

Racine UMC - Sumner Center – Wykoff UMC

As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.

May we together experience the presence of God

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We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord

Prelude

Welcome



“A Worship of celebration of Freedom”

This is the week that once again we pause and celebrate our freedom as a nation and the Independence and Liberty that we now enjoy. Today, we not only take a look at the Liberty we enjoy as Americans, but greater than that, we take a look at the Liberty that was made possible through the death of our Savior, Jesus Christ on the Cross.

All of the blessings we enjoy as Christians could not have taken place without our Savior who bled and died and rose again 3 short days later so that we could experience new life and freedom spiritually!

Far from being a scene that would draw the viewer in to inspiration and awe at it’s beauty, but when one stops to consider the message of the Cross of freedom from sin, and when one hears the cry of “It Is Finished” echoing through the ages, the Cross is a monument of beauty!

Words like “Father Forgive Them, they know not what they do”, speaks of the unconditional love of Christ even though he was reviled and rejected by those He loved.

In encourage you to take time today - not only to appreciate and pray for this great nation, but that you will also draw nearer to Christ than ever before as we bring Him honor and praises.

Pauls writings in *Galatians 6:14* state: “May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” Come it is time we praise God for this glorious day...

Call to Worship for Independence Day

L: We gather this morning appreciating our freedom to worship God.

P: May God continue to bless the Church of Christ in this land.

L: We draw near to the God who rules over all nations

P: May God continue to bless our country and all the countries in the world.

L: We seek to live in harmony and peace together with all peoples on the earth.

P: May God continue to establish peace on earth and help us understand that it begins in our hearts.

L: Come, let us worship the Lord!

Independence Day Prayer:

Almighty God, bless our nation and make it true to the ideas of freedom and justice and brotherhood for all who make it great. Guard us from war, from fire and wind, from compromise, fear and confusion.

Be close to our national leaders, give them vision and courage, as they ponder decisions effecting peace and the future of our world. Make us more deeply aware of our heritage realizing not only our rights but also our duties and responsibilities as citizens of this great nation. Make this great land and all its people know clearly your will, that they may fulfill the destiny ordained for us. In the name of your risen Son we pray. Amen

Praise Hymn UMH #102 "Now Thank We All Our God"

Author: Martin Rinkart (1636)

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1 Now thank we all our God
with heart and hands and voices,
who wondrous things has done,
in whom his world rejoices;
who from our mothers' arms
has blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.

2 O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us,

to keep us in his grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills
of this world in the next.

3 All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given,
the Son and Spirit blest,
who reign in highest heaven
the one eternal God,
whom heaven and earth adore;
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore.

We Hear God's Word

**New Testament Reading..... Galatians 5:1, 13-14, 16-17, 22-25
New Revised Standard Version**

*1 For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore,
and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.*

*13 For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters, only do not use your freedom as
an opportunity for self-indulgence,[c] but through love become enslaved to one another.*

*14 For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment,
"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*

The Works of the Flesh

16 Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

The Fruit of the Spirit

22 By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. 24 And those who belong to Christ[e] have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

Word of God, For the People of God, **Thanks Be to God!**

Children's Moments

Faith Hymn UMH #396 "O Jesus, I have Promised"

Author: John Ernest Bode (1869)

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**1 O Jesus, I have promised
To serve thee to the end;
Be thou forever near me,
My Master and my friend;
I shall not fear the battle
If thou art by my side,
Nor wander from the pathway
If thou wilt be my guide.**

**2 O let me feel thee near me!
The world is ever near:
I see the sights that dazzle,
The tempting sounds I hear.
My foes are ever near me,
Around me and within;
But, Jesus, draw thou nearer,
And shield my soul from sin.**

**3 O let me hear thee speaking
In accents clear and still,
Above the storms of passion,
The murmurs of self-will.
O speak to reassure me,
To hasten or control;
O speak, and make me listen,
Thou guardian of my soul.**

**4 O Jesus, thou hast promised
To all who follow thee
That where thou art in glory
There shall thy servant be.
And, Jesus, I have promised
To serve thee to the end;
O give me grace to follow,
My Master and my friend.**

Meditation

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic* church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

INVITATION

(Pastor stands behind the Lord's table.)

Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him,
who earnestly repent of their sin
and seek to live in peace with one another.
Therefore, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

CONFESSION AND PARDON.

**Merciful God,
we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have failed to be an obedient church.
We have not done your will,
we have broken your law,
we have rebelled against your love,
we have not loved our neighbors,
and we have not heard the cry of the needy.
Forgive us, we pray.
Free us for joyful obedience,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Hear the good news:
Christ died for us while we were yet sinners;
that proves God's love toward us.
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

**In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!
Glory to God. Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING*

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image
and breathed into us the breath of life.

When we turned away, and our love failed,
your love remained steadfast.

You delivered us from captivity,
made covenant to be our sovereign God,
and spoke to us through the prophets.

And so, with your people on earth
and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.

Your Spirit anointed him
to preach good news to the poor,
to proclaim release to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
and to announce that the time had come
when you would save your people.

He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners.

By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection
you gave birth to your Church,
delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
and made with us a new covenant
by water and the Spirit.

When the Lord Jesus ascended,
he promised to be with us always,
in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us,
he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread,
gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over, he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Drink from this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ,
redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father,
now and forever. Amen.

The body of Christ, given for you. Amen.
The blood of Christ, given for you. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer

What a weekend it is, Lord. It is time to gather and celebrate, time to reflect on the blessings of the freedoms that have been so sorely fought for and won, time to commit ourselves to offering the freedoms we cherish to others. We have gathered here in the midst of the business of the summer season to seek your will, to find peace and directions for our lives. Bless us, O Lord, with wisdom tempered with compassion. Remind us that we have such freedom because others who have gone before have stood for principles of hope. Do not let our pride of country overwhelm the needs that still abound within our walls and our land. Where there is hatred, help us to bring your words of love. Where there are injustices, help us to correct unjust systems and become advocates for the voiceless and powerless. Where there is apathy, empower us to bring the good news of your gracious transforming love. Be with us this day and all our days as we seek to follow you. We pray all these things through Jesus Christ our Lord who taught us to pray...

***Departing Hymn TFWS #2184 "Sent Out In Jesus Name"**

Author: José Aguiar

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Sent by the Lord am I; my hand I will apply in fellowship to build a peaceful loving world. Sent by the Lord am I; my hand I will apply in fellowship to build a peaceful loving world.

The angels cannot change a world of grief and pain, where sorrows do not cease, into a world of peace. The task is mine to do, to make it all come true; God, help me to obey, to do your will this day.

BENEDICTION, BLESSING

God of fireworks and good works, bless us this day as we go from this place. May our celebrations be joyous and memorable and may our service to others reflect your love and peace. AMEN.

Postlude