

Madison Mennonite Church

Koinonia Worship

September 27, 2020

GATHERING

Greet one another and add names to the liturgy of those who would like to lead, read, or facilitate. All ages are encouraged to participate in leadership! Help non-readers with their lines. Everyone reads the "Many" parts, unmuted for groups reading virtually. Re-mute afterward, if desired.

Call to Worship: Leader _____

Leader: Welcome, friends, to this sacred time of worship.
Set aside the tasks of the day, the worries of your heart,
For the Spirit of Renewal invites us in.
May God move in our midst and give life to our fellowship.

Many: Welcome, friends, to worship!

Lighting our Candles: Leader _____

Leader: Each week, we light a candle to symbolize Christ's presence with us and the unity we have with our beloved siblings at Madison Mennonite.

Light candles

Leader: Christ, our light, bless our fellowship with your Spirit's presence. We remember other MMC Koinonia Groups and pray that we are all united in love and peace. Amen.

HEARING the WORD: Reader 1 _____; Reader 2_____

Reader 1: A reading from Acts 2:43-47. "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship (*koinonia*), to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles."

Reader 2: "All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved."

Guiding Reflection: Reader: _____

Reader: Each week, there is an optional tactile activity. During the reflection and discussion, all ages, but children especially, are invited to consider what they would share with others like the Koinonia Groups did in the Acts reading. You may draw or write about this, gather things from your room, build something with Legos, etc. [If your group meets outdoors, have the children find a special rock or leaf and share it with another person in the group.]

"While there is no exact translation in English, *koinonia* is a Greek word most closely associated with concepts of a holy, covenantal fellowship... In short, it is a shared community that involves deep, close-knit participation among its people... While some are tempted to substitute the word "fellowship" for *koinonia*, it's far deeper. Fellowship is a more surface-level, friendly relationship, while *koinonia* is full, intimate unity. And it's an important element in the New Testament particularly, as the apostles

became filled with the Holy Spirit and then helped establish the first communities of new believers, who shared not only in the Spirit, but also in all aspects of life together, from meals and homes to money."

Questions for Group Reflection: Facilitator _____

(The facilitator reads the questions aloud and invites response. At 25 minutes into your gathering, or when it conversation has dwindled, the facilitator closes the time with prayer, below.)

1. As you hear the scripture, what do you envision early *koinonia* groups looked like? Who was there, where do you think they met, and what was important to them?
2. What is important to us as we create *koinonia* amongst this group?
3. To what does this passage call us, as persons and as a church?
4. *Tactile Activity:* Invite any children or adults to show the items they would want to share with the group. What is it? How would it be shared? Is it easier or harder to share when there is only one of something? What about when there is lots to go around?

At the closing of this time of sharing, pray together:

Facilitator: Loving Spirit, we give you thanks for this time of discovery in scripture and discernment with one another. May we continue to grow in wisdom and understanding as persons and as a church. Amen.

RESPONDING in PRAYER and FELLOWSHIP

Sharing Joys and Concerns: Leader _____

The Leader invites each person (children included!) to share any joys or concerns they bring to the group. Remind your group that if anyone does not wish to share, they may simply say "pass." After all have been invited to share, including the Leader, and if no one has something to add after a first round, join in a spirit of prayer (below).

Level 1B adaptation: *If the group is 15 people or larger, invite people to type their name in the chat if they would like to share, as we do on All-Church Sundays. Call on people in that order. If the group is smaller than 15 people, follow the instructions above.*

Praying Together

Leader: Holy God, we offer these prayers to you this day, trusting in your faithfulness.
We pray for ourselves, for our loved ones near and far. *(a moment for silent prayer)*
We pray for our community, our nation, and our world. *(a moment for silent prayer)*
Loving God,

Many: hear our prayers. Amen.

Sharing the Peace of Christ: Leader _____

Leader: May the peace of Christ be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Continued Fellowship (as time allows)

Koinonia Groups in Levels 2-4: You may want to spend this time discussing your Quarantine Resumes.



Sources used:
Bible reading from the NRSV.
Excerpt on "koinonia" from Crosswalk.com

Announcements:

*This Wednesday begins the Spiritual Practices for the Journey short-term Small Group. We will be using a simple tool that helps us discover our "spiritual type" -- how we tend to experience God, what we think of church, what actions we find most "consistent" with our faith, etc. All are welcome!

*Pastor Valerie will be at Camp Friedenswald this coming Friday and Saturday for a working retreat. Call or text to be in touch with any immediate needs. (Email is fine for non-urgent communications.)

*Next Sunday in All-Church Worship, we will be celebrating our annual 3rd Grade Bible Gifting! In the same spirit and in tandem with this month's focus on spiritual disciplines, we'll reflect on the spiritual practice of engaging scripture.

This Week's Calendar:

Wed., Sept. 30

- Spiritual Practices for the Journey, 7pm
- Community Care Call, 8:15pm

Thurs., Oct. 1

- Care Team, 7pm

Sun., Oct. 4

- All-Church Adult CE 4pm, Worship 5pm, and Fellowship Time

For links to these virtual gatherings, please see the weekly e-calendar.

