

Order of Worship

Fifth Sunday of Easter
May 7, 2023

Call to worship (Based on John 14:1-7)

Gather us, O God

There is room for us all.

Dwell with us, O God.

Show us the way.

Guide us, O God.

We give thanks and praise for Christ as our way, truth and life.

Call to confession

No one is lost to God. All are welcome to witness and receive God's saving grace. Let us confess our sins before our Savior.

Prayer of confession

You send us, God of the Great Commission, but we hedge and hesitate. Forgive our fear and our excuses. We are witnesses of your grace and glory but allow others to silence our praise. We imprison ourselves with doubt and shame and fail to shine your light for all to see. Forgive our fears. Free our testimony. Amen.

Assurance of pardon

Christ has transformed us. Christ has renewed us. Through Christ's death and resurrection, we are a new creation, ready to sing God's glory and testify to God's grace. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.

Prayer for illumination

Savior God, your Word is a lamp to our feet on this discipleship road. Walk with us. Guide us with your wisdom and grace. Open us to discerning your will and your way. 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 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

Humbled by God's generosity, let us offer our gifts to God and God's ministries through Christ's church.

Prayer of dedication

God, you meet our needs and transform us for service. Accept these gifts as signs of our gratitude and our commitment to witness to Christ's ministry in your world. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer (based on Psalm 31 and a prayer by Howard Thurman)

In you, O Lord, we seek refuge and strength. In your righteousness, deliver us. Incline your ear to us and hear us as we pray these prayers of your people.

Open unto us — courage for our fear.
Open unto us — wisdom for our confusion.
Open unto us — peace for our turmoil.

We are fraught and fearful, Holy God, devastated by gun violence, war and evil powers that seek to dominate and destroy. Guide our steps in your holy path so we can find our way to your peaceable kin-dom.

Open unto us — strength for our weakness.
Open unto us — love for our hates.
Open unto us — forgiveness for our sins.

Remind us, Gracious God, that Easter is not a thing of the past, but a continuous miracle; a death-defying promise worth our constant proclamation. Be with those who are ill and grieving loss. Hear the cries of



those who are in pain. Comfort those searching for answers to horrors that can't be explained.

Open unto us — joy for our sorrow.
Open unto us — hope for our despair.
Open unto us — light for our darkness.

Ground us in your good news, O God, and help us hold on to your promises of hope. Keep our feet steady on Christ's path as we seek to be his faithful followers, praying the prayer Jesus taught us, saying, **“Our Father....”**

Charge and benediction (based on John 14:27)

Christ does not give to us as the world gives.
We leave church today with Christ's peace to have, to hold, to share with others. Do not let your hearts be troubled, do not be afraid.
Christ is with us in all things.

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

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Liturgy written by Teri McDowell Ott and provided
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