

TCC Takeout

An Order of Service for Worship at Home

God's Extravagant Welcome:

“No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, YOU are welcome here!”

August 2, 2020



CALL TO WORSHIP

The day breaks

And God does not let us go.

The hour calls

And God searches for us yet.

The evening falls

And God holds us fast.

We stumble in our path

And God raises us up.

Let us turn to God in worship

God, who never turns from us.

Amen!

OPENING HYMN [Holy God, We Praise Thy Name](#)

Holy God, we praise Thy Name;
Lord of all, we bow before Thee!
All on earth Thy scepter claim,
All in Heaven above adore Thee;
Infinite Thy vast domain,
Everlasting is Thy reign.

Hark! the loud celestial hymn
Angel choirs above are raising,
Cherubim and seraphim,
In unceasing chorus praising;
Fill the heavens with sweet accord:
Holy, holy, holy, Lord.

Lo! the apostolic train
Join the sacred Name to hallow;
Prophets swell the loud refrain,
And the white robed martyrs follow;
And from morn to set of sun,
Through the Church the song goes on.

Holy Father, Holy Son,
Holy Spirit, Three we name Thee;
While in essence only One,
Undivided God we claim Thee;
And adoring bend the knee,
While we own the mystery.

GATHERING PRAYER

God, you see us.
You see our struggles,
You see our difficulties.
You see our possibilities,
You see our promise.
Connect the dots for us, O God.
Soften the hard spots with your blessing.
Help us to hear what you call us to do.
For you are a good God, a God present in the scramble,
And in the end, you always, always have a blessing.
For this and so much more,
we give you thanks, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

GLORIA PATRI ([Audio Version](#))

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost
As it was in the beginning,

Is now and ever shall be,
World without end,
Amen, Amen.

READINGS FROM SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 6:1-8

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. ²Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. ³And one called to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.' ⁴The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. ⁵And I said: 'Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!' ⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. ⁷The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: 'Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.' ⁸Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Now I should remind you, brothers and sisters, of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, ²through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you—unless you have come to believe in vain. ³ For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, ⁴and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. ⁷Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸Last of all, as to someone untimely born, he appeared also to me. ⁹For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace towards me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. ¹¹Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

Luke 5:1-11

Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, ²he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. ³He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the

shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. ⁴When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.' ⁵Simon answered, 'Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.' ⁶When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. ⁷So they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!' ⁹For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; ¹⁰and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.' ¹¹When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

REFLECTION

How often have we heard someone say, "I'm so disappointed in my [mother] or [father] or [teacher] or [older sister/ older brother] or [best friend] because at least from them I expected better. At least from them, I expected the right thing." It's as if we put these people we love up on a pedestal and expect them to be perfect. But who *is* perfect. If you are human, you are not perfect. And that goes for our own selves, too. We can get very disappointed at our own selves for not being perfect, for making mistakes. But if we are human, we will not be perfect.

And so I find the story of Simon Peter from today's Luke passage rather comforting. I imagine a Simon Peter who got down on himself for not being perfect, for making the mistake of doubting the Messiah. Simon Peter was a good person trying always to be better and to be a good disciple. He wasn't your selfish, ambitious sort who only looked out for himself. Simon Peter had a big heart and he wanted to do the right thing. And I imagine he tried *hard* to do the right thing, and so I can just picture a Peter who felt very guilty for thinking Jesus didn't know what he was talking about, when in fact, Jesus was doing something incredible for Peter.

Jesus had been talking to a crowd of people when the numbers were getting to be too many. So, seeing boats near the shore that were not in use, Jesus borrowed the one belonging to Simon Peter so that he could preach to the people from the boat while they were still on the shore. From this passage alone, we don't know if Jesus knew that it had been a bad night of fishing for Simon Peter and the other fishermen, but perhaps Jesus could tell from their tired eyes and fallen shoulders. And he doesn't forget this. As soon as Jesus is done teaching, he does something for Peter and the other fishermen to ease their stress. He tells them to let down their nets and catch such a great quantity of fish that their nets could hardly contain them. Jesus looks after Peter and the other fishermen in this way.

I feel sure that Peter knew this kindness in Jesus, but he was weary. Peter had worked all night with nothing to show for it. And he tells Jesus this. He says “Jesus, putting down our nets won’t do any good. Jesus, we’re the fishermen here. With all due respect, you’re a carpenter, not a fisherman, so sorry Jesus, but there aren’t any fish here. Yet, we’ll put out our nets because you say so.” But I am not sure that Peter really believed that he would catch any fish. Peter wasn’t going to disregard Jesus, but he didn’t have a lot of reason to think Jesus knew what he was talking about.

Peter did what Jesus said. I like that. Peter may have had doubts, but he went ahead and acted according to what Jesus said even though logic suggested otherwise. And when Peter put down his net according to what Jesus said, he was rewarded beyond anything he could have imagined. “They caught so many fish that their nets were [about] to break...[and their boats] began to sink.”

Simon Peter’s reaction to the miracle he was seeing was exactly what my reaction would have been, too. I am sure. He was embarrassed. He says to Jesus, “go away from me...I am sinful.” He was embarrassed to be in Jesus’ presence. He was embarrassed that he had doubted Jesus’ words. How could he, Simon Peter, a model disciple, have been so faithless that he would question Jesus? He must not be so perfect, after all. This is what I am guessing was going on in Peter’s mind. He was embarrassed that he was not perfect. He wanted Jesus to see in him a perfect disciple.

And what did Jesus see... Jesus saw a good hearted man that he loved and would always love regardless of shortcomings. And, I imagine Jesus knew just how embarrassed and afraid Peter would have been to be standing there in the presence of this Jesus. Jesus says to Peter, “don’t be afraid.” Jesus is saying, ‘Peter don’t be afraid that you’re not perfect. Don’t be afraid to be in my presence. You don’t have to change yourself to be in my presence. I love you as you are and I will help you do great things. You don’t have to be perfect. Be you, Peter.’ That’s what I imagine Jesus thinking and maybe also saying to Peter. And I imagine the kindness on Jesus’ face and Simon Peter breaking down in tears of gratitude.

We expect ourselves and the ones we care about to be perfect, even though that is not possible as human beings. We expect this impossible thing, and are embarrassed that we can’t be it. But that is not the way God works. With God we don’t need to be embarrassed. We need to simply be ourselves in God’s presence, and be loved. This is what Jesus is telling Simon Peter; “be here, and don’t be afraid.”

God’s ways are not our ways. For when we work hard and nothing happens we can get disappointed. Peter worked hard all night and was disappointed that he caught no fish. Yet, God’s ways are different. There may be a time when nothing seems to be happening and then all of a sudden you feel like your boat is too full to contain all the blessings you are receiving. You work hard, but see no results. You give your time and heart to listen to a friend who doesn’t give much back to you. You serve your

community, make financial donations, swallow away hurtful things others have said, and yet things stay the same. Then at some point, all of a sudden, you see incredible change for the better. At that point, you may feel overwhelmed or embarrassed for not believing it would all work out in the end. But God says ‘no, you do not need to be afraid of me.’

Instead God says, ‘look I’m going to empower you to do something even bigger. I’m not punishing you for doubting.’ To Peter, the message is that he will be sent to be not a fisherman of fish, but of people for the Lord. He will be sent out to gather up people so that they will know God. He will be much more than a fisherman; he will be a messenger of God’s love. Peter expected himself to be perfect and Jesus says ‘don’t worry, I *will* use you regardless. I empower you and I send you out. Don’t be embarrassed; just be willing to say yes to casting your net.’ And that is what Peter did. Peter wasn’t perfect, but he said yes.

What Peter experienced is what Isaiah in the Old Testament experienced, too. Isaiah is depressed that he is not perfect and he says, “woe is me!” Oh, how I pity myself, he is saying. “I am a man of unclean lips and I live among people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the ... Lord of hosts!” It’s as if Isaiah is saying, I am so embarrassed! I am not a good person, I don’t say the right things and yet I have seen God! I shouldn’t be able to see God; I am not a good enough person! I am so embarrassed!” But what happens to Isaiah? The Lord cleans his lips and takes away his sins. And God empowers Isaiah *to be able to respond* to God’s call. Isaiah says “here I am, [Lord]; send me!” Isaiah experiences the same embarrassment for not being perfect as Peter does. And like Peter, Isaiah is made to do even more amazing things. Why? Because God does not ask for perfection but a willing heart that will say yes.

That is what the Apostle Paul did. Paul, by his own admission, was not a perfect apostle. He writes in chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians, “I am the least of the apostles, unfit [even] to be called an apostle.” Paul was not perfect, by any means. He was, in fact, someone who had previously persecuted the Church. But he was able to do amazing work for Christ “by the Grace of God.”

Whether Paul had been embarrassed or not for his imperfections, the fact is he did not let those shortcomings come in between him and God. And as a result he was empowered to work for God and share the Gospel, the Good News that Christ died for our imperfections, so they don’t matter any more! That’s what God is trying so hard to tell us; “I don’t care if you’re imperfect, so please, don’t be embarrassed and don’t be afraid that I will look badly on you. Just let me be with you and love you and then let me help you help others know this, too!”

Is this too simple of a message? Some might say so. But if we are human, then it is a message we can all relate to. If you have ever felt embarrassed for something you

did that was wrong or stupid or unnecessary and had a hard time getting over that, then you know, whether simple or not, this is a powerful message. Really, it is a reminder that we are never alone in our imperfections and we can't get over our guilty and embarrassed feelings on our own. Only by the Grace of God we can.

And if you have ever been upset at someone you love for not being perfect, then, again, this is an important message. Because, God does not expect perfection from your loved ones, either. No, God loves us all as we are, and by God's Grace we will be empowered to 'let down our nets' and to stand in awe of what God will do.

So, let us say together, here we are, God. Use us as we are. Send us into the world to show your love, today and always. We will expect great things. Amen.

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION [You'll Never Walk Alone](#)

JOYS AND CONCERNS

As you take this moment to be in prayer, you may refer to the joys and concerns shared through the Trumpet Blast.

God hears all of our prayers, both those we give words to and say aloud, and those that remain silent in our hearts.

Prayer is always available to us.

PASTORAL PRAYER

God of love, who is the giver of all good things and the provider of all we need, we come before you this day in prayer. Grant us the faith and the humility to confess our shortcomings, and embrace us in your forgiving grace that we may know that nothing will ever separate us from you.

Merciful God, we come before you today with both our joys and our concerns. Grant us the assurance that you hear all of our prayers, both those we speak aloud and those we hold silent in our hearts. And may we know that in prayer we continue to live in community and in relationship with you. What a blessing this is; we are grateful.

Today we lift up in our hearts our family members, church members, and friends in many places. Give us words of strength and wisdom that we may share with one another.

We pray for our community of Northfield and surrounding communities. We pray for those who are struggling and ask that our eyes may be opened to know how we can be of assistance.

We pray for this country and for this world that we might find a way out of this pandemic and a way into a peaceful life together. We pray for leaders around the world that they may have wisdom and empathy for those whose voices have been silenced.

We pray for this planet that we might find ways to bring healing, restoration, and joy.

Today, dear Lord, we pray all this with gratitude and sincerity. And we know that this is the day that you have made; we will rejoice and be glad in it!

In Christ's name, we pray.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us join together in the prayer our Lord Jesus taught us to say ~

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

PRAYER RESPONSE ([Audio version](#))

Hear Our Prayer, O God,
Hear our prayer, O God,
Incline Thine ear to us,
And Grant us your peace.

PASTORAL BENEDECTION

God's peace: carry, keep and hold you.
God's love: nourish, bless and enfold you.
God's spirit: inspire, lift and mold you.
And may the Almighty God, holy and blessed,
Be with you now and forever. **Amen.**

CHORAL POSTLUDE [The Lord Bless You And Keep You, by John Rutter](#)

Go in peace to serve God and your neighbor in love.

*Liturgy from ucc.org Worship Ways.