



Dear Family of MCC Richmond...

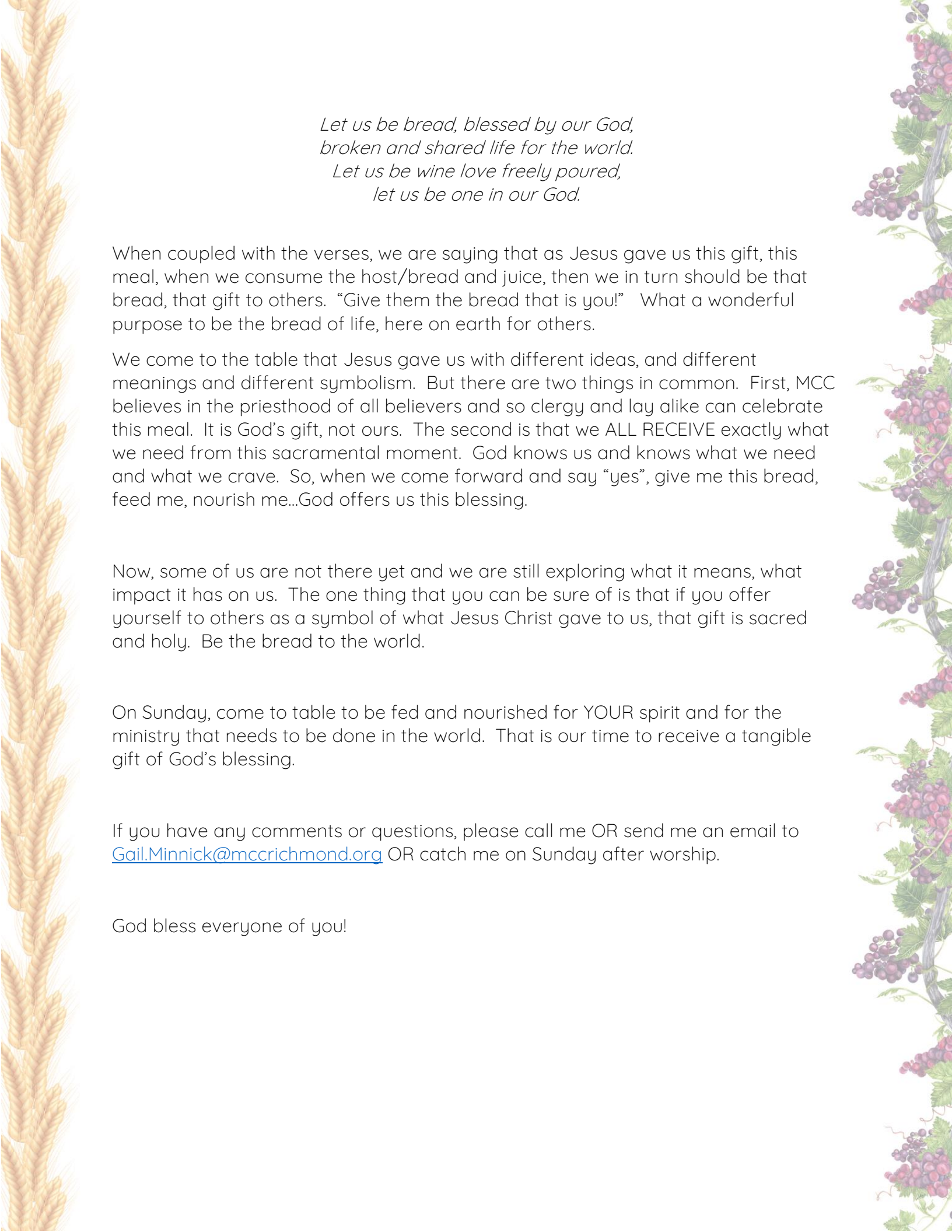
I have been thinking about the worship experience here at Metropolitan Community Church of Richmond. For me, it has been full, rewarding and life changing. And I would suspect that means that some of you, members and friends of this church, have experienced things as well. I am not sure if you would categorize the effect as I would, but surely change has happened and you are in the mix.

I want to share some of my thoughts around communion, or what you called, before I arrived, "The Holy Meal." At times, we use different names; some call it the last supper, holy communion, Eucharist, and of course, holy meal. The diversity of name indicates that most of us have some idea or definition of what transpires during the middle of our worship. And I fully realize that there are others who do not understand the ritual at all.

Coming from a Catholic background, I grew up using the term the Sacrament of Holy Communion. After many years, I now know this time as simply "communion," mostly because of the communion and community that is created and can be experienced. Sometimes we feel that connection toward one another, sometimes we can feel communion with the divine, and sometimes, especially on particular days, we might not feel anything at all.

At MCC Richmond, we have gone from a fully scripted liturgy where people would get up and read what was written. Those words were sacred and held deep meaning for some. When I came, we changed some of the parts to what has been affectionally called the "catholic" version, due to the words used. We then went to a more free-form liturgy where scripted words were not used and sometimes thoughts were spoken from the heart, of course, inspired by the Holy Spirit.

And currently we are singing the words. One of my favorite songs is now being used where the celebrant (the person who leads) sings a verse and the entire community responds with a refrain.



*Let us be bread, blessed by our God,
broken and shared life for the world.
Let us be wine love freely poured,
let us be one in our God.*

When coupled with the verses, we are saying that as Jesus gave us this gift, this meal, when we consume the host/bread and juice, then we in turn should be that bread, that gift to others. “Give them the bread that is you!” What a wonderful purpose to be the bread of life, here on earth for others.

We come to the table that Jesus gave us with different ideas, and different meanings and different symbolism. But there are two things in common. First, MCC believes in the priesthood of all believers and so clergy and lay alike can celebrate this meal. It is God’s gift, not ours. The second is that we ALL RECEIVE exactly what we need from this sacramental moment. God knows us and knows what we need and what we crave. So, when we come forward and say “yes”, give me this bread, feed me, nourish me...God offers us this blessing.

Now, some of us are not there yet and we are still exploring what it means, what impact it has on us. The one thing that you can be sure of is that if you offer yourself to others as a symbol of what Jesus Christ gave to us, that gift is sacred and holy. Be the bread to the world.

On Sunday, come to table to be fed and nourished for YOUR spirit and for the ministry that needs to be done in the world. That is our time to receive a tangible gift of God’s blessing.

If you have any comments or questions, please call me OR send me an email to Gail.Minnick@mccrichmond.org OR catch me on Sunday after worship.

God bless everyone of you!