

HEART-TO-HEART

We are reminded that Christ is in our hearts and we are in His and that love connects us all in unity.



We must begin to believe that God, in the mystery of prayer, has entrusted us with a force that can move the Heavenly world, and can bring its power down to earth.

Andrew Murray

Prayers Needed

In this month of November, all Christians are urged to pray.

Pray for our government leaders. This month we elect our government leaders for our State. Pray for God to lead you to vote for the right leaders, and for those who are elected, pray that God will guide them in righteous ways.

Pray for the persecuted. November 1 is the International Day of Prayer for Persecuted Christians. In America we take for granted that we are able to worship Christ openly and without fear. There are Christians all over the world who live in places where it's dangerous to openly worship Jesus. Beginning on November 1, and

throughout the entire month of November, we are all urged to pray together worldwide for our Christian brothers and sisters who stand firm in their faith and may be persecuted for doing so.

Pray with gratitude. In November we also celebrate Thanksgiving Day as a country. It is a day for family and friends to gather together. It's also a day to reflect on what we have to be thankful for. Our prayers include gratitude for the blessings that we have.

Make prayer a habit. At WOCC Pastor Jason began a time for prayers and praise to get us in the habit of praying and praising together as a church family. Let's continue to pray and praise throughout the week.

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Rediscovering the Familiar: Communion
Remembering the sacrifice that shapes our lives
by Alli Oshiro

Have you ever driven home and suddenly you're at your driveway? The route was so familiar that you arrived almost on autopilot.

Sometimes our faith can feel the same way. Practices that were once new and full of meaning become so familiar that we participate without slowing down to remember their personal significance. Communion is one of those gifts.

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Communion is one of the most familiar practices in our faith, yet after years of doing the same thing over and over, it is easy for communion to become just another practice. There are volumes of books that study the significance, history, and symbolism of communion so this article is by no means complete or exhaustive. It is however, an invitation to rediscover why this sacred practice is relevant to our lives today.

In 1 Corinthians 11, Paul reminds the church in Corinth how believers are to approach the Lord's Supper. To understand his teaching, we first need to understand the setting. Corinth was a bustling city that connected many countries, it was shaped by Greek culture, idol worship, and rigid social expectations. Although there were followers of Jesus in Corinth and an established church, many believers were still living according to the culture around them. Living in America today, this isn't so difficult to understand or relate to.

Paul addresses a troubling problem: instead of gathering in unity, believers were treating the Lord's Supper like an ordinary meal. Some ate excessively while others went hungry, and some even became drunk. Their actions mirrored a culture driven by status and self-interest. While this doesn't reflect how we engage in communion, there may be parts of practicing communion that feel ordinary or too familiar.

Paul then redirects their attention to Jesus. On the night He was betrayed, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." He then shared the cup, establishing the new covenant through His blood.

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"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."

Acts 2:42

Rediscovering the Familiar: Communion - cont.

Communion is rooted in remembrance and gratitude. In fact, the word Eucharist, another name for communion, comes from the Greek word meaning "thanksgiving."

The bread and cup also carried deep meaning. The unleavened bread pointed back to Passover and God's deliverance of Israel, while the cup represented the new covenant made possible through Christ's sacrifice. For believers surrounded by pagan worship and endless religious rituals, communion proclaimed a powerful truth: salvation is not earned through human works but through Jesus alone. It's also a reminder of what God has delivered us from.

Paul also reminds the church that communion looks both backward and forward. "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." Communion remembers Christ's finished work on the cross while anticipating His promised return. We were not created for this world, we were created for eternity.

Paul then gives an important warning: believers should not partake "in an unworthy manner." Communion invites us to bring our hearts before God with humility, allowing Him to expose pride, bitterness, apathy, or broken relationships. God's desire is not condemnation but repentance, restoration, and deeper fellowship with Him. Communion is to remind us of our relationship with Him.

When my kids make a mistake or do something wrong, I care very little about them fixing it themselves and far more about our relationship. I hope they trust me and feel safe enough to be honest. Small problems today while they are still young are just a preview of the greater problems we will have to navigate as they get older. I believe God desires the same with us. It is not about self-flagellation and penance, it is about coming close to our father and being honest.

For the church today, communion remains an invitation to remember Christ's sacrifice, examine our hearts, and celebrate the hope we have in Him. In a world marked by distraction, division, and self-reliance, communion calls us back to gratitude, humility, and our daily dependence on Jesus.

The challenge: The next time you receive communion, pause before you eat and ask, "What is Jesus inviting me to remember today?"



"Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts."

Psalm 139:23

Never Alone

by Jeanne Nagatani

A devotional by Charles Stanley caught my attention:

“2 Corinthians 1:3-4 ‘Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.’

The best comforters are those who have been through trouble and tragedy themselves. They know the feelings, the sadness, and the emotional upheavals that go with the territory. So when we go through adversity, isn't it reassuring to have someone there to walk with us who has endured the same trauma we are experiencing? Especially comforting is the friend who reminds us that our God is “the Father of all comfort” who has promised never to leave us or to forsake us.”

Our God is such a loving God that he has put people in my path when I had experienced a tragedy. I've had a lot of trials, and I've been able to give comfort to a few people who have had similar experiences.

What I learned is that we are never alone. God is always there. And if I needed a hug, He sends me someone to give me a hug and to walk alongside me.

How great is our God that He is always there for all of us. He knows our needs and knows how to comfort us. We just have to have faith and trust in Him.



“I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28:20



94-420 Farrington Hwy.
Waipahu, HI 96797
Office: (808) 671-0699
Email: info@westoahuchristian.org
Website: <http://www.westoahuchristian.org>

Pastor - Jason Oshiro
Editorial Staff - Alli Oshiro & Julie Morita

*Please feel free to contact:
Alli Oshiro or Julie Morita
about this newsletter or to
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