

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: Keep me alert. My God, I am willing.

As you breathe in, pray, "Keep me alert."

As you breathe out, pray, "My God, I am willing."

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.

Lenten Reading

from "Stars for the Righteous" by Ann Weems

Scripture – Isaiah 30:15-18

Time for Unburdening – On your way into worship, you were encouraged to pick up a rock. During this time, you're invited to spend a few moments contemplating – pressing whatever concerns and burdens you carry into that rock. When you're ready, you're invited to come forward and lay that rock down – that rock and all the burdens it carries.

Hymn #469 – Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

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

Lord, listen to your children praying.

Lord, send your Spirit in this place.

Lord, listen to your children praying.

Send us love; send us power; send us grace.

* Invitation to Confession

* Joining in Prayer (based on *Spill the Beans*, iss. 15, © 2015 Spill the Beans Resources):

God, when we have run out of patience and find ourselves unprepared, may you rekindle the light of our faith and reorient us toward the ways of your kingdom. Help us find a different rhythm to life – a rhythm that holds space for the waiting and anticipation, a waiting shaped by passion and held by generous living. God, relight the lamp of our expectation – of seeing beyond this journey that takes us closer to the cross. See beyond the gathering shadows and relight our hope that your promises will be fulfilled, your vision of life renewed. Rekindle in us faith that death can be overcome with the dawn. God, hear us as we pray ... and wait ... and long for this season to slip away unheard. Wait with us. Long for us. So be it. (Please take a moment for silent reflection and confession.)

In the name of Jesus, the blessed Christ, we pray.

Amen.

* God's Promise of Grace

* Sharing the Peace of Christ

* Song of Peace – Hymn #824 – There Is a Place of Quiet Rest, verse 3
(from *Glory to God*, © 2013 Westminster John Knox Press)

There is a place of quiet rest,
Near to the heart of God,
A place where all is joy and peace,
Near to the heart of God.
O Jesus, blest Redeemer,
Sent from the heart of God,
Hold us, who wait before thee,
Near to the heart of God.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Prayer to Open Minds and Hearts

Scripture reading – Matthew 25:1-13 (from the *Common English Bible*, © 2011)

¹ “At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten young bridesmaids who took their lamps and went out to meet the groom. ² Now five of them were wise, and the other five were foolish. ³ The foolish ones took their lamps but didn't bring oil for them. ⁴ But the wise ones took their lamps and also brought containers of oil. ⁵ “When the groom was late in coming, they all became drowsy and went to sleep. ⁶ But at midnight there was a cry, ‘Look, the groom! Come out to meet him.’ ⁷ “Then all those bridesmaids got up and prepared their lamps. ⁸ But the foolish bridesmaids said to the wise ones, ‘Give us some of your oil, because our lamps have gone out.’ ⁹ “But the wise bridesmaids replied, ‘No, because if we share with you, there won't be enough for our lamps and yours. We have a better idea. You go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’ ¹⁰ But while they were gone to buy oil, the groom came. Those who were ready went with him into the wedding. Then the door was shut. ¹¹ “Later the other bridesmaids came and said, ‘Lord, lord, open the door for us.’ ¹² “But he replied, ‘I tell you the truth, I don't know you.’ ¹³ “Therefore, keep alert, because you don't know the day or the hour.

Sermon: “Willing to PREPARE” – 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 do you need to prepare for God in your life? How does the church need to prepare?

Hymn #362 – Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers
(from *Glory to God*, © 2013 Westminster John Knox Press)

Rejoice! Rejoice, believers,
And let your lights appear;
The evening is advancing
And darker night is near.
The Bridegroom is arising
And soon he will draw nigh.
Up, watch with expectation;
At midnight comes the cry.

See that your lamps are burning;
Replenish them with oil;

Look now for your salvation,
The end of sin and toil.
The marriage feast is waiting;
The gates wide open stand;
Arise, O heirs of glory;
The Bridegroom is at hand!

Our hope and expectation,
O Jesus, now appear;
Arise, thou Sun so longed for,
Above this shadowed sphere!
With hearts and hands uplifted,
We plead, O Lord, to see
The day of earth's redemption,
And ever be with thee!

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 #451 – Open My Eyes, That I May See

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

Open my eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth thou hast for me.
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for thee,
Ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes; illumine me,
Spirit divine!

Open my ears, that I may hear
Voices of truth thou sendest clear.
And while the wave notes fall on my ear,
Everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for thee,
Ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears; illumine me,
Spirit divine!

Open my mouth, and let me bear
Gladly the warm truth everywhere.
Open my heart, and let me prepare
Love with thy children thus to share.
Silently now, I wait for thee,
Ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my heart; illumine me,
Spirit divine!

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*