



## Order of Service

Third Sunday of Easter

**April 26, 2020**

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### **Call to worship** *(based on 1 Peter 1:21-23)*

Through Christ you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God.

Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart.

You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

### **Call to confession**

We have been ransomed from futile things with the precious blood of Christ. We need not fear condemnation, but instead come to the throne of grace to repent boldly and trust in God's power and will to forgive and transform.

### **Prayer of confession**

Lord, we have been cut to the heart. We know there is nothing we can do to earn the grace we have received through Christ. We regret the times we cheapen it, accepting your gifts while neglecting your commandments. Forgive us for not loving one another. Forgive us for not sharing with others. Forgive us for going our own way and refusing to follow you. Do not let us get so focused on the headlines that we forget the good news of the gospel. Come alongside us and remind us of your Word and our purpose in this world. Hear our confession, free us from guilt, open our eyes that we might see and know our Savior, alive and present with us now. Amen.

### **Assurance of pardon**

God knows the concerns on our hearts and the worries on our minds. God listens and then speaks the Logos of truth and mercy, grace upon grace. The risen Christ comes alongside us, grants us peace, forgives us and sets us free. Believe the good news, in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

### **Prayer for illumination**

Gracious God, you hear our voice and supplications, now we ask for your Spirit to help us to hear your voice and instructions. Give to us this day the bread of life, the Logos, your Word that sustains us. Amen.



## **Scripture readings**

### **Sermon**

#### **Affirmation of faith** *(from A Brief Statement of Faith)*

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.

#### **Call for the offering**

As we debate and deliberate, discuss and question the current events, pressing needs and confusing circumstances of our time, Christ comes alongside us. He tells us again of God's goodness and life-giving power, God's abundant grace and steadfast kindness. Our hearts burn within us and we remember the good news of Jesus Christ. In gratitude and trust, we participate in God's will on earth, as in heaven, by the giving of God's tithes and our offerings. Freely we have received, freely let us give.

#### **Prayer of dedication**

Lord, there is nothing more precious than our relationship with you. When we are sad and unsure, you join us on our journey and remind us of your saving love. When we urge you to stay, you come and break bread with us, opening our eyes to you, to life, to resurrection hope. Take these gifts, given in faith, bless them and use them so that others will come to see you alongside of them in their deepest distress. Amen.

#### **Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer**

God of all times and places, we cannot stop talking about the painful events we have witnessed this week. We are discussing the numbers of people killed by COVID-19. We speak constantly of the suffering brought on by this pandemic. We talk about the economic, physical, mental, spiritual and psychological distress all over the globe. We debate the merits and risks of re-opening our country. We cannot turn away from the anxiety that feels ever-present. We know you hear our voices and our supplications. We give thanks that you do not leave us alone.

As the risen Christ comes alongside us now, we pour out our hearts, unashamed to share exactly how we feel and what we fear in this moment. We rest in your sure presence as we share with you now our thoughts and worries, hopes and doubts. *(Silent prayer)*

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God of all times and places, tell us again the story of salvation. Remind us how you rescued us from Egypt and sustained us in the wilderness. Help us to remember that you were with us in exile and made a way to bring us home. Do not let us forget that you can use for good even that which we intend for evil. Bring to our minds the countless times you have not allowed the storms of this life to overtake us. We know you hear our voices and our supplications. We give thanks that you do not leave us alone.

As the risen Christ comes alongside us now, we urge him not to leave, but instead to stay with us. We abide in your resurrected presence as we listen for your living Word, give us your guidance in this trying time. *(Silent prayer)*

God of all times and places, having heard your Word and broken bread with you, we recognize our Lord, alive and showing us the way. You do indeed make all things possible, defeating evil, overcoming death, restoring us to right relationship with you and one another. Send us to those places in deepest need of knowing that creation is redeemed and nothing can separate us from your love. Hear our voices and our shouts of praise as we proclaim: We have seen the Lord. He is risen indeed! We are not, and will never be, alone. We make our prayer in the name of One who taught us to say when we pray, *Our Father...*

**Charge and benediction** *(from 1 Peter 1:22-23)*

Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you now and remain with you always.

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Liturgy written by Jill Duffield  
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