

Wait for One Another  
Preacher: Rev. Lauren Lorincz  
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"Wait for One Another" Pilgrim Church UCC, World Communion Sunday, (1 Corinthians 11:20-34) October 4, 2015

### Telling the Story

-Let's imagine a scenario. We're in the city of Corinth, Greece a long time ago. We're poor day laborers and when the sun finally sets, we look forward to gathering with our fellow Christians at the home of one of the wealthiest Christians in town for a happy celebration of the Lord's Supper.

-We normally gather in small house churches. But when it comes time to celebrate Communion—all Christians gather at a home large enough for all of us. We don't just have bread and wine either—we have a feast and remember Jesus' Last Supper.

-We show up to the house after working in the hot sun all day, really excited to be with our friends.

What do we see?

-People who've had too much to drink, people who've had too much to eat, and scraps left over on the table. How do you feel?

-This was happening in Corinth! Paul (the Apostle to the Gentiles) got angry.

-Paul was especially mad at the wealthy Christians, saying sarcastically, "Do you not have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you show contempt for the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing?"[1]

-Wealthy Christians would arrive early and drink the best wine and eat the best food and those who came late (the poorest among the congregation) went away hungry. Celebrating Communion was a special occasion—the whole community would gather together to be one Body, and this is what was happening. These rude incidents felt like a betrayal of one another and of Jesus himself to Paul.

### World Communion Sunday

-Today is World Communion Sunday—when Christians all over the world recall that we are one united Body of Christ. We're united together across nations and cultures and languages at the Table of Jesus Christ.

-Our bread today (baked by the Kurth family) is a symbol of unity—of the beautiful patterns of God's creation where out of many, we are one body.

-Even if we may not all agree on what this Communion meal even means, the ritual act and the words have united Christians across generations and denominations for two thousand years. Jesus said:

-“This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

-“This is the cup of the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”[2]

#### Taking Communion out into the World

-In the end, Communion is an intimate experience of fellowship in which the whole Church in every time and place is present and divisions are overcome.

-Communion is a hopeful sign of the promised Realm of God marked by justice, love, and peace.

-We can remember how we felt as those day laborers in Corinth—knowing that there are people here in our community who go to bed hungry and that our compassion can make a difference.

-By the end of this month, Lex Eat Together will begin at Church of Our Redeemer, a community meal offered every Wednesday evening to help those in need in Lexington.

-We can show forth justice, love, and peace here and now as followers of Jesus today.

-That’s what makes our Christian faith special—we gather in worship to love and strengthen and challenge each other to go out to witness to Jesus’ compassion in the world. May it be so with us. Amen.

[1] 1 Corinthians 11:22

[2] 1 Corinthians 11:24-25.