

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST – CONGREGATIONAL
440 West Lanikaula Street, Hilo, Hawaii
November 4, 2012
COMMUNION SUNDAY

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

Call to Worship

Praise the Lord, O My Soul
I will praise the Lord as long as I live;
I will sing praises to my God all my life long.

Grace and peace be unto all the earth from God Our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit at work among us.

Come God, strengthen us for the tasks of life,
Touch the fiber of our existence; Help us bless all people;
Heal, preserve, and guide us with compassionate integrity and uprightness. Let Your Son's words energize our hearts and minds.

We offer prayers for our brothers and sisters throughout the earth. May each of us fulfill every good purpose as participants in your creation by answering every call for faithful action. Through us may Jesus be glorified by the grace of Your Holy Spirit. Amen

Invocation:

God of Holiness, pour over-flowing love into us. Help us to see within us the spiritual strength to exercise joyful faithfulness with mercy in all we do. Guide our best efforts with wisdom,.. skill,.. talent,.. ability,.. and aloha. Inspire us as instruments of Your blessing in all our relationships. Let us welcome each opportunity to trust Your Holy Spirit of forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

WE SHARE THE WORD OF GOD

Scripture: Ruth 1:1 and 4b-18 NRSV): In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons. {4}These took Moabite wives; the name of one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there for about ten years,{5}both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so that the woman was left without her two sons or her husband. {6}Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard

in the country of Moab that the Lord had had consideration for his people and given them food. {7}So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. {8}But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, 'Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me.

{9}The Lord grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your new husband.' Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. {10}They said to her, 'No, we will return with you to your people.' {11}But Naomi said, 'Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? {12}Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons,{13}would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the Lord has turned against me.' {14}Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.{15} So she said, 'See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.' {16}But Ruth said, 'Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go;where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. {17} Where you die, I will die—there will I be buried. May the Lord do thus and so to me, and more as well, if even death parts me from you!' {18}When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

Sermon: "Wherever You Go – God Goes – We Journey Together"

WE RESPOND IN WORD AND DEED

Call to Confession: Lord God, when I am desperate don't let me be too busy to welcome your presence on the road of life and in my every day decisions.

Confession: Forgiving God, sometimes I make excuses for passing up opportunities to share in the acts of mercy that meet me in the middle of the here and now! Sometimes I imagine I know all your rules for my life – and then I remember you love people more than rules. Come and guide the character of our everyday choices. Enter into the events of our human relationships. If any of us has done anything wrong, help us make restitution and change our behavior. Open our hearts with justice and reconciliation. With Jesus, we commit to love others as You love us. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon: When the burden of life is heavy, cast all your anxieties upon God who cares about you, now and always. Amen.

Invitation to the Offering: Join hands in service with God and your neighbors. Have courage to make an offering to God of every thing you touch. By mutual support with each other, let us do more than just listen to God's word. Let us transform our faith with energy devoted to service helpful to all, as we both give and receive grace from God's Son.

Prayer of Dedication: God, we open the treasured blessings of our lives in the Spirit of Your holy presence. Receive each of us and all that we do, and all that is within us into Your all-embracing mercy. Guide our fellowship in Hilo to serve faithfully as your Church of the Holy Cross. With thankful hearts, we are yours for ministry and mission. Let us grow in our faith, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.