



Order of Worship

Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 25, 2025

Call to worship (based on Psalm 67)

May God be gracious to us; May God bless us.

We gather in worship, knowing God is here.

May God's face shine upon us.

May God call us into the joyful work of creating peace.

Let us worship our God in praise.

Call to confession

We come to God as we are: messy, joyful, imperfect, guilty, righteous. But most of all, we come to God as ourselves, human, in need of proclaiming, confessing, forgiving, in need of community. Let us come to God with all we are.

Prayer of confession

God of the city, you call us to come to you in the world, but we disobey you. We choose power and profit over the acts of love that you exemplify for us again and again. We are content to work within systems that oppress instead of working to change things. We forget that everything comes from you, and that we are just stewards of what you have given. We seek out mountain tops instead of being among your people. Forgive us Lord, for the times that we forget your call to fully follow your example in the world. Embolden us to live fully in your call: to love our neighbor.

Assurance of pardon

God blesses us, again and again, despite the times that we mess up, despite us ignoring God. Friends, know and believe the good news of the Gospel: in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Prayer for illumination

God, speak loudly through your text. May we hear your truth, especially when it challenges us. Be the loud voice of love that we need to hear. Amen.

Scripture readings





Sermon

Affirmation of faith (excerpts from the Confession of Belhar)

We believe that Christ's work of reconciliation is made manifest in the church as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another;

We believe that unity is, therefore, both a gift and an obligation for the church of Jesus Christ; that through the working of God's Spirit it is a binding force, yet simultaneously a reality which must be earnestly pursued and sought: one which the people of God must continually be built up to attain,

We believe that this unity of the people of God must be manifested and be active in a variety of ways; in that we love one another; that we experience, practice and pursue community with one another; that we are obligated to give ourselves willingly and joyfully to be of benefit and blessing to one another; have one God and Father, are filled with one Spirit, are baptized with one baptism, eat of one bread and drink of one cup, confess one name, are obedient to one Lord, work for one cause, and share one hope and together come to know the height and the breadth and the depth of the love of Christ.

Call for the offering

God has blessed us so much. So let us give back to our Lord some of that blessing.

Prayer of dedication

Lord our God, we appreciate the many blessings that you have provided us with. Empower us to bless others through our actions, words, resources so that we may support and love others as you have loved us, so we can truly be your people in the city. May we use this offering to reflect you in our world.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

As we come to this time of prayer, let us start by taking a breath in... breathing in God's peace... breathing out God's love...

Let us pray:

Lord, you send us out into the world to act in peace, but our world is lacking peace. War rages on. Neighbors hurt neighbors. People are hungry, are suffering. And yet, the powers in charge struggle to meet people where they are, to recognize needs and do something about it. Help our nations follow your call to seek the peace that supports all people, not just those in power. Help our leaders to follow your example: to realize that peace is not passive and instead takes intentionality and work.

Let us remember the words that we say every Sunday and truly live them out: Peace be with you: **and also with you.**

Our churches also struggle with peace. We are divided between what we have always done and what we are called to do now. We ice out





people who we don't see as fitting in. Let our church be a conduit of peace Lord. May we welcome all with the peace that you have commanded.

Let us truly live out the words: Peace be with you: **and also with you.**

Gracious creator, we know that our local communities also struggle for peace. There are political, social, economic and so many other divides that separate friends, family and neighbors. May we remember that peace doesn't need necessarily mean agreement, but a commitment to work alongside our neighbors however we can.

May we be able to turn to those we disagree with and say: Peace be with you: **and also with you.**

God who walks with us through so many times of our lives, through the easy days and the hard days, be with those who are suffering. Bring peace to the sacred in-between of hospital rooms and hospice bedsides. Bring peace to those wrestling with their minds. Bring peace to those who are exhausted. Let us remember what you have told us, that peace is a community act. Let those who need support be surrounded by those who can help. Let us come together as a community of peace-people.

Let us say: Peace be with you: and **also with you.**

And now, let us pray together in the words that we were taught, words that connect us neighbor to neighbor: **"Our Father..."**.

Charge and benediction (based on John 14:27)

Jesus said: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you." Go out in peace, bringing God's peace and love everywhere you go. And may the love of God, the kind of love that changes the world, be with you and seen in all that you do. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Julia Burkley
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