

Large Print Bulletins are available in the back of the Sanctuary

Denmark Manor United Church of Christ

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A Service to Give Thanks and Say Farewell

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany 3:00PM January 28, 2018

Please remember to turn off your cell phones during the Worship Service. Thank you.

Preparation Music

(Please be seated and prepare yourself for worship)

The Entrance of the Light

Welcome-Pastor Meredith

*Ringing of the Bell

Introit: "Christ is the Light" *

First Time Choir. 2nd Time All Join in

Christ is the light, Christ is the light!

Goodbye to darkness, goodbye to night.

In the eastern sky the star is shining bright,

Oh, glory hallelujah children, Christ is the light.

*Opening Prayer

Leader: *Let us pray.*

All: **O wondrous God, on this holy day, we have gathered together once again to celebrate your presence among us, to praise you, and to thank you for all you have given us.**

May this time of worship strengthen and refresh us, and fill us with such joy that we cannot help but share it with everyone around us.

Though we are very different people, with many different talents and gifts, make us one in your Spirit, that we may be your ministers in the world. Amen.

*Hymn 43 "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

*The Passing of the Peace

Pastor: *The peace of Christ be with you.*

All: **And also with you.**

Please share a greeting of Christian love with those sitting around you.

A Time for Children: "Meet Our Tag Team"

Anthem: "It Is Well With My Soul"

Scripture Lesson: I Corinthians 12:27-13:13

Sermon: "A Still More Excellent Way"

*Hymn "The Gift of Love" *

1. Though I may speak with brav - est fire,
 2. Though I may give all I pos - sess,
 3. Come, Spir - it, come, our hearts con - trol,

and have the 'gift to all in - spire,
 and striv - ing so my love pro - fess,
 our spir - its long to be made whole.

and have not love, my words are vain,
 but not be given by love with - in,
 Let in - ward love guide ev - ery deed;

as sound - ing brass, and hope - less gain.
 the prof - it soon turns strange - ly thin.
 by this we wor - ship, and are freed.

WORDS: Hal Hopson, 1972 (1 Cor. 13:1-3)
 MUSIC: Trad. English melody; adapt. by Hal Hopson, 1972
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GIFT OF LOVE
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The Celebration of Holy Communion

The Invitation

Leader: *Beloved in Christ, the Gospel tells us that on the first day of the week Jesus Christ was raised from death, appeared to Mary Magdalene, on that same day sat at the table with two disciples, and was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.*

All: **This is the joyful feast of the people of God. Men and women, youth and children, come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and gather about Christ's table.**

Leader: This table is for all Christians who wish to know the presence of Christ and to share in the community of God's people.

Communion Prayer

Leader: *God be with you.*

People: **And with you.**

Leader: *Lift up your hearts.*

People: **We lift them to God.**

Leader: *Let us give thanks to God Most High.*

People: **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Leader: *We give you thanks, God of majesty and mercy, for calling forth the creation and raising us from dust by the breath of your being.*

We bless you for the beauty and bounty of the earth and for the vision of the day when sharing by all will mean scarcity for none.

We remember the covenant you made with your people Israel, and we give you thanks for all our ancestors in faith.

We rejoice that you call us to reconciliation with you and all people everywhere and that you remain faithful to your covenant even when we are faithless.

We rejoice that you call the entire human family to this table of sacrifice and victory.

We come in remembrance and celebration of the gift of Jesus Christ, whom you sent, in the fullness of time, to be the good news. Born of

Mary, our sister in faith, Christ lived among us to reveal the mystery of your Word, to suffer and die on the cross for us, to be raised from death on the third day, and then to live in glory.

We bless you, gracious God, for the presence of your Holy Spirit in the church you have gathered.

With your sons and daughters of faith in all places and times, we praise you with joy.

All: Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High.

Leader: *We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, and on the eve of death, Jesus gathered the disciples for the feast of Passover. Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."*

In the same way also 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."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of our faith.

**All: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God!
Hosanna in the highest!**

Leader: *Eternal God, we unite in this covenant of faith, recalling Christ's suffering and death, rejoicing in Christ's resurrection, and awaiting Christ's return in victory.*

We spread your table with these gifts of the earth and of our labor.

We present to you our very lives, committed to your service in behalf of all people.

We ask you to send your Holy Spirit on this bread and wine, on our gifts, and on us.

Strengthen your universal church that it may be the champion of peace and justice in all the world.

Restore the earth with your grace that is able to make all things new.

All: Be present with us as we share this meal, and throughout all our lives, that we may know you as the Holy One, who with Christ and the Holy Spirit, lives for ever. Amen.

Prayer of Our Savior (sung)

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.

Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,

and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom,

and the power and the glory forever. Amen

Leader: *The bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ.*

Leader: *The cup of blessing which we bless is the communion of the blood of Christ.*

Lamb of God

All: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

Call to the Supper

Leader: *The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.*

Sharing the Elements

Leader: *The body of Christ, the bread of heaven.*

All: Amen!

Leader: *The blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.*

All: Amen

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: *Let us pray.*

All: **Almighty God, we give you thanks for the gift of our Savior's presence in the simplicity and splendor of this holy meal. Unite us with all who are fed by Christ's body and blood that we may faithfully proclaim the good news of your love and that your universal church may be a rainbow of hope in an uncertain world; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.**

The Order for Farewell

Greeting:

Robin Brautigam: *Our church family is constantly changing. People come and go. Babies are born. Children grow up. People commit themselves to one another. Loved ones and friends among us come to the end of their lives. Individuals move into our community and church life. Others leave us, moving away to new places, new experiences, and new opportunities. It is important and right that we recognize these times of passage, of endings and beginnings. Today we share the time of farewell with a pastor who is leaving.*

Remembrance and Recognition

Giving and Sharing of Symbols

Anthem: "On Eagle's Wings"

Recognition of the End

Robert Krue: *On June 1, 2003, this local church called The Rev. Meredith Hutchison to serve as pastor.*

Pastor Meredith: *I thank Denmark Manor United Church of Christ, its members and friends, for the love, kindness, and support shown me these last 14 ½ years. I ask forgiveness for the mistakes I have made. I am grateful for the ways my leadership has been accepted. As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.*

People of Denmark Manor UCC: **We receive your thankfulness, offer forgiveness, and accept that you now leave to minister elsewhere. We express our gratitude for your time among us. We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us at your departure.**

Pastor Meredith: *I forgive you and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.*

Vows of Release

Robert: *Will the members of Denmark Manor United Church of Christ please stand. Do you offer your encouragement for her ministry as it unfolds in new ways?*

People of DMUCC: **We do, with the help of God.**

Robert: *Do you, Meredith Hutchison, release this local church from turning to you and depending on you?*

Pastor Meredith: *I do, with the help of God.*

Robert: *Do you offer your encouragement for the continued ministry here and on the relationship with another who will come to serve?*

Pastor Meredith: *I do, with the help of God.*

Witness of the Association

Robert: *On behalf of the Westmoreland Association of the Penn West Conference and the United Church of Christ, I witness to the words spoken: words of thankfulness, forgiveness, and release. The member churches of our association and conference hold each of you in prayer. We pledge our support in the transitions signified in this service. Thanks be to God.*

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Prayer

Robin: *Let us pray.*

People of DMUCC: **God, whose everlasting love for all is trustworthy, help each of us to trust the future which rests in your care. The time we were together in your name saw our laughter and tears, our hopes and disappointments. Guide us as we hold these cherished memories but move in new directions, until that time to come when we are completely one with you and with each other, in the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.**

***Hymn # 347 “Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ”**

*The Benediction-Pastor Meredith

*Benediction Response: “The Trees of the Field”

*Postlude

We are grateful for the presence and preaching of our Conference Minister, The Rev. David Ackerman who joins us today for this special service. We also thank Bob Krueel, President of the Westmoreland Association, Robin Brautigam-President of Denmark Manor UCC Consistory, Don McIlvaine who chaired the search committee that recommended Pastor Meredith to the Congregation and Denmark Manor’s wonderful Choir.

Please stay for the dinner which follows today’s worship service!

It is in the Fellowship Hall. As you exit the Sanctuary, turn right, go down the stairs, turn left and then down the hall. Please go in and be seated and we will say grace after everyone has found a seat.

From the Stillspeaking Devotional of the United Church of Christ

Holy Spirit Who?

Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." - Acts 19:1-7

That Paul could size up a church in no time. He took one look at the church in Ephesus and knew they had not received the Holy Spirit. How did he know that?

Were they stressed out and worked up?
Were they irritable and quarrelsome?
Did they talk more than they listened?
Did they think they were responsible for everything?

Did they strive to be excellent and polished over humble and faithful?
Were they fearful and joyless?
Were they dour and sour and no fun to be around?
Was their worship service lacking a pulse?

Did they profess love more than they showed it?
Did they ignore their neighbors in need?
Did they fail to confront abuses of power and stand with the marginalized?
Did they sidestep justice issues to avoid being "political"?

Did they not give generously to the ministries of the church?
Did they argue over small matters and ignore the important stuff?
Were they more focused on the church's survival than on God's mission in the world?
Were they more full of themselves than of Christ?

Were they squeamish or mystified by talk of this so-called "Holy Spirit"?

I have worshipped in many churches, from fiery Pentecostal to frozen congregational. All of them showed a surplus of the Spirit in some ways and a deficit in others. Perhaps Paul knew the Ephesian church lacked the Spirit, not because they were especially profane, but simply because they were a church.

Prayer . . . Lord, even if I didn't know it and don't always show it, thank you for blessing me with your Spirit. Just for today, don't let me give cause for Paul, or anyone, to call me out for not representing You. Amen.



About the Author . . . Matt Laney is the Senior Pastor of Virginia Highland Church UCC in Atlanta, GA and the author of Pride Wars, a fantasy series published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for Young Readers. The first book, The Spinner Prince, will be available March 9, 2018.