



Order of worship

6th Sunday after Pentecost

July 12, 2020

Call to worship (*Psalm 65:1-4*)

Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion; and to
you shall vows be performed,
O you who answer prayer! To you all flesh
shall come.

When deeds of iniquity overwhelm us, you
forgive our transgressions.

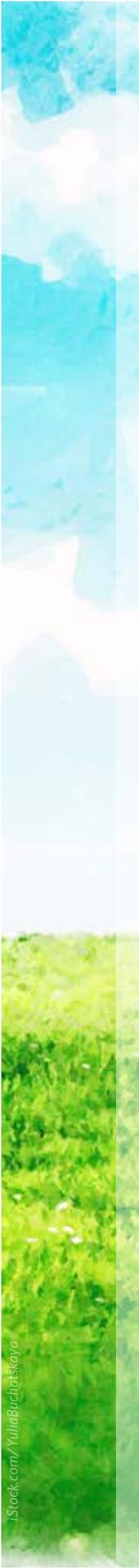
Happy are those whom you choose and
bring near to live in your courts. We shall be
satisfied with the goodness of your house,
your holy temple.

Call to confession (*Romans 8:1-2*)

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law
of sin and of death. Confident in this promise, let us confess our sin to God
and before one another.

Prayer of confession

Lord, too often we speak without pausing to seek your wisdom. We
assume our own goodness and fail to question our limited knowledge and
understanding. We hurt others with our hasty, often well intended, words
and actions. We falsely believe our ways are your ways and condemn
those who disagree with us. In this tumultuous time, turn us toward you.
Remove the scales from our eyes and give us ears to hear your guidance.
Do not let our need for earthly approval sway our commitment to take up
our cross and follow Jesus. Forgive our failings. Take our faltering attempts
at faithfulness and use them to lead us to your paths of righteousness.
Amen.



Assurance of pardon (*Romans 8:1-2*)

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

Friends, believe this astounding good news, through Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

Prayer for illumination

Lord Christ, you teach in parables, telling stories in ways that draw us in and reveal God's will. As we crowd around you this day, eager to hear your word to us, we ask for the ears to hear and not only hear, but understand and not only understand, but act on that which you long for us to know in the depths of our being. Amen.

Scripture readings

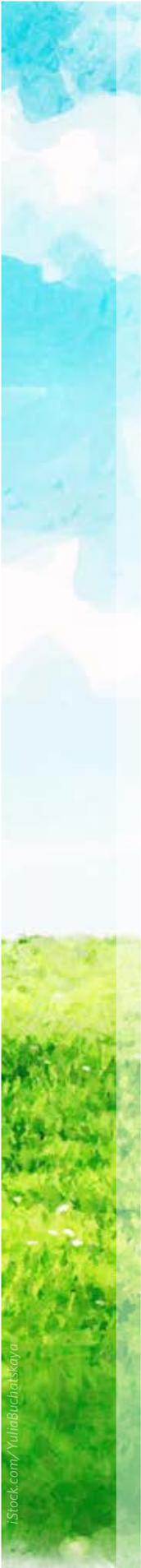
Sermon

Affirmation of faith (*Confession of 1967, sections 9.27 and 9.30*)

The one sufficient revelation of God is Jesus Christ, the Word of God incarnate, to whom the Holy Spirit bears unique and authoritative witness through the Holy Scriptures, which are received and obeyed as the word of God written. The Scriptures are not a witness among others, but the witness without parallel. The church has received the books of the Old and New Testaments as prophetic and apostolic testimony in which it hears the word of God and by which its faith and obedience are nourished and regulated. God's word is spoken to the church today where the Scriptures are faithfully preached and attentively read in dependence on the illumination of the Holy Spirit and with readiness to receive their truth and direction.

Call for the offering

We are to sow gospel seeds, scattering them lavishly everywhere we go, trusting that God will give the growth and bring forth an abundant harvest. Knowing that God is generous, loving and faithful, we seek to be so as well. Anticipating the joy of God's over-the-top grace, we give our gifts of God's tithes and our offerings.



Prayer of dedication

Gracious God, we present to you a portion of the resources you entrust us to steward. We give them rejoicing in the promise that you will take them, bless them, multiply them and use them to do your will on earth as it is done in heaven. May all that we do be done with exuberant generosity in response to your overflowing goodness to us. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

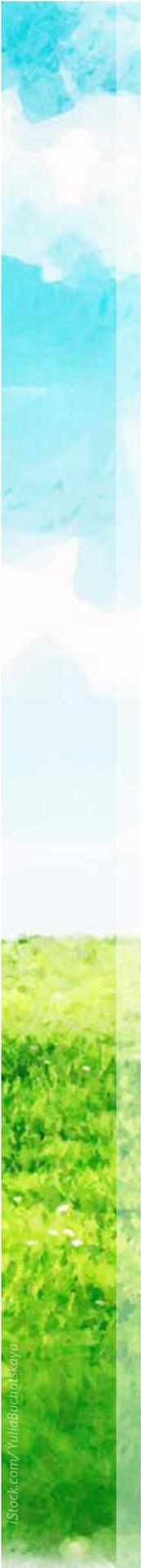
Lord, we come to this time of prayer with the intention to set our minds on you and on the Spirit. Even as we are tempted to give in to worldly priorities and earthly idolatries, we yearn to know the peace that comes from surrendering to your will. Like the crowds so long ago, we want to hear the transformative and life-giving message that Jesus came to proclaim. We are eager to know your saving Word and we are bold to share our most pressing needs and deepest hopes with you.

Hear us as we pray for those hard paths in our lives and in your world. When we grow weary of walking the same direction and wondering if painful circumstances will ever change, help us to find small fissures in our hardened hearts that can still shelter gospel hope. Do not let our communities become inhospitable places for your presence, worn down by treading the same way and unwilling to leave what we know. Show us now, Holy Spirit, the paths of righteousness and lead us in the way of Jesus Christ.

Hear us as we pray for those rocky places in our lives and in our world. Where we settle for shallow understating, give us the courage to go deep into your Word. When we want to maintain surface relationships, give us the trust to commit to truly knowing one another. When we settle for enthusiasm instead of substance, give us the tenacity to stick with each other, stay close to you and work for real, lasting, long-needed change. Show us now, Holy Spirit, the cornerstone and place our feet on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

Hear us as we pray for those thorny fields in our lives and in your world. When the cares of this world threaten to obscure our vision and render us unable to hear your call, burn away the chaff and leave only the wheat that nurtures your beloved world. When we value wealth more than people and worship the idols of safety

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and security instead of our servant Savior, cut away those dead branches so that we can dwell again near the vine that sustains us. Show us now, Holy Spirit, the wheat from which the bread of life is made so that we may be fed and satisfied by the body of Christ.

Hear us as we give thanks for the good soil only you can create, Lord God. We rejoice that despite all that threatens to silence your Good News, it still resounds through all creation. We praise you for your generosity and grace, your mercy and steadfast love that is new every morning. We give thanks for the abundant, life-giving harvest you freely offer and call us to cultivate. May the good fruit we bear bring relief to the suffering, comfort to those who mourn and peace to those who have no peace. May our sowing of the seeds of your Word heal the sick, bind up the brokenhearted and strengthen the weak. May our daily scattering of the gospel help spread justice, kindness and mercy all over your beloved world. 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

Go from this place praising God, who sends us into the world to proclaim the gospel and to work for justice and peace.

Give yourselves over to God's wise and gracious rule, knowing that God can be trusted to make all things work together for good, now and forever.

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.

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Liturgy written by Jill Duffield
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