



Unsettled but Unafraid: A Liturgy for Worshipping at Home

Week of July 12, 2020

St. Simons Presbyterian Church

Although we are not able to gather in-person for worship, we are able to gather in spirit. This liturgy is designed to be used alongside the worship video, although it can be used on its own. Use it individually or as a family. If you are using it in a family setting, consider giving each person one part to lead. If using individually, try to carve out 10-minutes to quietly read, reflect, and pray through. No matter how you worship, God will show up. Liturgy this week was compiled by Rev. Annie Franklin Arvin with a poem by church member and expert gardener, Jerry Spencer.

Call to Worship¹ *(included in video)*

God's word is a lamp to our feet
and a light to our path.

**We gather around
to root ourselves in a sacred story
and to grow in faith.**

God's teachings are our heritage;
they bring joy to searching hearts.

**We gather in God's presence
to offer our thanks and praise!**

Psalm 119:105-112

Your word is a lamp for my feet,
a light on my path.
I have taken an oath and confirmed it,
that I will follow your righteous laws.
I have suffered much;
preserve my life, Lord, according to your word.
Accept, Lord, the willing praise of my mouth,
and teach me your laws.
Though I constantly take my life in my hands,
I will not forget your law.
The wicked have set a snare for me,
but I have not strayed from your precepts.

¹ This weeks Call to Worship comes from *Call to Worship, Lectionary Aids 2019-2020, Year A*, published by the Office of Theology and Worship of the PC(USA), p 137.

Your statutes are my heritage forever;
they are the joy of my heart.
My heart is set on keeping your decrees
to the very end.

Scripture - Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 *(included in video)*

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear."

"Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Questions for Reflection

1. Have you ever planted something? What was that experience like?
2. In this parable, who controls where the seeds land? Do the seeds have any control over the soil they are planted in?
3. Metaphorically, what makes for good soil? What makes for a good environment to grow and to learn?
4. What soil do you find yourself in—the path, rocky soil, thorn plants, good soil? Is that where God has placed you?

Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer *(included in video)*

God the Sower,

You plant us on solid ground and you sustain us because you love us.
In your care and in your pruning, you call us to love one another like you have loved us.

Out of love for our neighbor we pray:

Plant seeds of hope in your church so we will
not be complacent in a world filled with despair.

Nourish those who govern us with rivers
that bring about peace and justice for all while washing away fear and greed.

Till the soil in our hearts to see one another as beloved children of God.

Provide shade and relief to those who are unsure
where their next meal is coming from and who are suffering in the heat this day.

Continue to restore this earth you made and
help us put an end to ignoring the goodness in what you made.

Water those who are grieving.
Quench their thirst for comfort and for healing.

Clear away the stress, the worries, and the anxieties of this world
and make room for the love, joy, and peace that only you can bring.

We pray these things trusting in your love as we say together the prayer Jesus taught us:

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by 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 debts as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

A Prayer for the Week:

God be in my head, and in my understanding;
God be in my eyes, and in my looking;
God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;
God be in my heart, and in my thinking;
God be at my end, and at my departing.

Amen.

Sarum Primer (c.1514)

Reflections In My Garden

A Poem by Jerry Spencer

As I wander through my garden looking lush and green
Plants in their best attire expecting to be seen
With many gifts from friends and family
Some nearby, others long since passed

Lily of the Nile from a dear cousin
Amaryllis from a long passed mother
Daylily from a close friend
All enrich the garden like no other

My garden becomes more precious
Because of memories it holds
May God bless this garden
And those whose gifts were bestowed