

Order of Worship

9th Sunday after Pentecost

August 7, 2022

Call to worship *(Based on Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16)*

Faith is the assurance of things hoped for,
the convictions of things not seen.

**Like Abraham, let us follow God,
even when we don't know where we are going.**

By faith, let us look forward to the city that has foundations,
whose architect and builder is God.

Let us worship the God whose promises call and claim us.

Call to confession

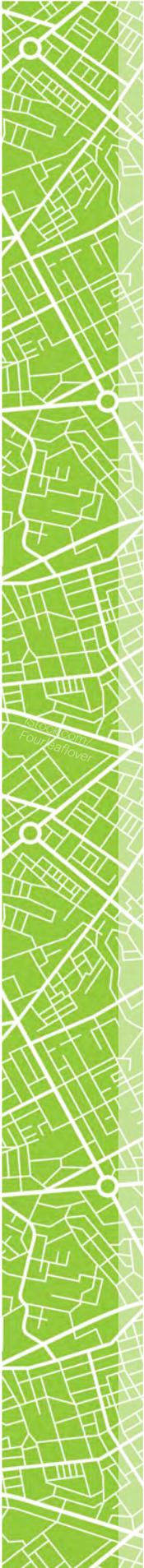
Sin shuts us down and stops us short of hearing of God's
Word. Let us open ourselves to hearing God's truth and
free ourselves to follow God's path.

Prayer of confession

God of Hope and Promise, we confess we do not always
believe. We confess our questions and complaints catch
up to us. We cannot understand our suffering and the
suffering of others. Forgive us when we give up on you
and ourselves. Return and restore us to right relationship.
Help us to not disengage but remain steadfast in faithful
dialogues of grace. Amen.

Assurance of pardon

God's grace is given freely. God's love is steadfast. Receive
the good news that you are forgiven, and live liberated
from sin to the glory of God. Amen.



Prayer for illumination

Your Word guides every step of our journey, God. Help us be attentive to your Word read and proclaimed today, so we can hear your message and act according to your will. Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith *(From A Brief Statement of Faith)*

We trust in God,
whom Jesus called Abba, Father.

In sovereign love God created the world good
and makes everyone equally in God's image,
male and female, of every race and people,
to live as one community.

But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator.
Ignoring God's commandments,
we violate the image of God in others and ourselves,
accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature,
and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care.
We deserve God's condemnation.

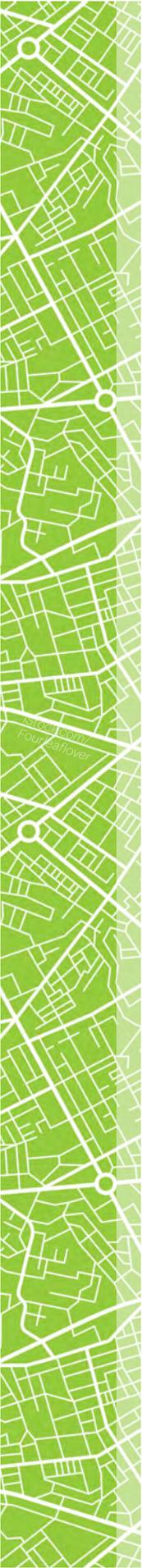
Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation.

In everlasting love,
the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people
to bless all families of the earth.

Hearing their cry,
God delivered the children of Israel
from the house of bondage.

Loving us still,
God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant.

Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child,
like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home,
God is faithful still.



Call for the offering *(From 2 Corinthians 9:7)*

“God loves a cheerful giver.” Let us present our tithes and offerings to God.

Prayer of dedication

God of abundance, everything we have is on loan from you. Help us be good stewards of all your precious resources. Bless these gifts we give in return that they might, in turn, be a blessing to others. Amen.

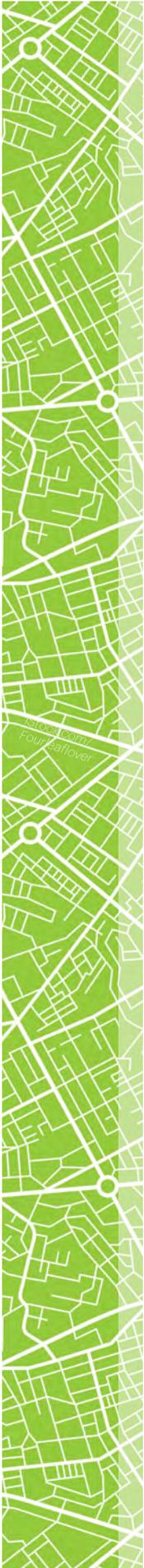
Prayers of the People and the Lord’s Prayer:

Lord, in this long season of lamentation, we question your promises in light of current events. The news of war has grown old for those not living under the threat of falling bombs and invading armies. Yet the urgency of aid, shelter for refugees and need for peace remains feverish. Your promise of salvation and steadfast love loses its luster in the face of humanity’s perpetual greed and sinful disregard for life. Restore us, Holy God, to hope-filled belief, that might still question, but remains steadfast in relationship with you as our Rock and Redeemer.

God our helper, through the waves of heat blanketing us this summer, attend to those suffering on our city streets, those who cannot escape to air-conditioned homes, those who bear the brunt of our overheated planet. Protect those fighting raging wildfires. Give vision to those creatively seeking solutions to overly taxed energy grids. Help us all bear the burden of responsible stewardship for shared resources.

Finally, let us not neglect the gifts of this summer. Even as we grieve and lament, we are grateful for moments of sabbath, covered-dish community building, farmers markets full of fresh produce, the crack of afternoon baseball bats, and the wide smiles of children playing in hoses and hydrants. As the blazing sun sets, and evening breezes cool, may we stroll hand-in-hand with our loved ones, reminding ourselves that joy sustains us in suffering, that laughter can break through the thickest skin of grief, that steadfast love can lighten our step even when life feels especially heavy.

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Our souls wait for you, O God, and our hearts rejoice in your presence. Hear these prayers of your people and give us the will to seek to bring them about.

Now, as the Body of Christ, we pray the prayer Christ taught us saying, **"Our Father ..."**.

Charge and benediction

God promises.

Christ saves.

The Holy Spirit liberates us to love and serve.

As we enter this new week may we go with the grace and blessings of God our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Amen.

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Liturgy written by Teri McDowell Ott
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