



Order of Worship

5th Sunday in Lent

April 6, 2025

Call to worship (Psalm 126)

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,

we were like those who dreamed.

Our mouths were filled with laughter,

our tongues with songs of joy.

It was said among the nations,

The Lord has done great things for them.

The Lord has done great things for us,

and we are filled with joy.

Call to confession

We come to confession like a wooden boat. We are weathered by storms of our own making; we are splintered and cracked, taking on water. God meets us in our confession as an expert carpenter: sanding, repairing, repainting, again and again, until we are restored.

Trusting in God's great love for us, let us join in our confession together, let us pray:

Prayer of confession

Ever-Present God, you offer us restoration and wholeness, yet we resist you. We reduce the purpose of this life to the amount of stuff we can retain, and we disregard the damage done to our planet, our neighbors, and to ourselves in the process.

We confess that we would rather remain as we are than risk the change that results from your presence in our lives. In this season of Lent, help us to realize just how much we depend on one another. Guide us to reorient our lives towards your goodness and your joy.

And as you do, we ask that you renew us, restore us, and remain with us, as you always have.





Assurance of pardon

The Lord has done great things for us. Through the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ, we are renewed, and we are made whole. Beloved children of God, know that you are forgiven, and be at peace. Amen.

Prayer for illumination

Holy God, just as you spoke at the dawn of creation, continue to speak to us now as we prepare to encounter your Word. Be with us in our listening, in our speaking, in our understanding, and in our responding. 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

The Lord has done great things for us. Every good gift comes from God; the things we are able to do with our time, our unique talents, as well as our treasure. In response to God's generosity, we are invited to share a portion of those gifts. However you are able to give, whatever you are called to share, let us continue our worship of God through the giving of our gifts.

Prayer of dedication

God of all gifts, we are grateful for the many ways you continue to provide for us. As we offer a portion of these gifts today, we ask that you



might receive them and transform them. Allow these gifts to become acts of restoration and hope, here in this community and beyond. So that all of your children might live into the abundance and the joy that you offer us.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

God of all creation, the psalmist reminds us of your capability to allow all who sow with tears, to reap with songs of joy. Therefore, we lift up our prayers to you this day.

We offer gratitude for all the places in our world singing songs of joy:

For buds breaking into bloom this spring,
For the search for plastic easter eggs,
For the warm sunlight that lingers in the evenings,
For the rain that nourishes life,
For celebrations that invite friends and family to gather,
For the family recipe that has been handed down through generations.
For hope that endures through all things,

For the many moments of joy we find, we give you thanks, O God.

We also lift up those who still find the falling of tears an everyday occurrence:

For those mourning the loss of someone they love,
For those who do not have a safe place to call home,
For those struggling with illness and recovery,
For everyone who feels lost and alone,
For everyone who experiences violence in all its forms,
For all the places where hate and oppression seem to have the upper hand.

For the places we continue to weep O God, we ask for your healing and peace.

God of love, restore us we pray. Only you know exactly what is needed to heal what is broken, to renew what has been worn down. Continue to guide us and help us to see where we might be a part of your renovations in this world. So that all of your children who sow with tears today, might reap with songs of joy tomorrow.

We pray all of these things in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray together saying: **"Our Father ..."**.





Charge and benediction

Remember, as our time of worship draws to a close and our lives of service begin anew, go out into the world in peace.

Return no one evil for evil.

Strengthen the fainthearted, support the weak, love everyone.

That God's light and love, justice, and joy, might be for you and all people everywhere. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Molly Spangler
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