

# Order of Worship

14th Sunday after Pentecost  
August 25, 2024

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## Call to worship

Christ abides in us,

**And we abide in him.**

Christ has the words of eternal life:

**We believe and trust that he is the Holy One of God.**

As we hear the gospel of peace today,

**Let us choose again whom we will serve.**

We will serve the God of liberation and new life,

**the God who hears and answers when we call.**

We bring our praises and our prayers to God,

**Trusting God to meet us as we gather.**

**Let us worship our God together!**

## Call to confession

Our psalm for today reminds us: "The Lord redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in God will be condemned" (Psalm 34:22).

Trusting that God is always more ready to forgive than we are to confess, let us turn to God in prayer, seeking forgiveness and new life.

## Prayer of confession

**Loving God, through Christ you abide in us, and you invite us to abide in you. But so often we are restless and unsatisfied. Instead of resting in the fullness of life Christ offers to us, we chase after money and fame, recognition and power, status and control. Instead of honoring the image of God in all our neighbors, we push others down in the pursuit of our own desires. Forgive us for forgetting that you call us to a different way of being in the world, to lives grounded in the self-giving love of Christ. Lead us out of self-interest and into communal care for one another and the world you have made. In Christ's name we pray; Amen.**



## Assurance of pardon

John's Gospel tells us: "God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him" (John 3:17). Christ forgives us and makes us whole. Christ fills us with life and sets us free for love. Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

## Prayer for illumination

Eternal God, quiet our hearts and minds amid the clattering chaos of the world and all the voices vying for our attention. May we clearly hear your word of life spoken to us today. As we hear, help us to understand; as we understand, move us to respond in love, for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ; Amen.

## Scripture readings

### Sermon

## Affirmation of faith (Philippians 2:5–11, Book of Common Worship)

**Christ Jesus,  
though he was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
as something to be exploited,  
but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
being born in human likeness.  
And being found in human form  
he humbled himself  
and became obedient to the point of death—  
even death on a cross.  
Therefore, God also highly exalted him  
and gave him the name that is above every name,  
so that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue should confess to the glory of God:  
Jesus Christ is Lord! Amen.**

## Call for the offering

When Christ abides in us and we abide in him, we can see that everything we have is a gift from God. The gifts of time, talent and treasure God has entrusted us with are not to be hoarded, but to be shared, to give life to others as Christ gives life to us. Let us now return to God a portion of what God has so generously given to us.

## Prayer of dedication

Holy God, we thank you that we have heard your words of eternal life today. As a sign of our gratitude, we offer you these gifts. Take what we have given and multiply it for the good: the good of our faith community, the good of our neighbors, and the good of the world you so love. Shape and mold us so that our whole lives become a loving response to your goodness. In the name of the one whose life gives life to the world, Jesus Christ, Amen.



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

Holy Three-in-One and One-in-Three, we give thanks that you draw us into community with you, just as your three persons live in perpetual community, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. Thank you for the many gifts of grace that flow into our lives when we enter the embrace of your love: for your nearness in times of trouble, for your guidance in times of uncertainty, for the promise of hope.

We thank you, too, that you draw us into community with our fellow human beings. We thank you for the gifts of this faith community... [specific gifts may be listed here]. In this time of conflict in the world, bind us to one another and to you, that we may bear faithful witness to your love. Help us to care for others as you care for us. May the work we do in your name show those around us what is possible when people commit to working together for the common good.

Loving Lord, we pray for our world marred by violence, arrogance, greed and injustice. We grieve the ways the "spiritual forces of evil" which the Apostle Paul wrote about still wreak havoc in our world today. As we fight against racism, sexism, poverty and every form of oppression, remind us that the fight is not against our neighbors who think or believe differently from us, but against the powers and principalities that oppose your reign of justice and peace. Ground us in your love and fill us with your Spirit that we may see Christ's face in the face of every person we meet. When we are tempted to treat our neighbors as enemies, soften our hearts and move us to offer your transformative grace. Give us patience, perseverance and hope as we join you in the work of building the kingdom of God.

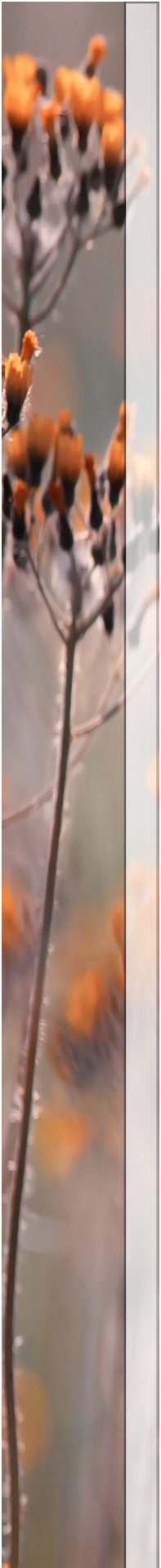
God of grace, you promise to be near to the brokenhearted and save the crushed in spirit. We bring before you those in our community who are sick or recovering, grieving or in pain. Comfort their spirits by your Spirit and ease their sufferings with your healing mercies. Make us attentive to their needs and bearers of your loving presence. Especially we pray for... [insert specific prayer requests here].

Lord of all, we thank you that through Christ's life, death and resurrection, you have already won victory over sin and death. Help us to live in ways that reflect and respond to your overflowing love. Make us ready with the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and even the sword of the Spirit, that we may stand firm in your grace and be your faithful people, bearing the good news of Jesus Christ to the world. We pray in Christ's name and as he taught us: **"Our Father..."**

### Charge and benediction (Book of Common Worship)

"Go out into the world in peace;  
have courage;  
hold on to what is good;  
return no one evil for evil;  
strengthen the fainthearted;  
support the weak, and help the suffering;  
honor all people;





love and serve the Lord,  
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.”

And remember that wherever you go, whatever evils God calls you to fight, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit will be with you always. Amen.

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

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