



Order of Service

2nd Sunday after Pentecost

June 14, 2020

Call to worship (*Psalm 116:1-2, 12-14*)

I love the LORD, because the Lord has heard my voice and my supplications.

Because God inclined God's ear to me, therefore I will call on the Lord as long as I live.

What shall I return to the LORD for all God's bounty to me?

I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD,

I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all God's people.

Call to confession (*Romans 5:6-8*)

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person — though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves God's love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

Prayer of confession

Lord, we come to you boldly, trusting your love for us as we recognize that while we are still sinners, Christ died for us. If it were not so, how could we ever be brave enough to share the burdens of our heart and speak aloud the guilt that weighs heavy on our conscience? In a time of turmoil and pain, suffering and hurt, we confess our lack of action to prevent the source of this season's anguish. For too long we have not loved you with our whole hearts, nor loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have failed to see your image in every human being, and we've torn apart instead of built up the one body of which we are a part. We plead for mercy. We cry out for grace. Make of us a new creation, and do it now.



Assurance of pardon

Friends, if it were not for the grace of our God, we would be unable to move forward in faith. But we trust this powerful truth: While we were still weak, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly, for us. Knowing that Jesus came not to condemn the world, but to save it, we rejoice, give thanks and praise God that we are forgiven.

Prayer for illumination

Word made flesh, make your embodied Word known to us this day. As we stop and attend fully to you, send your Spirit to give us understanding, to help us remember who and whose we are and to open our mouths to proclaim your near kingdom to a world aching for good news.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith *(from the Confession of Belhar)*

We believe that God has revealed God's self as the one who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among people;

- that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity, is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged;
- that God calls the church to follow God in this; for God brings justice to the oppressed and gives bread to the hungry;
- that God frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind;
- that God supports the downtrodden, protects the stranger, helps orphans and widows and blocks the path of the ungodly;
- that for God pure and undefiled religion is to visit the orphans and the widows in their suffering;
- that God wishes to teach the church to do what is good and to seek the right;
- that the church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and



strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream;

- that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.

Therefore, we reject any ideology which would legitimate forms of injustice and any doctrine which is unwilling to resist such an ideology in the name of the gospel.

Call for the offering (*Micah 6:6-8*)

With what shall I come before the Lord,
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before God with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?
Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

God has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

As a sign of our desire to do as God requires, let us give to God our tithes and offerings.

Prayer of dedication

Generous God, these offerings represent our sincere desire to be faithful, to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with you. Use them, we pray, to make justice, love and mercy evident in your beloved world until Christ comes again, and come again he will. Amen.



Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Lord, when you see us harassed and helpless, you have compassion for us. You know our need for a good shepherd, one who leads us to places of still waters and brings us through the valley of the shadow of death. Our anxiety grows during these long days of the pandemic. Our questions about how to move forward together in hope multiply as cries for justice go too long unheard. We feel harassed and helpless. We need your care and intervention, your mercy and direction.

Show us, Good Shepherd, where to go from here. Clear the path to green pastures and safe spaces where all can freely breathe. Heal the sick, the heart sick, the home sick, the long sick and the soul sick. Bring close those pushed to the margins, the laborers not paid a living wage, the ones hurting without access to healthcare, the lonely who yearn to be included. Cure every illness that consumes us and keeps us from abundant life: diseases of body, mind and spirit, COVID-19 and all-consuming greed, addictions and the abuse of power, violence and an ever-growing opportunity gap.

Send us, Savior of creation, into the world, to be your laborers, bringing in and sharing God's abundant grace-filled harvest. Make us justice bearers, evil crushers, life givers, healers and helpers. Move us with your compassion, so that we do not turn away from the suffering of others, but instead walk toward it in your power, trusting that the Spirit will bring endurance, character and a hope that does not disappoint.

Embrace us, loving God, draw us so close to you that we are pulled into genuine community with each other. Break down barriers between us. Build up trust among us. Give us the words to speak and the ears to hear your truth that will set us all free. Do not let us remain harassed and helpless, but gather us in the lost and the lonely, so that we are on earth as in heaven, your one, united, beloved household, all of us valued, cherished, nurtured and able to live without fear.

We make our prayer in the name of our Savior Jesus Christ, who taught us to say when we pray, *Our Father...*



Charge and benediction *(from the Book of Common Worship)*

Go out into the world in peace.

Have courage!

Hold fast to what is good.

Return no one evil for evil.

Strengthen the faint-hearted, support the weak, help the suffering.

Honor all people.

Love and serve the Lord your God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the power of the Holy Spirit be with you now and remain with you always.

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Liturgy written by Jill Duffield
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