



Order of worship

2nd Sunday after Epiphany

January 17, 2021

Call to worship *(based on Amos 5)*

We are called to seek good and not evil,
that we may live; and so that the Lord,
the God of hosts, will be with us.

**We are called to hate evil and love good,
and establish justice.**

Let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

We seek to be a people that embodies God's justice.

By the power of God at work within us, may it be so.

Call to confession

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sin, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us confess our sin together, trusting God's promised mercy.

Prayer of confession

Holy God, we confess our failures to discern the ways that racism and other demons of hostility have warped our common humanity. Claiming to be "colorblind" or "not racist," we have failed to see racism as a disease that infects us all. Yet we know that your Spirit heals the wounds in our lives and empowers us to extend that healing into the life of our communities. Empower us by your Spirit, O God, to be people who live out our baptism and live more fully into its promise that in Jesus Christ there is no longer Jew or Greek, slave or free, or male and female.



Assurance of pardon

In Christ, all the dividing walls of hostility have come down so that we might live in justice, friendship and peace. Friends, hear the good news of the gospel: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and restored, and set on right paths!

Prayer of illumination

O God, send your Spirit to us to us that we might discern your Word amid the words we read today, so that in hearing your Word we may be formed to follow Christ into our world. Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon

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

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 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,

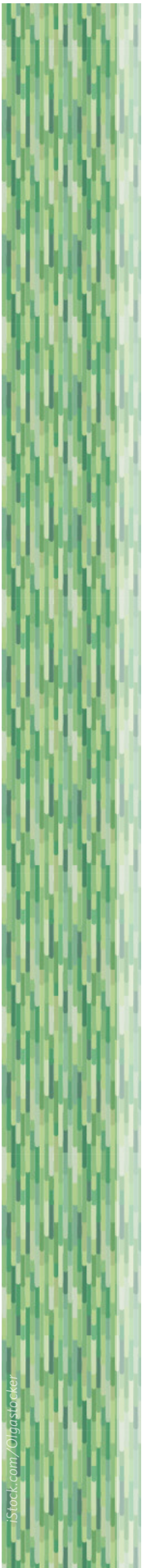
**vindicating his sinless life,
breaking the power of sin and evil,
delivering us from death to life eternal.**

With believers in every time and place,

**we rejoice that nothing in life or in death
can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Alleluia. Amen.



Call for the offering

God has showered us with good gifts. In response to this love, let us give all of who we are in return: our hearts, minds, energies and resources.

Prayer of dedication

O God, receive the gifts we offer as a sign of our commitment to live into our calling as a community of hope, love and justice for this world. May these gifts be part of your own work in the world to establish the flourishing of all your children and the whole creation.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Holy One, you have called for justice to roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. On this Sunday, as we remember the life and legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., help us to embody the justice and righteousness that he sought for our country. Help us to embody his dream of a beloved community and of a day when justice is a reality for all Americans, not just the few. Inspire us by his example and by the power of your Spirit at work within us to live in solidarity with all who have been marginalized in our world. Give us ears to hear their cries, and hearts that move us to respond.

Indeed, during these tumultuous days of political and social reckoning, give us courage to pursue accountability for all who have incited and inflicted this violence upon the nation — and courage to recognize our own complicity in the racism that has warped our common life. Animate courage in us so that we might confront realities that deform and deface our country and participate in your reconciling and justice-seeking work in our midst. Hear our prayers also for peace in the days ahead as we navigate transitions in the nation's leadership. Grant all of our elected leaders wisdom and patience and courage to work together for the common good and to restore a spirit of partnership among us.

God, our help in times of trouble, we continue to pray for the global community as it grapples with an ever-worsening pandemic. We pray that you would give each of us determination to take personal responsibility for measures that protect us all. We pray especially for the well-being of those hit hardest by the strains of this scourge, and pray for those in leadership in our communities, states and nation as they negotiate ways in which to aid those most afflicted.

We prayer all these things in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray saying, *Our Father...*



Charge and benediction *(based on Amos 5)*

Let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream,
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for us all.

May the God of justice and peace sanctify you entirely,
so that we might lift up the brokenhearted,
and stand with the oppressed. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Roger Gench
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