



Service of Prayer and Lament in times of violence

+ GATHERING +

Gathering Songs

(As the assembly sings the gathering songs, you are invited to come forward and light a candle in memory of someone who has died from violence of any kind or been affected by violence of any kind.)

Just a Closer Walk with Thee (ELW #697, TFF #253)
Precious Lord, Take My Hand (ELW #773, TFF #193)
My Lord, What a Morning (ELW #438, TFF #40)

Leaders move to the font as the songs come to an end.

The assembly is invited to stand and face the font as they are able.

Lamenting a sense of despair

**With Job of old we cry out:
Everywhere the innocent suffer.
Our desires and efforts achieve us little.
O God, are you good, yet do nothing to help us?
Our answers have holes, and we fall through.**

The assembly is invited to voice public laments aloud or in silence.

**For what do we lament?
For what do we come before God this day and cry out?
For what do we confess?**

The prayers continue.

Hear us, O God:
Hear us, O God.

Show yourself, O God:
Show yourself, O God.

Give us life:
Give us life.

Silence is kept.

**Hear these words, receive their power:
The majesty of God the Father undergirds all that is.
The mercy of God the Son accepts our despair.
The comfort of God the Spirit embraces us in communities of care.**

Thanks be to God.
Thanks be to God.
Amen.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.
O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted,
grant courage and hope.
Where anxiety is infections and widening,
grant peace and reassurance.
Where impossibilities close every door and window,
grant imagination and resistance.
Where distrust twists our thinking,
grant healing and illumination.
Where spirits are daunted and weakened,
grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams.
All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ,
our Savior.
Amen.

+ WORD +

First Reading

Isaiah 40:6-11

⁶A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.
⁷The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
⁸The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.
⁹Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,

O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
"Here is your God!"
¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Word of God. Word of Life.
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 13

¹How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
²How long must I bear pain in my soul,
and have sorrow in my heart all day long?
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?
³Consider and answer me, O LORD my God!
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,
⁴and my enemy will say, "I have prevailed";
my foes will rejoice because I am shaken.
⁵But I trusted in your steadfast love;
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.
⁶I will sing to the LORD,
because he has dealt bountifully with me.

Word of God. Word of Life.
Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Ephesians 4:25—5:2

²⁵So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. ²⁶Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷and do not make room for the devil. ²⁸Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy. ²⁹Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. ³¹Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, ³²and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.

¹Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, ²and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Word of God. Word of Life.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel

Matthew 5:1-12

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

³"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

⁷"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

⁸"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹"Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and
utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account

¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven,
for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were
before you.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Meditation

Silence follows. The silence is marked by the ringing of a bell.

Hymn

The assembly stands and joins in singing.

There is a Balm in Gilead (ELW #614, TFF #185)

Prayers of Intercession

The assembly begins and ends the prayers by singing:

Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying (ELW #752, TFF #247)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

God our deliver, whose approaching birth still shakes the foundations of our world, may we so wait for your coming with eagerness and hope that we embrace without terror the labor pangs of the new age. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Christ our victim, whose beauty disfigured and whose body torn upon the cross; open wide your arms to embrace our tortured world, especially the victims who were injured and for the families mourn the deaths of the many who were killed in Las Vegas, Nevada, that we may not turn away our eyes, but abandon ourselves to your mercy. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

God whose Holy name defies our definition, but whose will is known in freeing the oppressed, make us to be one with all who cry for justice; that we who speak your praise may struggle for your truth. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

O God our disturber, whose speech is pregnant with power and whose word will be fulfilled; may we know ourselves unsatisfied with all that distorts your truth, and make our hearts attentive to your liberating voice. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

O God who brought us to birth, and in whose arms we die, we give thanks for those saints who moved, and breathed, and had their being among us and now find rest in you. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

**O God you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

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 +

Blessing

**May God give you grace never to sell yourself short,
grace to risk something big for something good,
and grace to remember that the world is too dangerous
for anything but truth and too small for anything but love.
The Blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son + and Holy Spirit
be with us now and remain with us this day and always.
Amen.**

Sending Song

Why Should I Feel Discouraged/*His Eye Is on the Sparrow* (TFF #252)

Peace

The assembly shares in the peace of Christ.

**The peace of the risen Christ be with you all.
And also with you.**



*The assembly is invited to remain, for a time of reflection, mourning, and prayer.
If you so desire, there will be individuals available for prayer and conversation
following the service.*

Acknowledgments:

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