

Order of Worship

1st Sunday in Lent

March 9, 2025

Call to worship (based on Psalm 91)

Where is our home?

Our home is in the shelter and shadow of God.

How can this be our refuge?

Because God's angels will guard your house and those in it from evil and threat.

How can we flourish?

Staying close to God's ways will bring our lives to abundance.

Let us worship God.

Call to confession (based on Romans 10)

Scripture says, "No one who believes in Christ will be put to shame." Therefore, we do not approach God with shame but with life-giving expectation grounded in our trust of God. For when we confess with our mouth and trust in our heart, we will find healing for ourselves and for the world.

Prayer of confession

God of wide circles, we too often revert to our fear-filled instinct to cut off those unfamiliar and distant. May we evaluate others based on your heart. In Romans, you remind us when we lean into your kin-dom agenda, our worldview is expanded to focus on our common humanity. May we embrace your created diversity and include all in our cherished life's work.

Assurance of pardon (based on Romans 10)

Everyone. Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Having called upon the wide arms of our gracious God, know that you are forgiven. With joy, may we amplify God's grace into the whole world. Amen.





Prayer for illumination

Author and source of our lives and of our redeemer, Jesus Christ, we know what is written can be used for evil or for good. Open our hearts to your Spirit that the words read and proclaimed would go beyond ink, paper, digital images and sound. Despite the imperfect mediums, may this Scripture be the spiritual imparting of your deepest desires for the world into our hearts.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith (Theological Declaration of Barmen)

“Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole-body [is] joined and knit together” (Ephesians 4:15-16).

The Christian Church is the congregation of the brethren in which Jesus Christ acts presently as the Lord in Word and Sacrament through the Holy Spirit. As the church of pardoned sinners, it has to testify in the midst of a sinful world, with its faith as with its obedience, with its message as with its order, that it is solely his property, and that it lives and wants to live solely from his comfort and from his direction in the expectation of his appearance. We reject the false doctrine, as though the church were permitted to abandon the form of its message and order to its own pleasure or to changes in prevailing ideological and political convictions.

Call for the offering

In our deliverance and abundance, we are asked to use the first fruits of our labor to build the kin-dom. Let us be prayerful about how we may give our bounty to our benevolent God.

Prayer of dedication (in unison based on Deuteronomy 26:10-11)

Now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O Lord, have given me. I bow before you and shall celebrate with immigrants and strangers in our community the bounty of all you have given to me and my household.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

As we arrive at this season of penitence, we do not forget Easter. As we name our fears, our shortcomings, and the world's brokenness, we remember that you have already won the victory over sin and death. We enter the mindfulness exercise of Lent to remember our charge to care for a challenged world. As Easter people, we do this with the confidence in the outcome of our cares and our work as your people.

May we continue to be mindful of instability around the world in these days of rising autocracy. We remember Eastern Europe, Germany, France and the United States as well as Venezuela, Hungary and India. Strengthen all leaders in our world to act with integrity, to resist corruption and to uphold the principles of democracy. May they lead with



humility, always seeking the welfare of the people they serve.

We remember those who suffer due to exploitation and abuse, especially the communities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Provide them with protection and justice. Stir our hearts to advocate for their rights and to work towards a world where all are treated with dignity.

We pray for those who live with instability, especially our siblings in Mozambique, Syria, Somalia and Israel/Palestine.

We pray for those who fear startling proclamations of colonialism, especially our siblings in Panama, Gaza, Canada and Greenland.

We pray for President Trump, the United States Congress, and the U.S. Supreme Court, for their individual lives and families. Grant them wisdom to use their resources and power for the common good, to uplift the marginalized and to promote justice and equity. May they resist the temptation to seek power for its own sake and instead serve as stewards of your blessings.

We pray for Rev. Jihyun Oh, stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly and executive director of the Interim Unified Agency, and all our denomination's national staff during this period of restructuring. May we be friends to them, our colleagues in ministry, and work with them during this time of uncertainty both within and outside the church.

May we hear your voice during these trying times O God, and follow with joy your ways of justice, peace and love for all.

Hear us now, as we pray the prayer Christ taught us by saying together, **"Our Father..."**

Charge and benediction

May you center yourselves in God's ways and God's identity. May you see the faces of all, and our very planet, with the eyes of our Creator. May you know your welfare is inextricably entwined with that of your neighbor, the stranger you fear and the enemy you have named in your heart. May you be open to the transformation of your heart into God's heart. And may you walk humbly from this place to live life fully and generously everywhere you go and in all you do. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Kyle Walker and provided for free distribution.

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