



Order of Worship

Third Sunday of Easter
April 14, 2024

Call to worship (inspired by Psalm 4)

The Lord hears us when we call:

Come, let us put our trust in God.

The Lord fills our hearts with gladness:

Come, let us sing God's praises with shouts of joy!

The Lord grants peace to our weary souls:

Come, let us rest by the quiet waters of God's grace.

Call to confession

To repent is to turn away from sin and turn toward Christ Jesus. Scripture promises that when we confess, God hears our cries and wipes away our sin (Acts 3:19). Trusting in God's promises of new life, let us confess our sins and the sin of this world.

Prayer of confession

Risen Christ, we are often troubled by our doubts. But you are not troubled by them. You do not require perfect understanding. Instead, you reveal yourself to us again and again that we might come to know you. Forgive us when our doubts keep us stuck, when fear prevents us from loving all creation as you call us to do. Help us to accept the peace you so graciously offer to us. Have mercy on us when we hoard or hide it, when we fail to offer it to others. Renew us and make us whole that in this world of strife we may be bearers of your peace. In resurrection hope we pray, Amen.

Assurance of pardon

"See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are" (1 John 3:1). Children of God, we are claimed by God, forgiven of our sins, and set free for love. Alleluia! Amen.





Prayer for illumination

Redeeming God, as we hear your Word spoken to us, open our eyes to see the risen Christ, open our ears to hear the good news of his salvation for all the world, and open our minds to understand the mysteries of your love. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith (Romans 8:1, 28, 38, 39)

We believe there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus; for we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to God's purpose. We are convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Call for the offering

In response to God's abundant grace at work in our lives, let us present with gratitude our gifts of time, talent and treasure, for the building up of God's kingdom.

Prayer of dedication

Living Lord, we give you thanks for the bounty of your grace: you create us in your image, shower us with your love, forgive us when we turn away from you, and give us a future with hope. Bless these gifts we offer you today, and make us good stewards of the resources you have entrusted to us. May our gifts bring joy and peace in our church and in our community. In Christ's holy name we pray, Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

God of abundant grace, we gather today just as your first disciples gathered in the wake of the resurrection: in joy, wonder and disbelief. We remember that whenever we gather in your name, you appear in our midst, offering us the comfort of your presence and the assurance of your love. And we give you thanks that like those first disciples, you give us a community to practice our faith. Grant us grace to hold space for one another's doubts and questions. Give us courage to admit that we do not have all the answers. Make this community where we explore what it means to receive your forgiveness and dedicate our lives to you.

We remember that when the risen Christ first appeared to his disciples, he offered them peace. Our world is deeply in need of your peace, O God: a peace that is not only the absence of conflict but the presence of wholeness for all people. We pray for innocent victims of war in Ukraine and Gaza and around the world. Put an end to violence, Lord. Teach us to recognize our shared humanity, our shared status as your beloved children, each of us created in your image. Lead each of us to prioritize peace, both in our homes and communities and in the wider world. We pray for all who sit in seats of power: fill their hearts with compassion



and their decisions with wisdom, that all may have the chance not only to survive, but to flourish.

Most of all, God, save us from despair. Open our eyes to see the signs of resurrection life that are all around us. Plant hope within us, and help us to nurture its tender shoots, that it may grow more robust each day. May we begin to imagine the future of your shalom.

Loving Lord, we pray for members of our community who need your care. Ease the suffering of the sick and speed the healing of those in recovery. Comfort all those who mourn and bring rest to all who are worn down. Surround the isolated with love and soothe the troubled minds of the anxious. We especially pray for ..., and all we name now in the quiet of our hearts....

Lord of life, remind us of our call to love one another as you have loved us, with a love that casts out fear and creates community. Grant us energy to serve one another with humility and hope. Keep us faithful in your service until Christ comes again and all things are made new. We pray in his name and as he taught us: **“Our Father....”**

Charge and benediction (Teresa of Avila)

As you go out from this place, remember that
“Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body...
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.”

Together we are the resurrected body of Christ in the world. And wherever we go, however we live into that call, the risen Christ will be with us, God’s love will surround us, and the Spirit will breathe new life into our weary souls. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Rev. Ellen Williams Hensle and provided for free distribution.

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