

Order of Worship

Fourth Sunday of Lent
March 10, 2024

Call to worship (Psalm 107:1-3, 21-22)

O give thanks to the Lord, for God is good; for God's steadfast love endures forever.

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, those God redeemed from trouble and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

Let them thank the Lord for God's steadfast love, for God's wonderful works to humankind.

And let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices, and tell of the Lord's deeds with songs of joy.

Call to confession

The faithfulness of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. The mercies of God are new every morning. Beloved, confession of our sin before God is an act of trust in the goodness of God. In confession, we draw near to our maker in candor, knowing that nothing can be hidden from God. As we are honest with God and with one another about those places in our lives that stand in need of God's healing, we are opened to the mercies of God. So let us confess our sin, first in unison, and then in silence...

Prayer of confession

Holy God, giver of all that is good, we rejoice that you are the source of all that is. The breath of life is a gift from your generous hand. The food we eat is grown in the world you sustain. The community that supports us is called into being by your saving activity. Everything we have is a gift from you. Why, then, do we complain as though the manna, raining down from heaven for us even now, is not enough? Why do we worry that your well of living water will someday run dry? It is surely our sin that causes us live as though we do not trust your goodness. Forgive us, we pray. Teach us again to put all our trust in your promises that never fail. Remind us that we are always in your loving care. Fill us with grace, so that our lives might show forth the fullness of your love for all people...



Assurance of pardon (Hebrews 10:16-18)

“This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord:

‘I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds,’

and he adds,

‘I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.’

Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.”

Believe the promise of the Gospel: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Prayer for illumination (Psalm 19:14)

May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable to you, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer. Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith (from the Confession of 1967, Inclusive Language Text)

Having sung God’s praise, having confessed our sin and been assured of God’s pardon, having heard God’s word, let us respond by affirming the faith of the church. What do you believe?

God’s reconciling act in Jesus Christ is a mystery which the Scriptures describe in various ways. It is called the sacrifice of a lamb, a shepherd’s life given for his sheep, atonement by a priest; again it is ransom of a slave, payment of debt, vicarious satisfaction of a legal penalty, and victory over the powers of evil. These are expressions of a truth which remains beyond the reach of all theory in the depths of God’s love for humankind. They reveal the gravity, cost, and sure achievement of God’s reconciling work.

Call for the offering

From the providence of God, all that we need has been given to us, in sufficient abundance that we might share. Let us return our offerings as a sign of our commitment to follow the one who has loved us, even unto death.

Prayer of dedication

Gracious God, from the overflowing of your love, we have been given abundance upon abundance. Receive, we pray, our offerings and bless them. May we be blessed by their work, as we see your reign among us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord’s Prayer

Eternal God, our story together is one of your unending faithfulness to



us, even as we are not always faithful to you. Holy source of all that is good, you have shown us yourself in abundance and mercy, in grace and abiding care. Knowing of your enduring providence, we may come to you with the concerns that weigh heavily on us.

We pray to you for world affairs beyond our control. For the people of Ukraine, Israel and Gaza, we pray for peace, knowing that you alone are the source of true shalom, peaceable kingdom. Where there are those in harm's way, we pray protection. Where we ourselves harbor enmity and prejudice, we pray awareness and grace that we may learn forgiveness. Teach us how we may serve you more fully in ways we cannot imagine.

We pray for needs closer to home, for our own community. As we enter the season of Lent, we ask that you open our eyes to the needs on our very doorstep. May we see those whose names are known to you and offer compassion and goodwill. We pray for victims of violence, and gun violence in particular. We offer our prayers for those who seek solutions for intractable problems. Let us not give up hope. Let us not abandon the work of healing the world — we remember that all healing comes from you.

We pray as well for ourselves, our own material and spiritual needs. Where our members suffer from illness and affliction, grant your healing touch, bringing wholeness. For any in our midst who suffer from depression or addiction, give us understanding and compassion. For those who are lonely, may we be a place of friendship, a warm haven where love is shared. To that end, we pray for the church: Universal, Presbyterian, and our own congregation. Enrich our lives with your grace that we might also be repairers of the breach.

We make these and all of our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray together, **“Our Father ...”**.

Charge and benediction

Go into the world sure of the goodness of God. Remember the promises that God has kept. Be mindful of the ways that God has provided. Keep your eyes on the cross of Jesus Christ, and the new life that is offered to us all, and may the grace, mercy, and communion of our God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, bless you and those you love, both this day and every day hereafter. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Baron Mullis and provided for free distribution.

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