



Order of Worship

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
July 21, 2024

Call to worship (based on Matthew 11:28-30)

Jesus said, "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."

Lord, we come to worship you, seeking sabbath rest.

Jesus said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

Lord, we come to worship you, to listen for your teachings and to seek rest for our souls.

Jesus said, "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Lord, we come to worship you, that we might serve you faithfully.

Give thanks to God; bless God's name!

For the Lord is good; God's steadfast love endures forever, and God's faithfulness to all generations.

Call to confession

The scriptures teach that there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. The scriptures also teach that we have a high priest who has been tested as we are, yet without sin. As the letter to the Hebrews encourages us, "Let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Let us pray.

Prayer of confession

Good and gracious God, we confess that we run ourselves ragged. We are busy and preoccupied with so many things. We neglect to be still and know that you are God. Even our sabbath time can be filled with "busy-ness." Forgive us, Lord, for not accepting your gift and guidance of rest and restoration. Help us to put on the yoke of Jesus and walk in the way he models for us, mindful of our spiritual health and responding with compassion to the needs of our neighbors. Loving God, thank you for Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, who makes us complete in everything good so that we may do his will, working among us that which is pleasing in his sight. We pray through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.





Assurance of pardon (Ephesians 2:4-10)

God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ — by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.

Thanks be to God! For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

Prayer for illumination

Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God. Open our ears and our hearts to your teachings, Lord, that we may be strengthened in our faith and equipped for ministry in your name. Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith (From “A Declaration of Faith”)

**God sent his Son
to proclaim release to those who are bound,
to announce that God’s promised kingdom is at hand,
to urge everyone to repent and believe the good news.
The Lord is moving toward the time
when the glorious liberty of the children of God
will be manifest throughout the whole creation.
We testify God is at work here and now
when people obey Christ’s commission
to witness to him and make disciples of all nations,
when they spread the good news by their words
and embody it in their lives.**

**We believe that God sends us
to tell all nations
that Christ calls everyone to repentance, faith and obedience.
We are to proclaim by word and deed
that Christ gave himself to set people free
from sin and self-hatred, from ignorance and disease,
from all forms of oppression,
and even from death.
We are to offer them in Christ’s name
fullness of life now and forever.
We must not distort the gospel
by weakening its promises or demands,
by identifying it with oppressive structures,
by pointing to ourselves instead of Christ.
We must not restrict our proclamation
to persons just like ourselves.
We invite people everywhere
to believe in Christ and become his followers.
We urge them to join us in telling others the good news**



and in struggling for justice, compassion, and peace.

Call for the offering (2 Corinthians 9:13)

When the apostle Paul encouraged the Corinthian Christians to participate in the offering for the saints in Jerusalem who were in need, he wrote, "for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others."

With grateful hearts, let us bring our tithes and offerings, that we may supply the needs of the saints, overflow with thanksgiving to God, glorify God, and share generously what God has so graciously given to us.

Prayer of dedication

God of grace and God of glory, we thank you for your generous blessings which enrich our lives. Help us to be good stewards of all you give. May we freely give with generous hearts, even as we have received what you have so freely given us, Jesus Christ, your indescribable gift. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Holy God, Three in One, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we praise you for your goodness and your everlasting loving-kindness. With the power of your Word, you created the world and everything in it and fashioned us in your own image. In your Word made flesh, you lived among us, taught us your way, and reconciled us to you. Through your living Word, you continue to call us to obedience and service in the power of your Holy Spirit.

Thank you, God, for the claim you put on our lives in baptism and the call to follow you throughout life. We pray for the wisdom of your Son's teachings to guide us in our actions. In what we say and do as followers of Jesus, may we always say and do what he has taught and shown us in his own life. Hear our prayers, O Lord ...

God of all creation, we pray for the world in which we live. You offer us a better way, but we continue to live in strife. We divide ourselves and look to our own interests. We become discouraged and think we cannot make a difference. Lord, show us how to live as a witness to your power, promise, love and grace. Hear our prayers, O Lord ...

God of life, as the crowds carried their sick to Jesus with the hope of them being healed, we still carry our sick to you in our prayers. We pray for all for whom life is a struggle today because of illness, both those who are sick and those who give care. Bless those who are undergoing treatments, recovering from surgeries, facing new diagnoses, and living with chronic conditions. May they know the peace of your life-giving Spirit. We also pray for those who are preparing to die, and for their loved ones. Help us always to live as those who are prepared to die so that, when it is time to die, we may go forth as those who are prepared to live in Christ Jesus. Hear our prayers, O Lord ...





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

Charge and benediction

My beloved,
be steadfast, immovable,
always excelling in the work of the Lord,
because you know that in the Lord
your labor is not in vain.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with all of you.
Amen.

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Liturgy written by Philip K. Gladden and provided
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