

## Sunday 8 July 2018, Cashmere Presbyterian Church

Family Service Communion

Preacher: Silvia Purdie

### Three big ideas about Communion

#### Big idea number 1: In union

We are sharing together this morning in Holy Communion; towards the end of our service we will pass around bread and grape juice. I am suggesting three 'big ideas' about what Holy Communion is, what it means and what it does.

Three big ideas about Communion

- 1: Communion = in union together ... with each other and with God
- 2: Eucharist = thanks-giving, being grateful
- 3: Sacrifice = Jesus died for us

We begin with the first big idea: Communion

It is easy to say 'Welcome' and it is easy to say 'We all belong'  
It is not so easy for people to feel welcome or for people to feel they belong.

In church and in any group some people will feel that they fit in and other people will feel on the outer. That's just human nature.

What is the big idea about communion, about being in unity as people, about being one people in one body?

#### Big idea number 2: Thanks-giving

One of the old words for Communion is eucharist, which is a Greek word meaning being thankful.

**Memory verse:** Give thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Ephesians 5:20*

#### Big idea number 3: Sacrifice

My son Ben is heading to New York in a few months with the Cashmere High School music department for an amazing overseas tour. Obviously it costs a lot of money, and Ben is mowing our church lawns as part of his fundraising. He feels a little embarrassed asking for money all the time. He often says "Mum you would be a millionaire if it wasn't for us kids!"

Did you ever hear the story about the 9 year old kid who put a note on the fridge door one night saying “For doing the dishes TWICE this week you owe me \$10”.

And when he got up in the morning there was a note on the fridge from his mum saying: “For carrying you 9 months then giving birth to you – no charge. For feeding you, washing you, clothing you, cleaning up after you for 9 years – no charge. For thousands of hugs and kisses – no charge.”

Those of us who are parents know the cost of loving. And the best thing about loving is giving it away for free.

God is like that, only much bigger. The thing is, these things we celebrate in church, these gifts of love and grace, belonging, mercy, kindness, friendship, gifts of glory and power and the wonder of a loving relationship with God ... these come at a cost. All these things were won for us by God, bought for us at a price. We take them for granted but actually these were enormously costly for God.

Why? Because people generally prefer to shut God out, ignore God, push Jesus away and keep on trying to run things our own way. To connect with us, to push through our selfish walls of fear ... to do this God had to give everything. Jesus had to suffer and die for us.

When Jesus had that last meal with his friends before he knew full well he was going to be killed, he showed them what it cost him. This is my body, he said, broken for you. This is my blood poured out for you, he said.

He could have got out of it. He let himself be betrayed. He could have run away, but he let himself be arrested. He could have called his followers to fight for him but he let himself be whipped and abused. He could have called down armies of mighty angels to rescue him but he let himself be nailed to a cross and he stayed hanging on the cross until his breath failed and he died.

This was the ultimate pain, the greatest cost. This Communion we share comes at the greatest price. For Jesus, you were worth it. I am worth it. To form us as a people, it was worth anything, even death on a cross. To reach us in our pain, so that nothing we can go through can ever be out of God's reach, it was worth the cost.