

GATHERING IN GOD'S WORD

Prelude

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: As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

As you breathe in, pray, "As for me and my house."

As you breathe out, pray, "We will serve the Lord."

* Opening Praise (based on *Spill the Beans*, iss. 13, © 2014):

One: We come to this place to worship.

Many: But we come to this place with a back story.

One: Maybe there are parts we love to remember.

Many: Maybe there are parts we'd rather forget.

ALL: But each of us has a story to tell.

One: God comes to this place for worship.

Many: God comes to this place knowing our back stories.

One: God cherishes the parts we love to remember.

Many: God brings peace to the parts we'd rather forget.

One: In us and through us,

Many: With us and among us,

ALL: God has a story to tell.

* Invitation to Confession

* Joining in Prayer (based on *Spill the Beans*, iss. 13, © 2014):

God of the present, past, and future, the continuity of all things is in your hands. Your hand of love, in all its creative energy, stretches far back into the history of our lives, our families, and this church. As you bring together all the different threads of the people and events our of past, you weave us together into a whole new story just waiting to be told. But too often, God, it is easy to think that who and what we are is all because of our own doing. We forget the roots of our lives and those who have helped us grow. We forget that others have been here before us. We forget that we are a product of many generations, in our own lives and in the life of this church. Sometimes, God, we even isolate ourselves from the past as well as the future. We live only in the present and forget what has gone on before, giving little thought of what is to come. Merciful God, it is not right for us to be caught between times as if neither the past nor the future matters. Your hand is upon all of time, so help us appreciate the continuity of creation. Let us recognize the contributions the past has made to our present without letting that recognition turn into worship. Let us recognize that our dreams for the future inspire our living now without letting those dreams wish away the present. Be with us yesterday, today, tomorrow, and always. (*Please take a moment for silent reflection and confession.*)

In the spirit of your hope and love, we pray.

Amen.

* God's Promise of Grace

* 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 – Joshua 24:1-2, 14-26 (from the *Common English Bible*, © 2011)

¹ Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel at Shechem. He summoned the elders of Israel, its leaders, judges, and officers. They presented themselves before God. ² Then Joshua said to the entire people, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: Long ago your ancestors lived on the other side of the Euphrates. They served other gods. ... ¹⁴ "So now, revere the Lord. Serve him honestly and faithfully. Put aside the gods that your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates and in Egypt and serve the Lord. ¹⁵ But if it seems wrong in your opinion to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Choose the gods whom your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you live. But my family and I will serve the Lord." ¹⁶ Then the people answered, "God forbid that we ever leave the Lord to serve other gods! ¹⁷ The Lord is our God. He is the one who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. He has done these mighty signs in our sight. He has protected us the whole way we've gone and in all the nations through which we've passed. ¹⁸ The Lord has driven out all the nations before us, including the Amorites who lived in the land. We too will serve the Lord, because he is our God." ¹⁹ Then Joshua said to the people, "You can't serve the Lord, because he is a holy God. He is a jealous God. He won't forgive your rebellion and your sins. ²⁰ If you leave the Lord and serve foreign gods, then he will turn around and do you harm and finish you off, in spite of having done you good in the past." ²¹ Then the people said to Joshua, "No! The Lord is the one we will serve." ²² So Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen to serve the Lord." They said, "We are witnesses!" ²³ "So now put aside the foreign gods that are among you. Focus your hearts on the Lord, the God of Israel." ²⁴ The people said to Joshua, "We will serve the Lord our God and will obey him." Joshua makes a covenant ²⁵ On that day Joshua made a covenant for the people and established just rule for them at Shechem. ²⁶ Joshua wrote these words in God's Instruction scroll. Then he took a large stone and put it up there under the oak in the sanctuary of the Lord.

Sermon: "An Old Promise Renewed" – 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 you renew your dedication to serving God?

One: May the words of my mouth,

Many: And the meditations of all of our hearts

ALL: Be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer. Amen.

Hymn #386 – Come, Worship God

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

Come, worship God, who is worthy of honor;
Enter God's presence with thanks and a song!
You are the rock of your people's salvation
To whom our jubilant praises belong.

Ruled by your might are the heights of the mountains;
Held in your hands are the depths of the earth.
Yours is the sea, yours the land, for you made them,
God above all gods, who gave us our birth.

We are your people, the sheep of your pasture;
You are our Maker, and to you we pray.
Gladly we kneel in obedience before you;
Great is the one whom we worship this day!

Now let us listen, for you speak among us;
Open our hearts to receive what you say.
Peace be to all who remember your goodness,
Trust in your word, and rejoice in your way!

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 #691 – Lord, When I Came into This Life
(from *Glory to God*, © 2013 Westminster John Knox Press)

Lord, when I came into this life
You called me by my name;
Today I come, commit myself,
Responding to your claim.

Within the circle of the faith,
As member of your cast,
I take my place with all the saints
Of future, present, past.

In all the tensions of my life,
Between my faith and doubt,
Let your great Spirit give me hope,
Sustain me, lead me out.

So help me in my unbelief
And let my life be true:
Feet firmly planted on the earth,
My sights set high on you.

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*