



Order of worship

20th Sunday after Pentecost

October 18, 2020

Call to worship *(Psalm 96:1-6)*

O sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Sing to the Lord, bless God's name;
tell of God's salvation from day to day.

Declare the Lord's glory among the nations,
God's marvelous works among all the peoples.

For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;
God is to be revered above all gods.

For all the gods of the peoples are idols,
but the Lord made the heavens.

Honor and majesty are before the Lord;
strength and beauty are in God's sanctuary.

Call to confession

We are called to imitate Christ, but too often we emulate the lesser gods of our culture. We are called to be in the world, but not of it. Yet, we fail at making our discipleship that which is distinctive about us. Nonetheless, God is merciful and abounding in steadfast love. Therefore, we are confident in our coming before the Lord with our honest confession. Let us pray.



Prayer of confession

Lord, like those religious leaders long ago, we, too, have malice in our hearts. We wish ill upon those we do not like and fail to recognize our own shortcomings. We are certain in our opinions rather than humble about our assumptions. We think the best of ourselves and the worst of others, despite your admonishment to tend to the log in our own eye, rather than the speck in our neighbor's. We want to partition off our lives, offering you a portion of our loyalty, time and resources, when we are called to give our whole selves to you. Forgive our pettiness, our hard-heartedness and our stubbornness. Use our repentance as a means for the Spirit to work in us and remake us into a closer likeness of our Lord, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Assurance of pardon

The Lord our God answers us and forgives us.
The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting.
Friends, believe the good news,
through Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.

Prayer for illumination

What more, Lord, could we ask for than the promise of your presence with us, your presence that gives us rest? Send your Spirit to open us to your Word read and proclaimed that we might hear and find rest for our souls and bread for the journey. Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon



Affirmation of faith *(from A Brief Statement of Faith)*

In life and in death we belong to God.
Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit,
we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel,
whom alone we worship and serve.

We trust in Jesus Christ,
Fully human, fully God.
Jesus proclaimed the reign of God:
preaching good news to the poor
and release to the captives,
teaching by word and deed
and blessing the children,
healing the sick
and binding up the brokenhearted,
eating with outcasts,
forgiving sinners,
and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.
Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition,
Jesus was crucified,
suffering the depths of human pain
and giving his life for the sins of the world.
God raised this Jesus from the dead,
vindicating his sinless life,
breaking the power of sin and evil,
delivering us from death to life eternal.

Call for the offering *(Psalm 99:9)*

Extol the Lord our God, and worship at God's holy mountain;
for the Lord our God is holy.

Let us extol and worship our holy God with the gift of our
morning's offering.



Prayer of dedication

Lord of all, we render to you that which is yours. We recognize that all we have, that all the earth, every fiber of our being and every cell of creation is yours. We can do nothing apart from your presence and power working with us. In thanksgiving and joy, we give to you this offering. Bless it, we pray, and use it for that which will bring you glory and share your love. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Loving God, we feel at times as if we are being tested. One crisis passes and another one comes in its wake. The hurricanes churn over warming waters, the fires burn on the West coast, injustice follows injustice and this pandemic will not cease. How long, O Lord, how long? We cannot endure without a sure sense of your presence. We cannot rest without a glimpse of your power. While we want to remain faithful, we cannot help but lag in zeal. Hear our cries for help, we pray.

Gracious God, knowing all too well that today's problems are enough for today, we entrust to your compassionate care all the burdens we can no longer carry, the worries we can no longer bear. Take from us the anxieties that threaten to overtake us, the grief of cumulative losses, the fear for our well-being and that of those we love, the shame of deeds we cannot undo and the doubts that prevent us from moving forward. We hand them over, right now, believing that our Lord intercedes for us and the Spirit translates our sighs too deep for words.

Merciful God, you never abandon us, your faithfulness to the covenant you make with your people is unwavering. You walk with us, go before us, envelop us with your goodness and grace. Help us to feel your close presence with every breath and each heartbeat. May our awareness of your nearness empower us to do justice, love kindness and keep walking with you so that others will come to know your love through our witness. Make of us a grateful, joy-filled people, a light to which others are drawn.

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Glorious God, we are told only to ask and that in asking, we will receive. We ask now for whatever tugs on our hearts, weighs on our minds, calls from our souls. You know it before we name it. You desire what is best for your beloved world. You plan a hope-filled future for us. You refuse to give up on your good and beautiful creation. Help us to dream your dreams and envision your will until that day when Christ returns and all is well. We pray in the name of your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, who taught us to say when we pray, *Our Father...*

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

Go forth into the world in peace.
Be of good courage.
Hold fast that which is good.
Render to no one evil for evil.
Strengthen the fainthearted.
Support the weak.
Help the afflicted.
Show love to everyone.
Love and serve the Lord,
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit;
and the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

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