

GATHERING IN GOD'S WORD

Prelude

Sharing Our Lives in Prayer

Prayer Requests

Silent Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

Accompanist – Raquel Nisbit

Welcome

Letting God In

During this time, we invite you to prepare your heart and your mind for worship. We want you to be able to use this quiet time to settle your thoughts, set aside any distractions that may be troubling you, and focus your whole self on God. Open your heart, your mind, and your spirit, and let God into your life.

*Centering Prayer: **God, show me your glory all around.***

As you breathe in, pray, "God, show me your glory."

As you breathe out, pray, "All around."

* Opening Praise (based on Psalm 36):

One: God's faithful love reaches to the skies –

Many: To the north, to the south, to the east and west.

One: God's faithful love reaches past the heights of the highest mountains.

Many: God's faithful love reaches past the depths of the deepest seas.

One: God's faithful love reaches further than the most distant star.

Many: God's faithful love reaches deep down into the depths of our souls.

One: God's faithful love is beyond measure, beyond fathoming,

Many: Trusted and treasured beyond compare.

ALL: God's faithful love endures forever!

* Invitation to Confession

* Joining in Prayer (based on *Spill the Beans*, iss. 25, © 2017):

Holy God, maker of heaven and earth, you sent your Son, Jesus, into the world to reveal your unending love and your incomparable grace. For centuries, the church has tried to filter your light through different lenses, through different traditions, through different understandings of what it means to be saved. Times and understandings have changed, and yet still the church does not always find ways to shine your light in ways that help others to see you, to know you, to love you. Forgive us, Lord. We are fickle people – slow to learn and even slower to change. Help us turn back to you – to Jesus Christ, the light of the world, our redeemer and our friend. Lord, help us to choose to follow the light wherever it may lead us, and to share your love and your grace with all people. So be it. (Please take a moment for silent reflection and confession.)

Through Jesus, the Christ-child, born anew in our hearts each day, we pray.

Amen.

* God's Promise of Grace

* Song of Peace: "Let There Be Peace on Earth"

(reprinted with permission, © Jan-Lee Music, copyright-protected alternate lyrics)

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.

With God our Creator, we are family.

Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now.

With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow.

To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Prayer to Open Minds and Hearts

Scripture reading – John 3:1-21 (from the *Common English Bible*, © 2011)

¹ There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a Jewish leader. ² He came to Jesus at night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one could do these miraculous signs that you do unless God is with him." ³ Jesus answered, "I assure you, unless someone is born anew, it's not possible to see God's kingdom." ⁴ Nicodemus asked, "How is it possible for an adult to be born? It's impossible to enter the mother's womb for a second time and be born, isn't it?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "I assure you, unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, it's not possible to enter God's kingdom. ⁶ Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh, and whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Don't be surprised that I said to you, 'You must be born anew.' ⁸ God's Spirit blows wherever it wishes. You hear its sound, but you don't know where it comes from or where it is going. It's the same with everyone who is born of the Spirit." ⁹ Nicodemus said, "How are these things possible?" ¹⁰ "Jesus answered, "You are a teacher of Israel and you don't know these things? ¹¹ I assure you that we speak about what we know and testify about what we have seen, but you don't receive our testimony. ¹² If I have told you about earthly things and you don't believe, how will you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has gone up to heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Human One. ¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so must the Human One be lifted up ¹⁵ so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life. ¹⁶ God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him won't perish but will have eternal life. ¹⁷ God didn't send his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him isn't judged; whoever doesn't believe in him is already judged, because they don't believe in the name of God's only Son. ¹⁹ "This is the basis for judgment: The light came into the world, and people loved darkness more than the light, for their actions are evil. ²⁰ All who do wicked things hate the light and don't come to the light for fear that their actions will be exposed to the light. ²¹ Whoever does the truth comes to the light so that it can be seen that their actions were done in God."

Sermon: "Seeing God's Kingdom" – Rev. Lisa Johnson

Hymn #774 – There Is Now a New Creation

(from *Glory to God*, © 2013 Westminster John Knox Press)

There is now a new creation
Through the grace of Jesus Christ,
Peace and reconciliation
With the God of endless life.

Call the lost and found together;
Tell the news to everyone:
Now the past is gone forever
And the new life has begun.

Wrap the prodigal in welcome;
Run to greet the wayward child.
All is finished and forgiven;
Let us now be reconciled.

Come and join the celebration;
Come and join this happy feast;
Jesus makes an invitation

To the greatest and the least.

There is now a new creation
Through the grace of Jesus Christ.
Sing, with thanks and adoration,
To the God of endless life!

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Coming Together in Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer: **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

Hymn #462 – I Love to Tell the Story

(from *Glory to God*, © 2013 Westminster John Knox Press)

I love to tell the story of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love.
I love to tell the story, because I know 'tis true;
It satisfies my longings as nothing else could do.
I love to tell the story;
'Twill be my theme in glory
To tell the old, old story
Of Jesus and his love.

I love to tell the story; 'til pleasant to repeat
What seems, each time I tell it, more wonderfully sweet!
I love to tell the story, for some have never heard
The message of salvation from God's own holy Word.

I love to tell the story;
'Twill be my theme in glory
To tell the old, old story
Of Jesus and his love.

I love to tell the story, for those who know it best
Seem hungering and thirsting to hear it, like the rest.
And when, in scenes of glory, I sing the new, new song,
'Twill be the old, old story that I have loved so long.

I love to tell the story;
'Twill be my theme in glory
To tell the old, old story
Of Jesus and his love.

Prayer of Gratitude and Blessing

Our offering plates are located at the entrance to the sanctuary. This offering allows us to continue our outreach and mission both here in the community of Oronoco and beyond – in the greater Rochester area, in Minnesota, and even around the world. We are grateful for your willingness to join us in this mission and thank you for your generosity.

Announcements

BEING SENT OUT IN GOD'S WORD

* Charge & Blessing

Postlude

** indicates please rise in body or spirit as you feel led*