

Unsettled but Unafraid: A Liturgy for Worshipping at Home

Week of July 26, 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.



Call to Worship¹

Blessed be God whose work gives hope
and shapes our dreams,
whose love has conquered death.
Blessed be God who orders our way
and guides our steps,
who leads us into life.
Let us worship God together.

Scripture - Romans 8:26-39 (*included in video*)

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No

¹ This week's call to worship comes from *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion*,: *Liturgies for Year A, Volume 2*, edited by Kimberly Bracken Long, 2014.

one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Questions for Reflection

1. The scripture says the Spirit helps us in our weakness. What are some of our weaknesses? How have you felt the Spirit in your times of weakness?
2. God works for good. What do you think this goodness that God works for could be?
3. This scripture remind us we are called, but it also reminds us to respond to our call. How to you respond to God’s call?
4. What are the things that make you feel distant from God’s love? Is it you that overcomes those things?

Prayers of the People and Lords Prayer (included in video)

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:

Lord, our God-
whose power is beyond compare,
and glory is beyond understanding;
whose mercy is boundless,
and love for us is ineffable-
look upon us with your compassion
and grant us your abundant mercy;
for to you belong all glory, honor, and worship
tp the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,
now and forever and to the ages of ages.
Amen.

Liturgy of St. Basil (4th century)

We Rejoice!

There's a quote that hangs in my office that I've caught myself staring at this week. It reads "With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." I'm not 100% sure how the artist made this quote into a piece of art, but it looks like he put the letters of this quote on to a piece of paper and then blew water colors through a straw over the letters. It looks like the paint is splattered or or like bubbles have popped. It's bright. It's colorful. It's messy. It's the messiness of this artwork that stands out to me in relation to our scripture for this week.

The quote is actually a quote from the Brief Statement of Faith, which is a part of our PC(USA) Constitution. The Brief Statement of Faith was written in 1983 when the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and the Presbyterian Church in the United States were reunited to form the denomination we now know as the PC(USA). The statement was written in an attempt to unite the church around our common identity as Presbyterians while also being true to the disagreements and diversity in the church. It was written as a reminder that not even the mess of a divided church can separate us from God's love.

Life feels especially messy right now. We are living in the midst of a pandemic. We are making decisions with no good options about the way forward. We are praying for this pandemic season of life to end, yet there is no end in sight. Life looks like the letters are splattered with paint. It looks messy, yet one thing is certain, nothing, "not death or life, not angels or rulers, not present things or future things, not powers or height or depth, or anything that is created" can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

