



Order for Worship

5th Sunday of Easter

May 2, 2021

Call to worship *(1 John 4:16,19)*

God is love.

Those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

We love because God first loved us.

Those who abide in love, abide in God, and God abides in them.

Call to confession

Risen from the dead, Jesus Christ longs for us to know life in all of its fullness, offering us renewal and refreshment, hope and forgiveness. Let us trust in the promise of Easter as we make our confession.

Prayer of confession

Merciful God,
in Jesus, our risen Lord, we have seen your glory.
Yet our sinfulness often blocks out the light of Christ.
We are quick to accuse and slow to confess.
We find faults easily in others,
 while ignoring our own shortcomings.
We have squandered your gifts.
We have turned from your ways
We have ignored your Word.

Have mercy on us, compassionate God.
Pour out your Holy Spirit on our sinful lives.
Wash us with your love and cleanse us with your grace,
that day by day we might move closer
 to the people you would us be. Amen.



Declaration of forgiveness

The resurrection of Jesus shows us the grace of God is stronger than death and the love of God has no boundary. This is good news!
In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

Prayer for illumination

Gracious God, illumine these words by your Spirit that we might hear what you would have us hear and be who you would us be, for the sake of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of Faith *(from a Brief Statement of Faith)*

We trust in God the Holy Spirit,
everywhere the giver and renewer of life.
The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith,
sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor,
and binds us together with all believers
in the one body of Christ, the Church.

The same Spirit
who inspired the prophets and apostles
rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture,
engages us through the Word proclaimed,
claims us in the waters of baptism,
feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation,
and calls women and men to all ministries of the church.
In a broken and fearful world
the Spirit gives us courage
to pray without ceasing,
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.

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In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit,
we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks
and to live holy and joyful lives,
even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth,
praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

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.
Amen.

Call for the offering

With gratitude for God's faithfulness and with thanksgiving for
all that we have received, let us bring our gifts to God.

Prayer of dedication

O God, with faith and hope, we offer these gifts. Use them,
even as you use us, to accomplish your purposes in Jesus
Christ, the Head of the church and the Lord of our lives. Amen.

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Merciful God, powerful and wonderful, eternally present and
graciously close, we are grateful for what you have given us in
Jesus Christ, life and love without end. Prompted by your Spirit
and encouraged by your faithfulness, we lift to you the cares
and concerns of our hearts, the burdens and the worries of our
lives. We pray that the sick would be healed, that the broken
would be mended, that the mournful would be comforted. We
pray that warriors would yield to peace, that leaders would
gain wisdom, that the forsaken would be gathered in. We pray
that the sorrowful would be consoled, that the poor would be
lifted up, that the anxious would be released.

We pray for children in their growing and for youth in their
seeking. We pray for those making new starts and for those
nearing a journey's end. We pray for those facing hard choices
and for those enduring painful consequences. We pray for
those filled with bitterness and for those who are just empty.
We pray that your church might claim its potential, that the
body of Christ might be strengthened by its many parts, that
the work of ministry might be done with joy and thanksgiving.

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We pray for the courage to follow Jesus, for the faith to trust your promises to us, for the vision to see your kingdom among us even now.

We pray for all that you would have us pray. We pray for those for whom no one prays. We pray all of these things in the name of the one ceaselessly praying for us, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Trusting in Christ, we offer together the prayer he taught us: *Our Father ...*

Charge and blessing

Let us go from this place trusting that God is with us and for us in every place.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus, the love of God and the companionship of the Holy Spirit be with you and abide with you this day and forevermore. Amen.

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Liturgy written by John Wurster,
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