

Devotion, Week of September 27, 2026

Rev. Jeanne Simpson

I've thought a lot this week about the Philippians text we looked at on Sunday. Paul's letter is like a love letter. He clearly loves this small congregation planted in the middle of a Roman imperial city. He desperately wants the church to succeed, so he encourages them with pleas to live in unity and humility. If they take care of each other in love, they can survive.

I think about that as World Communion Sunday is coming up. We celebrate a day where every Christian in the world takes communion. It is a show of unity and love for the entire beloved community – a community that exists in almost all of the countries in the world. When we take the bread, we remember ALL of our brothers and sisters. When we drink the cup, we remember that Jesus came to ALL of us. Thousands of church leaders will say those words of institution in their own languages – “Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, ‘Take, eat; this is my body.’ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.’” This is the text from the gospels, but Paul adds this: “Do this in remembrance of me.”

Jesus emphasizes his body and his blood of the covenant, poured out for the forgiveness of sins. It's a sacrificial act that reminds us that Jesus died so that in believing in him, our sins would be forgiven. And Paul reminds the early church that this sacrament helps them remember Jesus, who many never knew personally. We unite with all other Christians when we celebrate this communion, and as Presbyterians, we believe that Christ is present through the Holy Spirit with us during this ritual. So as we prepare for Worldwide Communion on Sunday, let us remember that we come to the table with over 2.3 billion others to celebrate the fact that God loved us enough to send Jesus to us. Jesus loved us enough to die for us. God loved us enough to raise him from the dead. What an incredible inheritance.

Jeanne