

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: Immerse me in joy, God of Laughter.

As you breathe in, pray, "Immerse me in joy."

As you breathe out, pray, "God of Laughter."

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.

* Opening Hymn #155 – Raise a Song of Gladness (sing through 3 times)

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

Raise a song of gladness, peoples of the earth.

Christ has come, bringing peace,

Joy to every heart.

Alleluia, alleluia, joy to every heart!

Alleluia, alleluia, joy to every heart!

* Joining in Prayer:

O Great Laughing God, we come into your presence with joy and longing to be surprised. We thank you that you have given to us the gifts of laughter and delight. These things give hints as to the nature of your purpose for us and for all the earth. You know better than we do, Amused God, what important people we believe ourselves to be. Believing that we have to be serious all the time, we miss out on the joy of your creation. Forgive us, Heart of Joy, and make us open to the startling and upside-down ways in which you work. Fill us with Easter's laughter. Fill us with your healing joy. Fill us with the love poured into us through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Savior. May we find that in giving up to laughter, there is healing and hope and abundance and blessing. Tickle our souls with the brush of your Spirit to renew our worship and our living. *(Please take a moment for personal reflection and confession.)*

In the joy-filled name of Christ, we pray.

Amen.

* God's Promise of Grace

* Sharing the Peace of Christ

* Song of Peace: "Let There Be Peace on Earth" – *Today, instead of singing the words to this much-treasured song, you are invited to accompany Rocky's beautiful piano playing on a kazoo!*

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Prayer to Open Minds and Hearts

First Scripture reading – Psalm 150 (from the *Common English Bible*, © 2011)

- ¹ Praise the Lord!
Praise God in his sanctuary!
Praise God in his fortress, the sky!
- ² Praise God in his mighty acts!
Praise God as suits his incredible greatness!
- ³ Praise God with the blast of the ram's horn!
Praise God with lute and lyre!
- ⁴ Praise God with drum and dance!
Praise God with strings and pipe!
- ⁵ Praise God with loud cymbals!
Praise God with clashing cymbals!
- ⁶ Let every living thing praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord!

Reading from *Still Laughing, Still Learning (Still Looking for a Good Title): Mostly True Stories of Family, Friends, Faith & Foibles* by Bill Chadwick (© 2020 Beaver's Pond Press)

Joke Break!

Interactive Scripture reading – Acts 12:1-17

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.

What's the most useless word?

Hymn #591 – Halle, Halle, Hallelujah! (refrain only, sing through 3 times)

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

Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Halleljuah! Hallelujah!

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Coming Together in Prayer

Affirmation of Holy Humor (*insert*)

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 – I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy (*insert*, verses 1-3, repeat 1)

(from *African American Heritage Hymnal*, © 2001 GIA Publications, Inc.)

I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart, down in my heart;
I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy

Down in my heart,
Down in my heart to stay.

I've got the peace that passeth understanding
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart, down in my heart;
I've got the peace that passeth understanding
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart to stay.

I've got the love of Jesus, love of Jesus,
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart, down in my heart;
I've got the love of Jesus, love of Jesus,
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart to stay.

I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart, down in my heart;
I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart to stay.

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."

ALL: Now our service can begin.

One: This service has ended.

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

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

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

One: We are the Church

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: With spirits reaffirmed and renewed,

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

One: Suffused with God's grace,

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

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

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

One: We are the Church –

Postlude

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