



Order of worship

14th Sunday after Pentecost

September 6, 2020

Call to worship *(Psalm 149:1-5)*

Praise the Lord!

Sing to the Lord a new song.

Let Israel be glad in its Maker;
let the children of Zion rejoice in their King.

Let them praise the Lord's name with dancing,
making melody to God with tambourine and lyre.

For the Lord takes pleasure in the people;
God adorns the humble with victory.

Let the faithful exult in glory;
let them sing for joy on their couches.

Call to confession

You command us, Lord of all, to love our neighbors as ourselves. You instruct us to forgive as we have been forgiven. You put us in community that we might support and care for each other. We recognize how often we fail to obey your commandments and do your will. We give thanks that you never turn away a repentant sinner. Confident in your mercy, we come to you now to confess our sin and ask your forgiveness.

Prayer of confession

Why, Lord God, do we live as if our lives are our own and our will synonymous with your ways? Our actions defy your commandment to love you and love our neighbors. We forget that you entrust us with the power to forgive, the task of reconciliation and the responsibility to care for creation and every creature within it. When we are strong, we assume we are self-sufficient. When we are weak, we are embarrassed to ask for help. Forgive our pride and lack of compassion for ourselves and for others. Reveal to us yet again your merciful and gracious character and help us to reflect it so that our relationships demonstrate your loving kindness to the world. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.



Assurance of pardon

When we turn to God, the Lord freely pardons. We can trust in God and not be afraid. Friends, believe the good news, through Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

Prayer for illumination (*Psalm 119:33-37*)

Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes,
and I will observe it to the end.

Give me understanding, that I may keep your law
and observe it with my whole heart.

Lead me in the path of your commandments,
for I delight in it.

Turn my heart to your decrees,
and not to selfish gain.

Turn my eyes from looking at vanities;
give me life in your ways.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith (*The Nicene Creed*)

We believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
begotten from the Father before all ages,
God from God,
Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made;
of the same essence as the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;

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he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,
and was made human.
He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered and was buried.
The third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again with glory
to judge the living and the dead.
His kingdom will never end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life.
He proceeds from the Father and the Son,
and with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified.
He spoke through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look forward to the resurrection of the dead,
and to life in the world to come. Amen.

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 commitment to do as God requires,
we worship God with our morning's offering.



Prayer of dedication

There is nothing we can offer in exchange for the gift of salvation, the gift of life, the gift of each breath and every moment in your good creation, Lord God. You offer us grace and we cannot fathom such freely given love. We respond with praise, with worship, with offering a portion of what you have entrusted to us. Knowing you can do abundantly more than we could ever hope or imagine, we give these gifts to you and await with hopeful eagerness the blessings you will bring to others through them. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Almighty God, we approach you with reverence and hope, aware that we often lack the words to express our deepest fears and our most heartfelt needs. We are confident that before a word is on our lips, you know it completely. We believe your promise of presence, the certainty of your providence and your power to work for good in ways we may not see, but can surely trust. Relying on your grace, we bring to you the cares of the world, the concerns of our community, the worries that keep us up at night.

Lord, as we see images of destruction, of communities in flames and entire towns destroyed by winds and water, we pray for those impacted by natural disasters. Sustain the weary, strengthen the weak, empower your people to be the helpers to those desperate for relief. Do not let us shrink from loving our neighbors now and through the long months of recovery that are yet to come.

We remember, too, the many among us feeling crushed under the weight of this persistent pandemic. Comfort those who grieve, heal the sick, encourage the caregivers, provide for your people unable to make ends meet. Make of your followers those who fish for people and mend the communal safety nets that keep your children from drowning when the storms of life churn.

Knowing that we are put in community to care for each other, that our fate is inextricably tied to that of others, we pray to be peacemakers and ambassadors of reconciliation, to work for ways of life together that bind up rather than tear down, to be those who let loose mercy and overflowing justice.

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Gracious God, you hear the cries of your people and find a way to set them free: free from oppression, free from exploitation, free from anything that prevents the abundant life Christ came to give. As partakers of your grace, we boldly ask to be participants in your kingdom's coming until that time when every tribe and every nation is healed and whole, gathered together and praising our Savior and Lord, the one who taught us to say when we pray, *Our Father...*

Charge (*Matthew 22:37-40*)

Go out into the world in peace.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.

Benediction (*Romans 15:13*)

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

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Liturgy written by Jill Duffield and provided for free distribution.

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