

**April 5, 2023
Healing Service
Wednesday in Holy Week**



INTRODUCTION

God's word, proclaimed and reflected upon, and the prayer it calls forth from those gathered, are the heart of this service, which is prepared especially for contemplative settings. The Holy Spirit, who knows our needs, prays with and through us, and when we have no words, for us. Silence makes room to breathe deeply, time to still the heart and quiet restless thoughts, and, a place to listen and rest in the presence of God, "like a child upon its mother's breast" (Psalm 131:2). Some times of silence will last no longer than a deep breath; some will be more spacious. Before worship begins, keeping silence or listening to meditative music invites the community into the unhurried pace of prayer.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit gathers us into a community of prayer.

PRELUDE: Healer of Our Every Ill (M. Haugen)

WELCOME

GREETING

The love of God poured into our hearts, the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray.

O God, rich in mercy, full of kindness, out of your great love, you raise us up from sin and death and make us alive together with Christ. Write your word upon our hearts and restore in us the image of your love that, by your Spirit, our way of life may become the way of Christ, through whom we pray.

Amen.

Silence

MEDITATION: *There is a Balm in Gilead*

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, silence, reflection, and song.

FIRST READING: *Psalm 121*

I lift up my eyes to the hills—from where will my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade at your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 13:10-17*

Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the sabbath day." But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the sabbath day?" When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the

wonderful things that he was doing.

SERMON

A Litany of Healing and Hope

When will help come?

Silence

We are haunted and afraid by what we cannot understand.
We are tired, aching, and empty.
Our bodies betray our past, bearing so many wounds not yet healed.

We are weary of the trauma relived and repeated in our lives, our relationships, and our bodies.

When will our help come, O God?

II. Be present

We are lost and alone in our grief.

Silence.

Our children *do not know us; we do not know ourselves.*
Our relationships suffer; too many people use us and sin against us.
We bear the pain of our trauma alone; our substances have become our refuge.

Be present to us in our anguish, O God.

III. Heal us

We struggle in our illness.

Silence.

In our pain, we have lost our connection to you and to our true selves.
The burden of our guilt weighs on our hearts and minds.
We wrestle with the consequences of our choices and long for new beginnings.
We struggle to find peace and to trust in your mercy.

Heal us, most merciful God.

IV: Make us whole

We feel desperate in our need.

Silence.

Help us heal our broken bodies and broken spirits.

Teach us to love ourselves and our bodies, and to love one another as children of God.

Grant us the courage to breathe in the truth of your grace and to turn our grief into wonder.

God of great compassion, make us whole again.

Renew us by your Holy Spirit that we may become the people you have made us to be.

Amen.

Silence.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

MEDITATION: *Under the Shelter of the Unseen Promise*

BLESSING

Christ Jesus dwell in our hearts through faith, as we are being rooted and grounded in love, strengthened by the Spirit, and filled with all the fullness of God.

Amen.