

GATHERING IN GOD'S WORD

Prelude

Rocky Nisbit, accompanist

Sharing Our Lives in Prayer

Prayer Requests

Silent Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

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: **Witness.***

*As you breathe in and out,
think about what it means to witness;
what witness has to do with faith;
how we can find blessedness in witness.*

Glimpses of God

With the authentic stories of our lives and our days, we call each other into this time of worship together by sharing the glimpses of God that have captured our attention throughout the last week or two. If you have a way that you've noticed God – God's work, God's love, God's leading, God's presence – we invite you to come up and share it. Your story doesn't have to be eloquent. It doesn't have to be long. Your experience of God is yours to share in whatever way is most comfortable for you. We hold space for your story, and we listen with our ears and our hearts.

* Invitation to Confession

* Joining in Prayer:

Holy One, you are constantly behind us and before us, to our right and to our left, in our hearts and in our minds. You are always with us, guiding us, protecting us, showering us with mercy and grace, and for that, we are always and deeply grateful. As we sense you moving in our hearts and our minds, God, we pray that we would have the courage and the tenacity to now only following where you're leading us but share our faith in all that we do and all that we say. Give us the steadfastness to share our authentic witness, even when it's hard. Give us the perseverance to share our authentic witness, especially when it's hard. Give us strength of spirit and surety of faith in those moments and situations when our faith is tested in the most confrontational ways. Even when we are questioned, your love remains. Even when we are doubted, your love remains. Even when we are persecuted and reviled, your love remains. *(Please take a moment for silent reflection and confession.)*

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we pray.

Amen.

* God's Promise of Grace

* Sharing the Peace of Christ

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

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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 – Acts 16:16-34 (from the *Common English Bible*, © 2011)

¹⁶ One day, when we were on the way to the place for prayer, we met a slave woman. She had a spirit that enabled her to predict the future. She made a lot of money for her owners through fortune-telling. ¹⁷ She began following Paul and us, shouting, "These people are servants of the Most High God! They are proclaiming a way of salvation to you!" ¹⁸ She did this for many days. This annoyed Paul so much that he finally turned and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ, I command you to leave her!" It left her at that very moment. ¹⁹ Her owners realized that their hope for making money was gone. They grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them before the officials in the city center. ²⁰ When her owners approached the legal authorities, they said, "These people are causing an uproar in our city. They are Jews ²¹ who promote customs that we Romans can't accept or practice." ²² The crowd joined in the attacks against Paul and Silas, so the authorities ordered that they be stripped of their clothes and beaten with a rod. ²³ When Paul and Silas had been severely beaten, the authorities threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to secure them with great care. ²⁴ When he received these instructions, he threw them into the innermost cell and secured their feet in stocks. ²⁵ Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ All at once there was such a violent earthquake that it shook the prison's foundations. The doors flew open and everyone's chains came loose. ²⁷ When the jailer awoke and saw the open doors of the prison, he thought the prisoners had escaped, so he drew his sword and was about to kill himself. ²⁸ But Paul shouted loudly, "Don't harm yourself! We're all here!" ²⁹ The jailer called for some lights, rushed in, and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ He led them outside and asked, "Honorable masters, what must I do to be rescued?" ³¹ They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your entire household." ³² They spoke the Lord's word to him and everyone else in his house. ³³ Right then, in the middle of the night, the jailer welcomed them and washed their wounds. He and everyone in his household were immediately baptized. ³⁴ He brought them into his home and gave them a meal. He was overjoyed because he and everyone in his household had come to believe in God.

Sermon: "Blessed Are Those Who Are Persecuted and Reviled ..." – Rev. Lisa Johnson

Exploring the Word Together

This is a time for us to process our faith and our hearing of God's word together – a time to be the word of God for one another. It's also a time to build community with one another – a time to share elements of our faith and our understanding of that faith with each other. Feel free to participate in conversation with those around you or sit and ponder this question on your own.

How can we make space for others' experiences of God?

Hymn #757 – Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples
(from *Glory to God*, © 2013 Westminster John Knox Press)

Today we all are called to be disciples of the Lord,
To help to set the captives free, make plowshares out of sword,
To feed the hungry, quench their thirst, make love and peace our fast,
To serve the poor and homeless first, our ease and comfort last.

God made the world and at its birth ordained our human race
To live as stewards of the earth, responding to God's grace.
But we are vain and sadly proud; we sow not peace but strife.
Our discord spreads a deadly cloud that threatens all of life.

Pray justice may come rolling down as in a mighty stream,
With righteousness in field and town to cleanse us and redeem.
For God is longing to restore an earth where conflicts cease,
A world that was created for a harmony of peace.

May we in service to our God act out the living word,
And walk the road the saints have trod till all have seen and heard.
As stewards of the earth may we give thanks in one accord
To God who calls us all to be disciples of the Lord.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Coming Together in Prayer
Pastoral Prayer

Celebrating the Lord's Supper

Our tradition in this congregation is to partake of the bread whenever you feel prepared to do so and to hold the wine/juice until all have been served so that we can all partake together. This gives us the chance to participate in this holy mystery as we participate in our faith – both as individuals and as a community.

Invitation to the Table

Great Thanksgiving

One: God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: We lift them up to God.

One: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

Many: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Prayer for the Feast

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.**

Words of Institution

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Hymn #507 – Come to the Table of Grace

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

Come to the table of grace.

Come to the table of grace.

This is God's table;

It's not yours or mine.

Come to the table of grace.

Come to the table of peace.

Come to the table of peace.

This is God's table;

It's not yours or mine.

Come to the table of peace.

Come to the table of love.

Come to the table of love.

This is God's table;

It's not yours or mine.

Come to the table of love.

Come to the table of hope.
Come to the table of hope.
This is God's table;
It's not yours or mine.
Come to the table of hope.

Come to the table of joy.
Come to the table of joy.
This is God's table;
It's not yours or mine.
Come to the table of joy.

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

* Blessing

* Claiming Our Faith Identity

This is a chance for us to remind one another of both who we are and whose we are before we head back out in the world. The hope is that, as we grow more and more familiar with the words and the claim and call that they place on our hearts, we'll be able to recall them throughout the week in those moments when we need to tap into our faith. The words and phrases are also aimed at helping us connect with our congregation's own mission statement: "We are a community of believers whose mission is to share God's Word, show God's Love, serve God's World, and strive for God's Peace."

One: We are the Church –

ALL: God's beloved children today, tomorrow, and always.

One: Here, in this worship, through prayer, word, and fellowship,

ALL: God has embraced us yet again, and our spirits have been made new.

One: Suffused with God's grace,

ALL: We claim new strength, new purpose, and new hope in our call.

One: With spirits reaffirmed and renewed,

ALL: We are called to SHARE God's Word. We are called to SHOW God's Love. We are called to SERVE God's World. We are called to STRIVE for God's Peace.

One: We are the Church

ALL: Because God binds us together in sacred companionship and blessed connectedness.

One: And now, as the Church, God calls us out

ALL: To do and be God's extravagant love in the world.

One: This service has ended.

ALL: Now our service can begin.

Postlude

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