



Order of worship

9th Sunday after Pentecost

August 2, 2020

Call to worship *(Psalm 17:1-7)*

Hear a just cause, O LORD; attend to my cry;
give ear to my prayer from lips free of deceit.

From you let my vindication come;
let your eyes see the right.

If you try my heart, if you visit me by night,
if you test me, you will find no wickedness in me;
my mouth does not transgress.

As for what others do, by the word of your lips I have
avoided the ways of the violent.

My steps have held fast to your paths;
my feet have not slipped.

I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God;
incline your ear to me, hear my words.

Wondrously show your steadfast love, O savior of those who
seek refuge from their adversaries at your right hand.

Call to confession *(Psalm 145:8-9)*

The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in
steadfast love. The Lord is good to all, and the Lord's compassion is over
all creation. Confident of this promise, we come before God and one
another to confess our sins, repent and seek God's forgiveness.

Prayer of confession

Lord of abundance and compassion, we confess that when we see the
overwhelming needs of your beloved world, we want to turn away, seek
our own security and retreat from the chaos all around us. Forgive us for
failing to heed Jesus' command to provide for the crowds. Forgive us for
hoarding what we have instead of willingly offering it to you that it might

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be blessed, multiplied and used to sustain everyone. We know that you are present in seemingly desolate places, meeting us in our doubts, using even our failings and mistakes for your purposes. In your abounding, steadfast love, grant us mercy and make of us a merciful, gracious and faithful people. Amen.

Assurance of pardon *(Psalm 145:17-18)*

The Lord is just in all ways, and kind in all that God does. God is near to all who call on the Lord, to all who call on the Lord in truth. Friends, having called on the Lord in truth, we can trust that God is near, just and kind.

Believe the good news, in Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

Prayer for illumination

Lord, like the Apostle Paul, we seek to speak the truth in Christ. We long for our speech to reflect yours, our actions to embody your performative, living Word. We come, therefore, seeking to hear what you would say to us this day, attentive and eager to Scripture, ready to listen, to learn and to act in ways that honor and praise you. Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith *(from A Brief Statement of Faith)*

We trust in Jesus Christ,
Fully human, fully God.
Jesus proclaimed the reign of God:
preaching good news to the poor
and release to the captives,
teaching by word and deed
and blessing the children,
healing the sick
and binding up the brokenhearted,
eating with outcasts,
forgiving sinners,
and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.
Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition,
Jesus was crucified,
suffering the depths of human pain

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and giving his life for the sins of the world.
God raised this Jesus from the dead,
vindicating his sinless life,
breaking the power of sin and evil,
delivering us from death to life eternal.

Call for the offering

No matter how small the gift, how meager our offering feels in the face of such large needs, Jesus receives it with gladness, blesses it, multiplies it and asks us to help distribute it to those who are hungry, weary and hurting. This is the time when we are given the unspeakable joy of participating in God's miraculous, abundant grace. Let us worship God with our morning's offering.

Prayer of dedication

Lord, we look in awe at the extent of your compassion, the unbounded care you give to all the earth. We rejoice that when we give you whatever we have, you accept it, give God thanks for it, expand its power to provide and allow us to witness the miracles of mercy that ensue as a result. We pray that you would take these very offerings and do with them what you did in that desolate place so long ago, feed people, nurture people, grant relief and give those who are hurting hope and assurance that they are seen and beloved. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

God of abundant compassion and extravagant love, we join our hearts and voices in prayer to you, trusting your promise to hear and respond, not as we deserve, but as your mercy dictates. When we look within ourselves, we are chastened by the many ways we fall short of delighting in your law. We heed the advice of the wicked without even recognizing we are neglecting your commandments. We hurt those closest to us, injure those whom you call us to be compassionate toward and dread the consequences of our own behavior. And yet, it is in those dark, lonely places that you appear and bless us, make of us new creations and reshape us for your divine purposes. We praise you for your unwillingness to let us go and we cling to you now as we wrestle with the chaos within and around us. We rejoice that you are present right here in this place.

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God of bread and fish, hillsides and healing, we come to you like the crowds, in need of relief, fearful we do not have enough, eager to see Jesus face to face. We heed his instruction to sit and we cannot believe that the Savior of the world serves us and refuses to send us away. Having been satisfied with the bread of heaven, we ask to be a part of distributing the mercy, grace and justice of our Lord. We know we have been blessed in order to be a blessing to others. In that recognition we remember those in our midst who are hungry. As this pandemic continues and many wrestle with unemployment or underemployment or dangerous employment, grant security in all its forms to those most anxious about their well-being and that of those they love. We know that all around us your beloved children long for healing in body, mind or spirit. We know you see them with compassion and want for them abundant life. May we be conduits for Christ's power, embodying your love to all.

God of blessing and sending, we cannot count all the ways you come to us and give us that which we need. We revel in the beauty of creation. We relish the care of friends and family. We enjoy the taste of food, the voice of a loved one, the familiar melodies of hymns and the everyday mercies that are new every morning. As we sing our praise and express our thanks, we ask you to empower us to participate in your compassionate care for all the earth and every creature upon it. We pray in the name of our Savior Jesus Christ, who taught us to say when we pray, *Our Father...*

Charge and benediction (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24)

Go out into the world in peace. Have courage! Hold fast to what is good. Return no one evil for evil. Strengthen the faint-hearted, support the weak, help the suffering. Honor all people. Love and serve the Lord your God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

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Liturgy written by Jill Duffield and provided for free distribution.

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