

# Order of Worship

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost  
August 11, 2024

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## Call to worship (based on John 6:35)

Jesus says, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

**Savior God, we come to you hungry and thirsty, grateful for the sustenance you provide.**

## Call to confession

Our sins and shortcomings are not permanent obstacles to God. Grace and forgiveness are freely given. Let us take this opportunity to humbly approach our God and confess our sins.

## Prayer of confession

**Christ calls us to stand with the least and the last, but we cling to power and privilege. We fear worldly consequences for faithful action. We fail to follow where Christ leads, making excuses for ourselves, for our silence in the face of oppression, for our lack of action. Forgive us, God, and help us risk following where Christ calls. Amen.**

## Assurance of pardon

God's love is sure and steadfast. Receive the good news that you are forgiven and return to right relationship with God. Amen.

## Prayer for illumination

Open our ears and humble our hearts as we approach your Word read and proclaimed today, Great God. May we listen, discern and follow the path you intend for us. Amen.


## Scripture readings

## Sermon

## Affirmation of faith (from A Brief Statement of Faith)

**We trust in God,  
whom Jesus called Abba, Father.**





In sovereign love God created the world good  
and makes everyone equally in God's image,  
male and female, of every race and people,  
to live as one community.  
But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator.  
Ignoring God's commandments,  
we violate the image of God in others and ourselves,  
accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature,  
and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care.  
We deserve God's condemnation.  
Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation.  
In everlasting love,  
the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people  
to bless all families of the earth.  
Hearing their cry,  
God delivered the children of Israel  
from the house of bondage.  
Loving us still,  
God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant.  
Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child,  
like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home,  
God is faithful still.

### **Call for the offering**

"From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required."  
(Luke 12:48)

Let us present our tithes and offerings to God.

### **Prayer of dedication**

The bounty of summer is upon us. God's table is filled with a feast beyond our wildest dreams. We are grateful to be God's welcome guest. May the gifts we give during this offering bless others as we have been blessed. Amen.

### **Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer**

*Is the tree as it rises delighted with its many/ branches,/ each one like a poem?*  
(*"Do stones feel?"* by Mary Oliver)

God of glory, may we delight over our growth, our branches reaching to the sky, our children dancing beneath the summer sun, blades of grass between their bare toes. May we delight over the growth of our summer gardens, the food we can produce by seed and soil, the hunger we can feed with the abundance you so freely share. Let us not be so shrouded with concern, so overwhelmed by worry, that we miss the ways you grace us with delight.

*Only if there are angels in your head will you/ ever, possibly, see one.*  
(*"The World I Live In"* by Mary Oliver)

God of grace, help us to see your angels at work among us, lighting upon the unhoused in the street, delivering cups of coffee, Ziplocs full of fresh toiletries and deli sandwiches. Help us honor your angels with our praise



and gratitude —the patient teacher, the loving parent, the determined wildfire fighter, the volunteer rescue worker, the visitor of the elderly, the sick, the imprisoned. Give us eyes to see, O God, your angels at work and help us be among their ranks.

*The last roses have opened their factories of sweetness/ and are giving it back to the world.*

(“Roses, Late Summer” by Mary Oliver)

Loving God, like the roses, what sweetness can we give back this week at work, at church, within our homes and our communities? A smile? A supportive gesture? A longed-for embrace? Guide us to share what we have to give: a kind, encouraging email; an unexpected compliment; a reassuring word of grace; our presence in the midst of pain; a prayer of petition on behalf of the poor and downtrodden; an offering of time or treasure. Generous God, guide us in our giving this week. Make us bearers of your abundant grace.

In these final weeks of summer, we lift these prayers to you, Great God, deserving of all our honor and praise. Now, as the Body of Christ, hear us as we pray the prayer Christ taught us saying, **“Our Father ...”**.

### **Charge and benediction**

During this hour of worship, we have known forgiveness, restoration and grace. Now we are sent from this place to share and to serve.

May God our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer go with us, guiding and blessing us as we seek to be a blessing to others.

Amen.

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Liturgy written by Teri McDowell Ott and provided for free distribution.

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