



Order of worship

11th Sunday after Pentecost

August 16, 2020

Call to worship *(Psalm 67:1-7)*

May God be gracious to us and bless us and
make his face to shine upon us,

that your way may be known upon earth,
your saving power among all nations.

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge
the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth.

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, has blessed us.

May God continue to bless us;
let all the ends of the earth revere the Lord.

Call to confession

The gifts and calling of God are irrevocable. God will not reject God's people. Knowing God is merciful and abounding in steadfast love, always willing to hear our prayers and accept our heartfelt confession, we turn to our Lord with boldness, speaking aloud the ways we fail to be the people God calls us to be.

Prayer of confession

God of all people, we come before you this day keenly aware of the ways we fall short of your vision for us and for our life together. You tell us how good and pleasant it is when we dwell together in unity, and yet we create division and cultivate disdain. You command us to care for each other, but we send away those crying out for help. You call us and put us together



in community, but we want to pick and choose those with whom we associate. Forgive us for thinking we are self-sufficient and independent, rather than utterly dependent upon you and in need of each other. Help us to see ourselves and others as the beloved reflections of the divine we are and give us the grace to treat each other as such. Amen.

Assurance of pardon (*Romans 11*)

God does not reject God's people. God is merciful to all.

Friends, believe the good news and be at peace: Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

Prayer for illumination

Lord, the noise all around us is loud and frightening. We find ourselves anxious and distracted, worried about much we cannot control. We long to hear you tell us to not be afraid. We ask again for the gift of your peace that passes understanding. As the Word is read and proclaimed, send your Holy Spirit to help us rightly hear and respond. Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of Faith (*The Confession of 1967, section on the Holy Spirit*)

God the Holy Spirit fulfills the work of reconciliation in human life. The Holy Spirit creates and renews the church as the community in which people are reconciled to God and to one another.

The Spirit enables people to receive forgiveness as they forgive one another and to enjoy the peace of God as they make peace among themselves. In spite of their sin, the Spirit gives people power to become representatives of Jesus Christ and his gospel of reconciliation to all.

Call for the offering

God, your providence is evident when we take a long, loving look at our lives. The twists and turns, the disappointments and hurts, none of them were absent of your grace and purpose. Aware that you do not reject or abandon us, but remain with us always, we respond with gratitude, giving in joy our morning's offering with confidence you will use it to reveal your care to others. Amen.



Prayer of dedication

Receive these gifts, gracious God, as an outward sign of our recognition of your amazing grace. There is nothing we can offer you in return for your love to us, and yet we know that you take what we give in faith. Bless and use it for the building up of your kingdom on earth until Christ comes again. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Good and gracious God, so many of your people are hurting. There seems no end in sight to the uncertainty and pain of this season. Parents and caregivers are worried about children's well-being as the school year approaches and the pandemic persists. Those living in group care facilities yearn to be able to have visitors again and the loneliness of those already isolated grows. The economic fallout from this virus gets deeper and wider as many scramble to find work and put food on the table. It feels, at times, as if we call out to you and you do not respond. Like the Canaanite woman, we shout for mercy, but we receive no help. Yet, she kept calling out to you, kept following you, refused to be turned away until you healed her daughter.

We call out to you now, Lord Christ: Have mercy on us. Hear our cries. Help us.

We call out for mercy for those on the frontlines of fighting for justice. We call out for mercy for those on the frontlines of fighting this pandemic. We call out for mercy for those grieving the death of loved ones. We call out for mercy for the sick and those who tend them. We call out for mercy for the scared and those who comfort them. We call out for mercy for those without food or housing, medical care or community. We call out for mercy on behalf of those who do not have the strength to raise their own voices. We call out for mercy for ourselves, trusting you know our deepest needs even if we do not have the wisdom to name them.

Hear us, Lord. Heal us, Lord. Help us, Lord.

When we fear you have walked away from us in our desperation, send your Holy Spirit to remind us yet again that God does not reject God's people, that the call and gifts of God are irrevocable. Embed in us the biblical stories that teach us that even that which we intend for evil, you, Lord God, use for good. Grant us the faith of the Canaanite woman so that we will persist in advocating for the vulnerable and hurting no matter how long it takes for our world to be made well.

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Give us faith, Almighty God, to keep focused on our Savior, following the Way, loving you and our neighbors, until the One we worship comes again and come again he will. We make our prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to say when we pray, *Our Father ...*

Charge and benediction

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 God bless you and keep you. May God cause the divine light to shine upon you and be gracious to you. May God turn toward you, and grant you peace.

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Liturgy written by Jill Duffield
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