



Order of Worship

13th Sunday after Pentecost

September 4, 2022

Call to worship

From daily worries that distract and distort your
life-giving path,

gather us, O God.

From suffering that overwhelms and weighs heavy
on our hearts,

gather us, O God.

From temptations to escape through worldly
addictions and comforts,

gather us, O God.

We choose you and Christ's way. Help us attend to
your presence with us in worship.

Let us worship God.

Call to confession

The path of faithfulness is oftentimes difficult and full of
obstacles of our own making. Let us humbly approach the
God who calls and creates, confessing the sins that turn us
away from new life in Christ.

Prayer of confession

Holy God, you formed us from the dust of the earth and
breathed life into our bodies. Yet we take these lives
for granted, choosing destructive paths and unhealthy
habits. We turn to idols that addict and enslave, instead
of the liberating resources Christ provides. Forgive our
foolishness, God our Redeemer, and grant us the wisdom
to follow you in faith. Amen.



Assurance of pardon

Our God, who restores and resurrects, grants us new life in Jesus Christ. Know that you are forgiven and live fully in joyful freedom. Amen.

Prayer for illumination

Your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. May we approach your Word today, Holy God, with the reverence and respect it deserves. Let us be intentional in our listening and focused in our minds as we hear your Word read and proclaimed today. Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith *(From a Brief Statement of Faith)*

We trust in God,
whom Jesus called Abba, Father.

In sovereign love God created the world good
and makes everyone equally in God's image,
male and female, of every race and people,
to live as one community.

But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator.
Ignoring God's commandments,
we violate the image of God in others and ourselves,
accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature,
and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care.
We deserve God's condemnation.

Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation.

In everlasting love,
the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people
to bless all families of the earth.

Hearing their cry,
God delivered the children of Israel
from the house of bondage.

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Loving us still,
God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant.

Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child,
like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home,
God is faithful still.

Call for the offering

We have more to offer than we recognize or realize. God has given us abundant gifts. Let us faithfully respond to our generous God by presenting our tithes and offerings.

Prayer of dedication

Holy God, take these gifts and bless them for good use to your glory. May these tokens of our gratitude be of service in blessing the poor, feeding the hungry, clothing and sheltering those struggling to survive. Use these gifts to further Christ's mission and ministry in a hurting world.
Amen.

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer:

Gather us, God, under your wings. Shelter us from the news of this world. Grant us refuge and respite so we can be still and remember we are yours. Our spirits dim at the devastating scenes we witness on the nightly news. We seek your light, but our hope fades in the face of overwhelming need.

As people of faith, we dare to pray for a better, more just world, claiming your love in Jesus Christ that welcomes and includes all creation. Hear us as we pray especially for:

Refugees and houseless adults and children...

People in countries ravaged by conflict and war...

Political leaders working for peace and international harmony...

All who strive to save the earth from devastation and destruction...

You are holy, God of majesty, and your Spirit is everywhere guiding us to beauty, truth and goodness. As summer months roll into fall and we reembrace work and school routines, we praise you for the many ways you show up for us, even when we are distracted or lost. Hear us as we praise you especially for:

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The love of our families...
The strength and support of friends...
The communities to which we belong, people who know us by name...
Encouragement and kindness that keep us going when the road gets rough...

You make all things new, Resurrecting God, and we pray for the renewal of our world, the healing of wounds, the righting of wrongs, and the strengthening of your people. Hear us as we pray especially for:

Families suffering from separation...
Those isolated by sickness or grief...
Those suffering with addiction and disease...
Those seeking escape from life itself...

We praise you, God of Glory, for your attention and your presence with us in prayer. We thank you for being in relationship with us. Hear us now, as we collectively pray the prayer Christ taught us saying, "**Our Father...**".

Charge and benediction *(Based on Deuteronomy 30:19)*

God has set before us life and death, blessings and curses.
Choose life so that you and your descendants may live.

May the grace, hope, peace and love of God the Creator,
Redeemer and Sustainer be with us all. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Teri McDowell Ott
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