer and Lord who taught us to pray...

[re:Worship: Prayers of the People: Proper 21 A \(re-worship.blogspot.com\)](http://re-worship.blogspot.com)

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. 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, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen

Invitation to the offering

World Communion Sunday celebrates the relationship we share with Jesus' followers around the world. Let us share our gifts with God, so there can be an outpouring of generosity in Jesus' name around the globe.

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May you be encouraged to visit our website at [St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Thunder Bay, ON – Part of the PCCWeb network of churches](#) and give a financial gift to support the work of this ministry.

Hymn

Sent forth by your blessing

775

1. Sent forth by your blessing, our true faith confessing,
your people, O God, from your table take leave.
The supper is ended: oh now be extended
the fruits of your service in all who believe.
The seed of your teaching, our hungry souls reaching,
shall blossom in action for all humankind.
Your grace shall incite us, your love shall unite us
to work for your kingdom, your purpose to find.

2. With praise and thanksgiving to God ever-living
the task of our everyday life we will face,
our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,
embracing as neighbours all those of each race.
One feast that has fed us, one light that has led us,
unite us as one in your life that we share.
Then may all the living, with praise and thanksgiving,
give honour to Christ and his name that we bear.

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Benediction

This week, think of yourself as an ambassador for Christ,
seeking reconciliation where people are divided,
carrying the peace of Christ into each encounter.
And so may the peace of God,
which surpasses all understanding,
guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus
and go with you into each new day. Amen.

Postlude