Order of Worship

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

July 30, 2023

Call to worship (based on Psalm 105)

Give thanks to the Lord; call on his name;

make known his deeds among the peoples.

Sing to him, sing praises to him;

tell of all his wonderful works.

Glory in his holy name;

let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.

Call to confession

The kingdom of heaven is for all of us, but we come to this space full of our own burdens. Let us confess our sins before our Triune God.

Prayer of confession (based on Psalm 51:10-12)

Holy God, we try to keep you close to us, but in the process, we push our neighbors away. We have been distracted in a distracting world and withheld love from each other and from you. Have mercy on us, O God. In your compassion, cleanse and release us from our sin. Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Amen.

Assurance of pardon (based on Romans 8:34)

Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died and who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who intercedes for us. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.

Prayer for illumination

Eternal God, you have made us in your image. Let our hearts, minds and spirits be turned to you in this time so that the Holy Spirit may bring us closer to the Word. Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith (from The Confession of Belhar)

We believe:

- **that God has entrusted the church with the message of reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ;**
- **that the church is called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, that the church is called blessed because it is a peacemaker, that the church is witness both by word and by deed to the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells;**
- **that God's life-giving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death, and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness and enmity, that God's life-giving Word and Spirit will enable the church to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world.**

Call for the offering (from 2 Corinthians 9:6)

The one who sows a small number of seeds will also reap a small crop, and the one who sows a generous amount of seeds will also reap a generous crop. Let us share our offering to God in support of the kingdom of heaven.

Prayer of dedication

Gracious God, this offering is what we have to give you this day. Be it time, talent or treasure, we lift these gifts to you. It is through you that all things are made new, and we ask that you renew our spirit to continue sharing our gifts with the least of us. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

O God, we give thanks for the gift another day, for sunshine and long summer days, for shade and sunblock, we lift up our hearts to give thanks to changing seasons through the sweetness of iced drinks and days slowly shortening. We give thanks for …

- Ordinary neighbors who use their gifts and talents to help others;
- Farmers, merchants, bakers and others who help provide our loved ones and ourselves with nourishment;
- The everyday miracles that give us hope such as plants growing and yeast blooming.

God of grace and peace, we offer our prayers for those in need. In this moment of prayer, we pause to remember …

- Those who don't have the resources they need;
- Those who are lonely and are without community;
- Those who cannot find peace in their own body or mind;
- Those who struggle with religious trauma.

O God, you have welcomed us into the kingdom of heaven. It is a kingdom that is beyond our understanding, but we trust that you know it just as you know us. God, let us find peace in that which we cannot know and faith to trust in your love.

Finally, hear us now, as we pray the prayer Christ taught us to pray by saying together, **"Our Father ..."**

Charge and benediction (Numbers 6:24-26)

May we continue this day knowing that God has created this place for us; God created every one of us; And God loves each of us. So go out into the world and carry this love with you every place you go.

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace." Amen.

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Liturgy written by Jo Wiersema and provided for free distribution.

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