



BUILDING A BIGGER TABLE

September 2020

Galatians 3:23-29

Mark 14:1-9

WORSHIP

+ Invocation +

There is no longer Jew or Greek,
There is no longer slave or free,
There is no longer male or female,
For we are all one in Christ Jesus.

+ CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS +

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another:

pause...

Gracious God,
We come before you, beloved but broken. We have not always treated others as we would want them to treat us. We have not always called out injustice and abuse.

We have not always been kind to ourselves. We have not always taken care of the world we share with other living creatures. Remind us of who we are, beloved children bathed in your love. Renew us by your Spirit to live as your holy people, bringing healing to the brokenness around us. **Amen.**

At every moment we are held in existence by the love of God, renewed by the Spirit within and among us, and made alive again in Christ. Receive this assurance in Jesus' name: we are forgiven and freed to live for the healing of the world.

Amen.

+ GATHERING SONG: Gather Us In (ELW # 532) +

+ PRAYER +

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray together: Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may move every human heart; that the barriers dividing us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; and that with our divisions healed, we might live in justice and peace; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

+ SCRIPTURE +

+ Galatians 3:23-29

+ Mark 14:1-9

+ REFLECTION ON BUILDING A BIGGER TABLE +

1. How has your congregation welcomed persons with disabilities?
2. How has your church built a bigger table?
3. Who are the people missing from your church today? Is there a place for them at the table in your congregation?
4. Are there obstacles, invisible walls or unwritten rules that prevent people of different abilities, races, sexual orientations, economic background, etc. from fully participating in your congregation?
5. How can you build a ramp so that all are welcomed to the table?

+ SONG: COME TO THE TABLE +

+ STATEMENT OF FAITH +

Let us proclaim our faith together:

We are not alone; we live in God's world.

We believe in God, who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

- to celebrate God's presence
- to live with respect in Creation,
- to love and serve others,
- to seek justice and resist evil,
- to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.

We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.

+ PRAYERS +

- + We pray for congregations and church leaders, that they can rely on patience and understanding when making decisions for the next year of ministry, and that the Spirit move them to explore new and creative ways to share your good news with others. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**
- + For your earth, generous Creator, that we might be better stewards of all that you have created to ensure that plants, soil, water, creatures and air are sustained, treasured, and protected. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**
- + Your people cry out, merciful God, for justice, for equity, and for peace; be with all those who experience injustice through harmful systems and policies, through hurtful words or abuse, and those who experience the devastating effects of war and violence. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**
- + God of healing, we pray for all people who are hungry, sick, dying, grieving, facing addiction, those whose faith feels absent, those who face oppression, and anyone who is struggling in any way, that you might transform their hearts and minds to know they are loved unconditionally. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

For all these things, and anything else that you know we need, we give you thanks and praise, God of grace. **Amen.**

+ SHARING OF THE PEACE +

The peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Share a sign or word of peace with someone today.

+ OFFERING +

Let us pray together:

God, our Creator, you open wide your hands and satisfy the needs of every living creature. We thank you and bless you for your tender nurture and care. Through the gifts we give to our congregations and others who serve their neighbors, help us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and bring justice to the oppressed in our world. Help us to boldly go where you send us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

+ BLESSING +

The God of all grace bless you now and forever.

Amen.

+ SONG: FOR EVERYONE BORN A PLACE AT THE TABLE +

+ SENDING +

Go in peace.

Build a bigger table.

Christ is with you.

Amen.

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Music on the accompanying video provided by bensound.com, Randy Skow-Anderson, and Breaking Chains

ACTION STEPS FOR BUILDING A BIGGER TABLE

Here are three action steps you can take to start building that ramp.

1. Robin DeAngelo, author of *White Fragility*, says that the first step is to **"Remove from your vocabulary the claims "I'm not a racist."** I'm not sexist. I'm not prejudice. Instead of being defensive, be humble, be a learner, take a baby step, be open to learn and wonder with people you trust...How am I racist, sexist, prejudiced? This will go a long way to build the ramp over the first step?
2. **You can never understand what you need to understand about racism if you only listen to white people.**¹ Build relationships. Talk to people of color. Get to know someone who is LGBTQIA+. Read a book written by a person of color, listen to a podcast, watch a youtube video or movie about a person of color's life experiences. Here are some suggestions... *Waking Up White, Dear Church, White Fragility...Selma, Just Mercy...*
3. **Take action and work for justice through your local church.** Figure out what you would have to do to remove the invisible sign that says persons of color, LGBTQIA persons, cognitively and physically challenged persons aren't really welcome. Begin the conversation to become a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation, start a Green Team and make your congregation more environmentally aware. Join the synod's justice team. The next meeting is October 6.

¹ Robin DiAngelo