Texts: Acts 16:9-15; Psalm 67; Revelation 21:10, 22 – 22:5; John 14:23-39

Call to Worship

L: God calls us to this place, a haven for healing and hope.

P: We come, with the pain of our burdens,

  we come to hear God's Word of hope for us.

L: Together, we will sing songs of joy;

  each of us will hear God whisper our name,

  'Beloved of my heart.'

P: We join our voices in prayer and praise;

  we sing of our longing for new lives.

L: Here, our shadowed corners are filled with Light;

  here we discover that God dwells in us.

P: And not just us, for God would teach all to love;

  God's Spirit would lead all peoples in peace.

Prayer of the Day

Lord God the Almighty,

you bless us with all

that you have created:

 you teach us to swim

  in the bright crystal water of life;

 you cook breakfast for us

  in that eternal city;

 you open your heart to us

  and will never close its door.

We worship you.

Jesus Christ, Lamb of God:

you stand at the door,

 your hand on the knob,

 your coat over your arm,

 ready to go away.

Yet you do not leave us

trouble-hearted,

but fill our emptiness with your peace.

We praise you.

Holy Spirit, God-sent Gift:

you come to our defense

 when we are falsely accused;

you rescue us

 from the school yard bully

 who always picks on us;

you sit by our beds

 and comfort us

 when the nightmares of life

 keep us awake.

We open our hearts to you.

God in Community, Holy in One,

we sing for joy to you, even as we pray with all people

as Jesus taught us, saying,

(The Lord’s Prayer)

Call to Reconciliation

How easy we can learn of God's love - but how hard it is to live it! The world distracts us with its easy choices, while we know how intentional we must be to love one another. Join me as we confess our failures to love and we open our hearts to God, saying,

Unison Prayer of Confession

 Because you dwell in our hearts, Eternal God, you know how the anger, the pain, the bitterness of our lives try to crowd you out. The noise of the world deafens us to that Word which can heal us. We want our children to be good, kind, and gentle to others, and then they hear us call others names, and speak of them with demeaning words. Our desire for revenge towards those who have hurt us shows that your peace, indeed, is not in us.

 You promise a new heaven and a new earth, so create new spirits and new lives within us, Healing God. Shattered by our sin, your heart can still heal our brokenness. Your Spirit, living deep within our souls, can teach us faithful ways.  Your Word, Jesus Christ our Lord, whispers to us of your mercy, your hope, your love.

Silence is kept

Assurance of Pardon

L: The Word which can transform us is not some idle gossip, but good news for us. It fills us with forgiveness, equips us for service, and sends us forth to love others as God loves us.

P: In our midst, the Holy Spirit teaches us all we need to know, gives us what we need in order to be faithful, and fills us with peace. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication/Offering

We do not only offer our gifts to you, but our community to all who are lonely, our hearts to all who are grieving, our hope to all who have lost their way, our lives to all who are tossed aside by the world.  This we pray, in Jesus’ name.  Amen.

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

L: May God be gracious to you.

P: And also to you.

L: Children of God, offer your hearts to the One who saves you.

P: We open our hearts to the Alpha and Omega,

  the beginning and the end of hope, life, grace.

L: As God's people, sing for joy to the One who is with you.

P: We join all creation in lifting our praises to our God.

God of all beginnings,

you spoke a Word, your Spirit acted,

 calling forth the first heaven and the first earth.

Rivers teeming with life flowed to the seas,

holiness roamed the hills and valleys,

 peace was planted deep in the heart of creation.

To your children created in your image,

you made the promise to be our God,

 but we heard sin and death calling to us

 and crossed the boundary into their power.

You did not turn your face away from us

but longing to be gracious to us,

 you sent your messengers to invite us

 back to your heart, where we might live.

When we continued in our foolish ways,

you sent Jesus to us, in your name,

to remind us of all the promises you have made.

So, with those who have been called home to you,

and with those who continue to journey your way,

we join the peoples in praising you:

P: Holy, holy, holy, God whose face shines upon us.

  All the ends of the earth bless your name.

  Hosanna in the highest!

  Blessed is the One who comes to give us peace.

  Hosanna in the highest!

Holy are you, God who makes all things new,

and blessed is Jesus Christ, our Joy, our Savior.

Hearing our cries for help in the dark nights of the soul,

 he came bringing the light of your love;

finding us living in sin's squalor,

 he came to make a home for us;

Going to the cross for us,

 he went into death's cold tomb,

so we might not be afraid,

but cradled in the warmth

of the power of the resurrection.

As we remember his promise to always be with us,

as we celebrate his saving power among all nations,

we speak of that mystery we call faith:

P: Christ died, so death would be no more;

  Christ was raised, so the first things might pass away;

  Christ went away, and will come to us to take us back to you.

Here at this table of grace and wonder,

where the simple gifts you have prepared

are set aside for sacred use,

your Spirit is poured out upon them

and your children gathered in this place of prayer.

As we eat of the bread broken for us,

 we feast on the promises that, one day, pain will be no more,

   that our tears will mingle with the waters of life.

As we drink deeply from the cup of peace,

 we are filled with the joy of your grace,

   and hearing the cries of those around us,

   we go forth to serve them with your hope and justice.

And when the first things have passed away,

when we wander down the streets of the new Jerusalem,

we will find you waiting for us,

our sisters and brothers gathered together

around the Table of glory and wonder,

where we will sing our praises to you forever,

God in Community, Holy in One. Amen.

Sending

L: Our God, who is gracious, sends us out to be a blessing.

P: With our hearts, we will sing God’s praises;

  with our hands, we will serve God’s people.

L: Jesus, who is our Brother, sends us to be with others.

P: We will comfort all whose hearts are troubled;

  we will go to help all who cry out to us.

L: The Holy Spirit, who is our Advocate, sends us into a broken world.

P: We will work for justice for all who are oppressed;

  we will teach songs of hope to all who despair.

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