*IMMC Conference Sunday June 11, 2023*

Unity in Love

Scripture

Philippians 2:1-5 (Message)

Focus

Unity, community, and discernment are complicated, but God’s love for us is both simple and abundant.

Call to Worship

Leader: Come and worship our God and testify…

**People: …love has made a difference!**

Leader: Come, with humility and openness, to hear the story of Jesus that tells us…

**People: …love has made a difference!**

Leader: Come, all who are hungry for justice and joy, remembering…

**People: …Love has made a difference!**

***All: God of Love, open your arms to us as we bring our whole selves to your Presence, remembering that your love has made a difference. Amen.***

Music

*Voices Together*

VT 801 I’m Gonna Eat at the Welcome Table

VT 732 Abre Mis Ojos

VT 568 Christ Has No Body Here but Ours

VT 582 My Love Colors Outside the Lines

VT 389 Together

VT 388 How Can I Say?

VT 386 One is the Body

VT 397 The Church’s One Foundation

Invocation Prayer

God of life-changing love, we invite you into this place today. We ask for you to enter our hearts and open us not only to You, but to one another. We see our differences, and we celebrate them, as you have made us all in Your likeness. We are told to love our neighbor as ourselves, and so we ask that you soften our hearts, help us put aside our egos, and aid us in walking side by side.

Amen.

Confession

Leader: Creator God, there are times we’ve made it all about us. In those times where we have forgotten our neighbor,

**People: Christ, have mercy**

Leader: For the times we’ve missed that what we hear and see may be a message compelling us to become more Christlike,

**People: Lord, have mercy**

Leader: For the times we’ve quelched diversity,

**People: Christ, have mercy**

Leader: For the times we’ve forgotten our call to hospitality,

**People: Lord, have mercy**

***All: God, have mercy on us as we seek to do your will together, helping each other as we run this race set before us. Amen.***

Words of Assurance

You, beloved, are the face of Christ to your neighbor. You have been given from God everything you need to welcome and care for others as well as yourself. May the Spirit guide you in being faithful to the love Christ has given each one of you.

Children’s Time

*In this Children’s activity, the focus will be on seeing the good things in others and how God has gifted people differently but loves us all the same. This will be illustrated by looking at the different people who are involved in this worship service and the different gifts they offer as an expression of their love for God. It will be easiest if you pick people that are visible in the service, but you may want to also talk about those who offer less visible gifts.*

Good morning! We’re going to start by looking around at the other children around you. Now look at the rest of the congregation. We’re all a little different, aren’t we? But we’re all here for the same reason: God loves us and we want to show our love back to God, don’t we? How do you like to show love to God? *(Some answers may include singing, praying, dancing, sharing with others, caring for other people).*

We have some things in common that help us connect with other people, but sometimes we also connect because we are different. Like when you have a red crayon, and your friend has a blue crayon, and you share with one another. Sometimes one person is good at one thing and someone else is good at another.

*(Here is where you’ll involve the people you’ve thought about in advance).* Let’s think about the different people who are helping out in church today.What is <<person one>> good at? What about <<person two>>? And <<person three>>? *(Insert conversation about other people who are less visible in the congregation)*. Wow, they are all good at different things! And when we all work together, we can all show our love for God!

God loves us no matter what, but when we work together to show our love for God at church we can celebrate and enjoy God’s love so much more! And together, we can do so much more than if we tried to do it all by ourselves. Even though we’re different, we can find unity in love through our love for God.

Sermon

You can access a video sermon from Conference Co-Minister Joanne Gallardo using this link: <https://youtu.be/-MvgyfvqW3E>

Benediction / Sending

As we go back into the communities that hold us, let us remember to have space for love, grace, and mercy with all whom we meet. Amen.