

Making a Commitment to Unity in Diversity

May 26, 2019

Pastor Judy Howard Peterson

artisanchurch.com

[Music Intro]

[Male voice] The following is a presentation of Artisan Church in Rochester, New York.

[Voice of Pastor Judy]

Somebody asked me how I will spend the rest of my summer and my summers are usually dominated by two primary events, I've been at a university schedule for 12 years and kind of still in that schedule. The two primary events: are family gatherings and weddings and I love both of them. Both of them are gifts, both of them are opportunities to strengthen relational bonds, solidify my commitment to be with people. Family gatherings and weddings are often the gift of being with, family gatherings weddings are also filled with the work of being with other people.

Every summer I have the gift of an entire week with my husband's entire nuclear family. Parents, siblings, their spouses, their six kids— we laugh, we eat, we swim, we play Frisbee, we hug, we hug-back, it's a gift and I have a blast. Last summer after they left my husband I were so physically exhausted from hosting them that we went to a local pub to eat because I could not— we had food I could not assemble a plate full of food to save my life, I was so tired. And we listen to a bad eighties cover band for hours simply because we couldn't get off the stool that we were sitting on. Being with a good way it is a gift but it's also a ton of work, which is why at weddings that I officiate I make sure that the individuals that are making these vows understand that the vows are not so much for the better times, the richer times, the healthier times— that the truth is we make vows to one another for worse times, for poorer times, and for times of sickness. It's important to me that those who are entering into such a committed relationship, often very young people in my case, understand that being with it is a gift but if it's going to work it's going to be a lot of work.

The word community finds its origins in the in the combination of two latin words the word comus means the word to be with or to be together and munis is the word gift community means the “aaaj of being one another”, it's the joy of it, the goodness of it, the gift of being with our combat munis community is such a gift. And I want to take a moment since this is my last Sunday here at artists and really to think this community for welcoming me in with such open arms and such gracious spirits. I know I am nothing like Pastor Scott and yet you have

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been very gracious to put up with myself. And or providing me a lovely place to stay furnishing it with some of your own staff and you've taken long walks with me when I would have walked alone otherwise, you have given me a pass to the dog park so I could meet all sorts of new friends, you shared meals with me and long conversations over coffee and wine, and most of all you let me meddle in your lives and allowed me to share a bit of mine you have certainly given me the gift of being with this last month. And although I have not ever in my life had a faith crisis I had most recently had a church crisis and so this gift of being with comes very sweetly to me, it has been lovely. In that every visitor to every church if every member of every church was offered the same gift that I got this last month I'm pretty sure all of our opinions about church would change. Let's be honest here, although community is the gift of being with, that gift only comes when we commit to day to day work of being with— someone set up for a place for me to stay someone gave their things so that I could sleep on it and cook with it and and be in it. People prepared meals for me to join, people had to choose to go on walks with me and put up with my dog who licks them all the time. And I'm sure some of you felt uncomfortable when I asked meddling questions that you wish I would have kept the distance from. And I can talk forever and listening is a lot of work. And if I was here more than a month you would find out that sometimes I can be a lot of work to be with and I might find out that that's true about you too. I want to be clear about this because I think a good portion of our culture thinks that community should come wrapped in a pink bow as a present to them like that it's something that exists just naturally in nature and some people get it and some people don't. And so when community that starts to feel like a lot of work we tend to want to trade it in for a different model like sometimes I purchased wrongly. You see when we believe that community is the gift of with without understanding that it only happens alongside the work of with, then it's inevitable that when community begins to feel like work we begin to think is not a gift. But perhaps if we could grasp the truth that the gift of with was never meant to just be a personal gift for us.

Community is actually not just for us, it's actually a gift we become for the world for those of us who want to follow Jesus Christ in a three-dimensional way— not just trying to wrap our minds around some sort of doctrine but wrapping our-our lives around some sort of way we do the work of with because we want to be the gift of with so the world would come to know a god that is so relational that the God we serve can be defined as three persons and yet so singular that we have a God that calls God self-one. The Christian Church defines this truth about God a God that's both three relational and one singular as a doctrinal imperative. Now a doctrinal imperative is simply a truth that is essential, that's all it means. And we say the fact that we have a God that's relational and singular at the same time, the Trinity, this is one of our doctrinal imperatives. And I would argue that every doctrinal imperative, every truth you

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believe about God that's essential, should be followed up with a moral indicative and all that means is it's a behavior that reveals the truth you believe. Doctrinal imperatives without moral indicative make people cause hypocrites. And so every doctrinal imperative we believe is supposed to come into three-dimensional life to follow that up, to declare to the world "no like this". This is at the foundation of a three-dimensional faith it simply means, if you believe something to be true about God there should be a behavioral response in your life. That's how this was designed to work. Our God is forgiving doctrinal imperative, we forgive moral indicative. Our God is loving doctrinal imperative, we live it's a moral indicative. It's not just some we're choosing to do because we're Artisan, we're doing this because we're Christ's body, our God put on skin to become vulnerable willing to lay down his life, doctrinal imperative. We show up in vulnerable flesh prepared to love more than fight, this is just a moral indicative. We do the work of with because we want to do this gift giving to the world of a God that so relationally that it has to be called three and so singular that you could only call God one. And Jesus makes it clear that this is the core piece of the plan for how God is going to get proclaimed beyond those who are already know God.

In Jesus' final prayer in John Chapter 17, this is his final prayer for community. And I'm just going to tell you if you get like one last prayer of our community you don't want to pray for a sandwich, you know? Like you know, like you I take your most meaningful desires and you say like this could you give this to these people that I love you ask for the big stuff what you really want. Listen carefully to what Jesus prayed, prays for in John 17: "I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."

Notice that Jesus does not pray for that his followers would be prosperous he does not pray that—pray that they would be profound or that they would be right but he does pray that they would be protected from the things that would try to pull them apart and Jesus knows that forces are already at work trying to pull them apart. Jesus has seen it even in his core group of disciples, James and John have already asked for privileged positions and Jesus knows that the passions and ambitions of people often push us to rule rather than serve, which always pulls people apart. And there are disciples with different political leanings even in the core

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group that is around Jesus and He knows how the love of principle can trump the love of people and there have been already disagreements about who, how money should be spent and Jesus knows that fighting for a share of the pot often causes people to miss the point that they're supposed to share. Jesus knows that moving forward there's going to be even greater risk to this better news that's being brought to the Gentiles and then to other cultures being one is going to be a lot of work, in fact it's never really been done before. There's going to be very logical reasons to divide— well supported theological debates are going to pull them apart, cultural preferences are going to keep them largely separate on Sundays, and so Jesus prays. And social status is going to keep people from hanging out, and there's going to be dishes in the sink, and busy schedules, and flippant words, and judgemental behavior, and behavior that doesn't help the judgment. But Jesus says maybe they could all be one Father, just as You are in Me and I am in You may they all be in us— also be in us so that the world could believe that really I was sent by you. See, Jesus' pulling for us. That we would all be one that we would have no divisions among us so that then the world could believe that Jesus really was the Messiah that his coming actually changed everything. And Jesus as the world will then truly know that I save people when my people are saved from the most natural thing that happened 56 verses into scripture that they from dividing. That will be the proclamation. When they learn to live in complete unity then people will know I am a savior and so Jesus prays that we would all be one. And it would be remarkable it would be so different from our world which I think is kind of the point that those who follow Jesus are supposed to look so different from the world. And right now the church is just as divided as the world. So different we would it would be if the if the if we were at United the world I think what stood up and take notice and then they would be like "No there are actually people who are doing this work of with".

I think people would notice now just as they notice then because being one is so rare so where that most people have given it up as some sort of pipe dream, so Jesus continues to pray. I believe today he prays for a community that would be so committed to the work of with that they would become the gift that the world so needs of a possibility that we could stick it out together. How is it the Jews and Gentiles are loving one another after all this time? How is it that a prostitute is a now with the Pharisee— Isn't she too wounded? Isn't he too rude? How is it that a Roman centurion and a leper are breaking bread together? Isn't one unclean and one part of the group? How is it that a Democrat, a Republican, a Catholic and a Protestant, a scientist and a theologian, a C.E.O. and a custodian, a conservative and a progressive, how are they indeed hanging out together with one another? What if people saw this and said "Whoa something has saved them!" We thought it was impossible and wonder what it was.

This is the gift of being with. A gift not just to be pursued by us for us but a gift to be pursued by us for the world, a world that is so divided it is trained in antagonism, it is disinterested in life

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with those with whom it disagrees and it doesn't really know any different. And unfortunately it hasn't seen that much different in the church. But what if we could become the gift of with by committing to the moral indicative of doing the work of with forgiving the unforgivable giving second and third chances to those who never seem to get it right. Agreeing to disagree and remaining committed to each other in that disagreement, haring our resources and refusing to share gossip. I believe that we have the opportunity that the— and that God is extending an invitation to the church again to be better news than what the world is proclaiming in a three-dimensional way by how they are with one another. And I believe one of the most power-more powerful moral indicative we have is to be a type of community that answers Jesus' prayer: that they would all be one as He and the Father are one. We could do that, we could answer that prayer if we commit to the work of being with not just for better but for worse, not just for richer but poor, and not just in health but when we feel really sick. Brennan Manning says it this way and over the years I've come back to this he said: "The way we live with each other in the community of faith it is the truest test of a follower of Jesus Christ. It is as simple and demanding as that."

And so I wrap my month with you I want to challenge you, commission you I think how you are going to be together and continue to be together as the truest test of your faith this work of being with. Today I want to read from First Peter 3:8-9. I started out my time here with something that I said I think is the Gospel in tweet form "Behold! Do not be afraid, I bring you good news of great joy that's for all the people. Today in the City of David a savior has been born who is Christ the Lord" this is the good news in tweet form. A real God has come for all people in a real place and real flesh and is continuing to do that. And I think this might be the work of with also in some sort of tweet form so here we go you can put it on the screen says: "Finally all of you should be of one—" Not working? Oh, no problem, I'm going to read it to you. First Peter 3: 8 and 9 "Finally all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other, love each other as brothers and sisters, be tender hearted and keep a humble attitude, do not repay evil for evil, do not retaliate with insults when people insult you." Don't you wish that was the header on, like, Facebook? OK. "Instead pay them back with a blessing, that is what God has called you to do and then he will grant you his blessing." Number one, "Finally all of you should be of one mind", that's the first line of the tweet. Now the New American Standard Bible says "Be of one mind" I'm actually says means be harmonious, OK? This is not the we're all supposed to sing the same note I'm not a musician this is your church is filled with musicians but I know that harmony means we're not all singing the same thing. It does mean that as followers of Jesus we need to remember that we're all singing the same song but we're maybe not all singing the same note. And we need to remember that following Jesus is not a solo endeavor, Jesus doesn't need any more soloists. As followers of Jesus that we don't get to just sing

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whatever we want and but instead we lay down our lives into this unique music that God is creating called community and we learn to harmonize. Now to harmonize you and I will need to learn how to listen carefully to those around us we have to hear one another then we have to adjust our note then we can harmonize. And I've invited Kim to come up because she's a music teacher and she's going to teach you stuff that I actually don't have any clue about, except I read about it. But she's going to do it in a three dimensional real life way, which is always better news about what harmony or or what it means when God says be of one mind, which I would say is really be one song.

[Voice of Kim]

The reason I'm here is because she mentioned this part of her service and I accidentally geeked out about music theory when she was talking about it. I should not have done that. But really I am up here with fear and trembling and want to know that Artisan has the best musicians— the most talented, most amazing musicians and what I offer today really is just a very simple very basic understanding of music theory. So most people also know that I'm a coach because it says it a lot in the back of my shirts a lot. But I also as a band teacher and I taught for a fourth to Eighth grade band for 15 years so that's where this little bit of knowledge comes from. So as Judy said we can choose to sing alone and sing that one single line melody. And as a fourth grade band teacher I can tell you that it's very important for the kids when they're learning to learn how to play their single line melody by themselves. They don't have to listen to be able to because they're concentrating on one thing. But then think fourth grade band concert, the first one. What do you will think of is like hot cross buns with about 20 or however many kids trying to put this together. It is way more difficult than you would think for them to listen to each other and then play their thing so you know the simple melody [Plays first notes of Twinkle, twinkle, little star melody on a keyboard]. You know you really grip play with your kid play that for the first time you're thrilled "Yes! I spent my money on something". So you know that's the that's the first part and it's OK and then you put it together a whole bunch of fourth graders and it's OK. But then I think the second concert you have some talented kids and you start to get some a little bit more, little bit of harmony. [Plays first notes of Twinkle, twinkle, little star melody on a keyboard while harmonizing] So that takes a tiny bit more ability to listen to play with each other. But then what really begins to make a richer, fuller music is when you can add in the chords with lots of notes. And now if I was as talented as Mel I could really do a bang up job here but I'm not. The chords that you're used to hearing, very basic chords in a lot of our traditional music and in a popular music just 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 so you have consonants, sounds good to our ear, dissonance, in other words the notes are fighting each other a little and resolve. Get more of harmony and track so and so that when you put it behind a melody [Plays first notes of

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Twinkle, twinkle, little star melody on a keyboard while harmonizing with different cords]. And it wants to resolve so bad but it also makes it interesting. Thank you.

[Voice of Pastor Judy]

And if you ask any musician musician you'll find that people do not come out of the womb knowing how to sing harmony. Singing harmony is a learned skill that people like Kim put up with fourth to eighth graders for years to help them learn how to do that. It requires that you listen to someone else and hold your own note at the same time, this is the work of being in community. It's difficult because in an individualistic culture we're trained to be soloists and we're not listening we ask everybody else to adjust to our note. But that's not Jesus' way— Jesus invites us to lay down our lives for one another to not just ask people to listen to us and harmonize with us but we listen to other people and we harmonize with them. This is also difficult because we actually hear harmonies very differently— what sounds good to our ears is actually nurtured and not natural. What sounds right would sound off perhaps to another culture, there is not a universal actual sense of harmony. We are so immersed in Western music that we think oh this is the only way harmony sounds but if you go to India you'll hear a whole different sound of harmony and so if you're going to start being an intercultural church, which I would dream one day Artisan would be it's going to take even more listening because what is going to be harmonic is going to feel off to some of you and feel on to other people at the same time. This passage states you should be of one mind or like minded. This does not mean that Jesus' followers will agree on everything that would be a miracle and so boring. We would never have that tension that makes it sound so beautiful and then seek towards resolution. And said differently means that we sing different notes, we acknowledge that all the notes are important and that we are all of one song and we can make beautiful music together if we will listen to the notes others are singing and then commit to the life laying down work of learning harmony. Be of one mind harmonize with each other be of one song.

Second thing it says is sympathize with each other. This literally means to feel the other side in the Greek, OK? To sympathize means to feel not see it or not know the other side but to feel the other side. Again this can be super uncomfortable for other people because we don't like, we have so much of our own feeling going on, I can't feel your stuff too! Feel the other side all too often I think we want to be sympathized with. Somebody feel my feelings. But it's as simple as that sympathize with I feel the other side what would happen if we begin to just feel the other side it would change everything if we weren't constantly defending our own feelings but trying to figure out how does that feel? Now about several years ago I was driving home from work, and and I don't live that far from work less than a mile, but sometimes I brought food and snacks over to students all the time I bring a carload of stuff to a drive over in the morning. This

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particular day was a normal day about 12 hours of working endlessly with students and I was absolutely exhausted and my husband I knew we were going to eat together and I was responsible for dinner that night. And so I was realizing I didn't have any idea what we were going to do so I called him in Chicago is a hands free cell phone city, I'm sure it is true here too, like you're not supposed to touch the thing in the car, but I can only a mile, right? And so and I was trying to figure out dinner and I've already served all day, right? Feel me. OK? So I was talking on the phone and I came up to this 4-way stop, which is just not that far from my work, and because I had the phone here I didn't see there was a person entering the crosswalk coming this way with their dog and I started to accelerate, I saw them and I stopped but I really scared him. I mean this guy— people are so nice in Rochester you know have been so nice going to go ahead, go ahead, oh not Chicago man you take your space. You know you are like if you don't merge in that you know you're not going to get your space if you don't do it and so this guy was kind of like I mean this guy was in my windshield right I'm like sorry sorry sorry sorry sorry you know I mean I was utterly repentant, I was! I had my head down and like I knew I was wrong, I was so wrong, I almost killed his dog and him and that's wrong I mean there's wrong I'm not trying to justify it but I thought that he would take my penance is like some sort of conciliatory thing like it would resolve. No this guy is mad and so finally he makes his way across the other I go home and now I'm mad. You couldn't even accept my sorry. You know it's and I'm all this way and I get a couple blocks from my house and I feel like the Holy Spirit says to me you really scared him, like I did scare him, he wasn't so mad, he was afraid. So I said I better go find him. So then I drove around the blocks and blocks and blocks, it's all one way too. I saw him with his dog and then I pulled up and I scared him again and I jumped out of the car and I said I'm so so sorry that I scared you. He said you found me. Yes, I said because I scared you and you were going to go home thinking you were angry but you were just afraid and I'm sorry that I did that to you. If we could learn how to feel the other side we can resolve some of this stuff so I encourage you whose side you need to feel. The Community of Christ needs to develop to the practice of feeling all sides that they could to commit to the work of feeling the other side because Jesus Christ our Savior put on skin like ours and he didn't have to but he chose to it says so he could sympathize with our weakness so he could feel the other side this is a doctrinal imperative and we're to be the moral indicative that we sympathize with people even in their weaknesses.

The third thing says love each other as brothers and sisters you don't get to choose them but you got to claim I'm this is what I would say and just a little side note this is an exploitation I think against the nuclear family this is a tough word for some people and better news for others bow then and now Jesus is not building the church on the nuclear family. Capitalism builds the church on the nuclear family but Jesus did not build the church on the nuclear family. And it's a

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tough word for some for those who wanted to focus on their own family for those who wanted to gather their own wealth and stored up in barns for their offspring for those who didn't want to bridge uncomfortable divide your claim people who are unlike them in history or custom This was a tough work and you got to be brothers and sisters with these people, it's a tough word both then and now. But it was better news for other people— for those who didn't have the families to focus on, for those who didn't have a barn or resources, better news for those who were alone on the other side of the divides. It was great news the call the love as brothers and sisters was so much better news for some. We are committing to others as if we are family this means that we want to create a community in the name of Christ that commits to claiming siblings across all sorts of divides without us choosing whom we have a preference for sharing our lives and resources in common and living. Like, we understand we have to keep coming back to this table for holidays at least, Brother and Sister Christian community requires commitment there. All this discomfort and discord and say you're still in my family. Instead, I'm saying you can't get rid of me.

Several years ago I had two students whom I knew really well, in this case it was a man and a woman who had dated for a little over a year and over the summer the guy had texted a break up to this young woman. OK do not be texting break ups and then like dated a full year now my students break up all the time, right? They break up regularly. This is not the problem, you can break up it's the way they break up that's so nasty and if they are both followers of Jesus Christ, which in this case they were they are stuck with each other for eternity so I need them to break up well. So I call this young man I said no, no, no, you are not breaking up either that way I you cannot break up with people that badly. And so I actually drove to this young woman's house to the south of Chicago. I drove five hours to this Christian camp to meet with this young man face to face, right? Who had broke up with her because he needed to spend more time with God, please just own your own stuff, you know? I don't bring the big guy in the room so somebody else can you know say that's not true. I drove there with communion supplies in my trunk. I found a young man who was leading a bunch of kids, I said come over here and then I said you we're going to now take communion so you can bless one another and then you can break up but- you're going to bless each other in your break up you are not going to divide as if you are not siblings for all of eternity. We've got to figure out how to do this you can go to another church, you can pick a different a denomination but you've got to leave well and you've got to let people go well. You cannot pretend you're not going to be in this forever and ever.

Fourth thing be tender-hearted. Now tender-hearted can seem like you want to be nice and sensitive but this is not what the original word meant, it means to have strong bowels that's really what I mean it— To commit to loving somebody from the depths of your being. This is not surface nice, this is gut wrenching work. You will need some intestinal fortitude to do the

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work of with. In true community you are going to feel the ups and downs of this, you are going to feel it like in your gut and you're meant to feel the hard work of staying in community and stay anyway. And true community you're going to feel it in the depths of you, it's going to be gut wrenching some days and you have to be able to stomach this and the truth is not everybody can stomach the work of community. We do this painful work because this is the way we reveal to the world a Savior who was willing to be broken and poured out for us. Christian community often means that we, actually, we feel crushed by things. We feel crushed by the way people treat us and I read a long time ago in a devotional that that actually people cannot drink grapes. This is the way. Man it's crushing to be in community. You know it will crush you. But it is the only way do not resist the methods that the church can be to actually bring you into something that could be Sacramental for somebody else and holy. Jesus actually allowed himself to be broken and to be torn apart and to be crushed for the sake of the Gospel and community can be crushing in that way. He allowed his body to be torn apart for sinners and to be poured out for people he loved. And if we're going to be the moral indicative of this doctrinal imperative we too will feel that crushing work in community because for us to experience community with God Jesus had to be poured out and we have to be poured out to.

Work towards harmony, Sympathize with those you consider the other side, commit to staying a family around the table, and don't be shocked when it feels crushing or gut wrenching and keep a humble attitude. We talked about this a lot last week so I'm not going to go too much on it but the word literally in this particular case means to stay below the waist, OK? Usually, I'm say it told to stay above the waist in all matters but I am this is this is what it means and it's good advice for this sort of way when you feel like you want to fight if you sit down it works better. When it says I want you to keep a humble attitude a means to stay low to stay below the waist, right? And it means like, OK, you want to fight this person and you can swing when you're standing up or you can run. Just take a seat for a minute— that's my advice here is when you start like you want to fight or flee just sit down before you make a decision about your community. Sit down with one another, get low, don't swing, and don't run.

And the last one and that it says in the scripture is don't repay evil for evil. My Facebook heading, if I ever had one, don't retaliate with insults when people insult you instead pay them back with a blessing or you can say Biblically don't repay a bad nature with the bad nature. Christian community is meant to reveal Christ to this world, it means it's not for our own consumption but for the sake of witness we're trying to declare Christ in this world the gift of a Savior who came to live among us who did not repay evil for evil but instead prayed for those who persecuted Him. He did not retaliate when people spit on Him and insulted Him— He said Oh forget them they don't know what they're doing. He did not curse those who curse them instead He lay down their life His life on their behalf. Christian community is built when we do

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not do as those have done to us but instead we do as Christ has done for us. And we intentionally bless those who hurt us not because they are sorry but because we want the world to know our Christ. And this is what our Christ said we commit to being a moral indicative of this God. And this will always be work and it will rarely feel like a blessing to think about it but at the moment you get done thinking about it about whether or not you want to bless the one who hurt you and you actually move in to just doing it it's like all of Heaven rejoices and empowers you in that work. Most of us are still thinking about doing it and we feel like we don't have the power to do it that's not when the power comes out, when you think it— the power comes when you live it move into that sort of conciliatory work and all the power of the Holy Spirit pours upon you when you bless those who have been unkind to you. This is the moment when you truly experience what it is to be conformed into the image of God's Son Jesus Christ our scripture says the way to do that is to pay them back with the blessing. Now this is interesting one, Greek meaning of the Greek word *year* used here is that blossom with a prayer of consecration that blessing where that consecration it's the same word used when Jesus prays over the bread before He multiplies it for the masses He gives it a he consecrated it or at the Last Supper He gives a H thanks God for it and play it praise the player of prayer consecration over it.

Don't return a bad nature for a bad nature instead look up to God and ask a blessing on that thing and see if it doesn't become more than just the ingredients involved, OK? That's what happens when you concentrate like this could never bless anybody watch this I'm going to consecrate it. This is just flour and bread it or flour and water and sugar, no watch this this is going to be Christ's body because I'm going to consecrate and bless and how does one loaf of bread feed a thousand or become a means of grace? I don't know, it's a total mystery but what we know is that when God comes in around above and through this it does that. How can a broken relationship become a place of blessing? It is a mystery but if you will lift it up and ask God to consecrate it it can be something we can become something more than just its ingredients. I challenge you lift up your broken relationships and your life to God and God can make them a delivery vehicle for grace perhaps, it could even bless the multitudes. It's meant to reveal God to the world to be the moral indicative it's not just to bless us it's to bless the whole world to reveal the Savior who came to live among us to reveal a Savior who came to sing harmony with us to sympathize with us to call us brothers and sisters and sons and daughters and siblings and to God it out for us and I humbly lay down his life to be torn and crushed for our sake and it concludes with these words. This is what God called you to do, not suggest. This is what God called you to do and he will grant you his blessing you are called for this purpose to be one so that the world will know that Jesus really actually does save us. And that would be better news in the world has ever received one verse. One verse says commit to

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this kind of community that was revealed through Jesus the Christ become the moral indicative of this doctrinal imperative and God will grant you his blessing. Again it's the same word, God is going to lift you up and make you more than your ingredients you are not just your story and your life if you can give it to God and do this work and He will lift you up and He will feed multitude through you and He will make you a means of grace, how? I don't know it's a mystery. But this is what He says He does work towards harmony sympathize with those you consider the other side. Commit to staying around the table, don't be shocked when it feels gut wrenching, stay low, be humble and more than anything else love your enemies in doing this more than anything else you testify to the one who never repays evil for evil but in turn instead returns a blessing and consecrates those who hurt him.

This is the work of with. I think it could make you into the gift of with for the whole world and my hope is that you will become a people who understand and live out this sort of three dimensional moral indicative of the better news that God could lift you up and bless you. They got to be in around above and through you in a mysterious way that feeds the world so that together we all could be the gift of with to a world that's just dying of hunger for this sort of thing.

This morning we come to the table we come to the table where we experience Christ broken and poured out on our behalf this is a doctrinal imperative in all Christian churches this is what Christ did and He invites us to come and to take the bread and the cup and to take it into us to remember it, to put it back into our membership in a three dimensional way, not an idea. That this bread and this cup become part of yourselves and you become the broken and poured out people on behalf of this world. So this morning as we come to the table may you hear the words that Paul spoke: On the night that Jesus was betrayed, He took bread and when He had blessed it, consecrated it, He broke it and He said this is my body, I'm willing for this to happen for you do this and remembering me. In the same way He took the cup after supper saying this cup is the new covenant in my blood as often as you drink this to do this and remembering me. Put me back into your membership for as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord's day until He comes back again and we all have life forever. So God come into these simple elements make them more than what they would be. Is a mystery but could you be in around above and through them. And God I pray for the elements in this room Oh so many stories that it would be a mystery what you could do it for God I just lift them up to you right now. I ask that you would consecrate them that you would make them more than their ingredient list that you would make them a grace to feed the multitude I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

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For communion we just come down by the center aisles and go about by the sides just for the sake of transportation we take a piece of bread and dip it in the cup. We take both of them together if you forget and you take a piece of bread and before you dip it you can just get another piece of bread, the garden multiplies enough for everybody. The table is ready for you.

[Voice of Del Ipolito]

So Judy you still want to normally gives us the blessing and she will do that but if you have been touched by Judy, I would like for us to bless her first. So I want to invite some folks to come up and put some hands on Judy if that's OK with you? Lord we want to thank you so much for the blessing that Judy has been charged. For the what I call holy disruption of the meddling that she says. And we ask that you would return so much to her because she's just given so much. Let me just ask that you would return now to her that you would bless her for the next steps of her church, wherever she goes. We pray that you would bless her relationships the ones that she's formed here but also the ones that she and most importantly her relationship with Jeff, thank you for lending her to us for a month. And I just want to end with this blessing that is in your words. The Lord bless you Judy and keep you. The Lord make His face a shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace in the name of Jesus. Amen.

[Voice of Pastor Judy]

Thank you. So now I may bless you and return if you all stand and receive the benediction as I tell you they should lift up your heads and you should just feel like have one day a week you get to revel not nothing expected in return. Just a desire to consecrate you for your week, to make you holy for your week. And so now May the God who love the whole world so much He simply couldn't stay away so he put on skin to come and walk alongside us. May this good God, whom we know most clearly through the person of Jesus the Christ go before you to guide the way into a life that is a moral indicative to this doctrinal imperative of a life laying down God. May this God go behind you to encourage you to stick with this gut wrenching work. And may God be above you to watch over you keeping you from singing solo, from walking away from the table or from paying back evil for evil. May God go beside you to be your most intimate travelling companion may you take your life cues from the one who showed up as good news of great joy for all people. And may God go within you to give you the peace that passes all understanding it means it's a peace that makes no sense at all a peace that comes when we know that with Jesus there is always better news in the name of the Father Son and Holy Spirit go in peace.

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[end of sermon]

[Male voice] For more information visit us at ArtisanChurch.com