

Order of Worship

Reign of Christ Sunday
November 26, 2023

Call to worship (from Psalm 100)

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.

Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing.

Know that the Lord is God. It is she who made us, and we are hers.

We are God's people, the sheep of her pasture.

Enter God's gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise.

Give thanks to God; bless his name.

For the Lord is good; her steadfast love endures forever.

God's faithfulness is from generation to generation. Let us worship God!

Call to Confession (from Ezekiel 34:11-12)

Thus says the Lord our God: "I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out the scattered sheep, so I will seek out my people."

Trusting that God is indeed seeking us, let us confess our sin together:

Prayer of confession

Shepherding God, you have called to us, but we have not answered. You have sought us out, but we have continued to wander. You have tenderly gathered us together and cared for us, but we have not extended that same care and mercy to others. Forgive us. Remind us. Teach us. Set us free from sin that we might turn toward your love and justice for the whole world. Guide us so that, tentative step after tentative step, we may walk your way. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon (from Ezekiel 34:15-16)

Thus says the Lord our God: "I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak."

The relentless grace of Jesus Christ always finds and forgives us. Thanks be to our ever-seeking God!



Prayer for illumination (Glory to God #82/83, v.2)

To be sung or spoken:

*Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,
Born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.*

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith (from the Theological Declaration of Barmen)

As Jesus is God's assurance of the forgiveness of all our sins,
so in the same way
and with the same seriousness
is he also God's mighty claim upon our whole life.
Through him befalls us a joyful deliverance
from the godless fetters of this world
for a free, grateful service to his creatures.

We reject the false doctrine,
As though there were areas of our life
in which we would not belong to Jesus Christ,
but to other lords —
areas in which we would not need justification
and sanctification through him.

Call for the offering

Jesus calls us to reach out and care for our neighbors in need. One way we do that is together as the church: the corporate body of Christ. Let us offer our gifts to God for God's work in our community.

Prayer of dedication

Generous God, we bless your name because you have called us and claimed us and sent us into the world to do your will. Receive now this offering, both of our money and our lives. Through these gifts, may the hungry be fed, the thirsty quenched, the naked clothed, and the stranger welcomed. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

God, our judge and our redeemer, we give you thanks this day for the ways you have blessed our lives with abundance:

- For feasts and gatherings with family and friends;
- For traveling mercies over this holiday weekend;
- For days off from school and work;
- For warm homes, warm smiles, and warm hearts;

Christ, our teacher and our companion, we lift up to you those people and places in our world who are suffering this morning:

- For creation, groaning under the weight of a changing climate;



- For people living in places of war and violence, especially Ukraine, Israel and Gaza;
- For people who are hungry, thirsty, homeless, in prison, or in immigration detention centers;
- For all who have spent Thanksgiving sick, grieving, or lonely.

Holy Spirit, our comforter and our provoker, empower us work toward your saving purposes in the world:

- To feed, clothe, and welcome people who lack life's basic necessities;
- To embrace the ones our world calls untouchable;
- To lift our voices in the public square for those whose voices are disregarded and silenced;
- And to pursue justice and peace in our personal relationships, our communities, and the whole of your world.

God, we lift up to you all these and the many more thanksgivings and petitions spilling out of our hearts this morning, as we pray the prayer Jesus taught us to pray, saying, **"Our Father..."**.

Charge and benediction

Friends, go forth from this place and seek the face of Christ.

Seek Christ's face in every person you meet:

the least, the greatest,
the remarkable, the ordinary,
the sacred, the profane.

Seek Christ's face outside yourselves:

outside these walls
outside your daily routines.

Seek Christ's face in people who are vulnerable,
trusting that when they look into your eyes,
they, too, will see Christ's face looking back.

And as you go:

May the grace of Christ enfold your heart,
May the love of God sustain your soul,
And may the holy mischief of the Spirit disrupt your life
And bring you home to Christ's Sovereign, joyful Kingdom!
Alleluia. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Rev. Ginna Bairby and provided
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