



## HOME LITURGY FOR WORD AND SACRAMENT

February 22, 2015

---

### Centering Ourselves

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Us1I0fw7hKo>

PASTOR: Oh, deem not they are blest alone  
Whose lives a peaceful tenor keep;  
The Power who pities man, has shown  
A blessing for the eyes that weep.

The light of smiles shall fill again  
The lids that overflow with tears;  
And weary hours of woe and pain  
Are promises of happier years.

There is a day of sunny rest  
For every dark and troubled night;  
And grief may bide an evening guest,  
But joy shall come with early light.

And thou, who, o'er thy friend's low bier,  
Sheddest the bitter drops like rain,  
Hope that a brighter, happier sphere  
Will give him to thy arms again.

Nor let the good man's trust depart,  
Though life its common gifts deny,--  
Though with a pierced and broken heart,  
And spurned of men, he goes to die.

For God has marked each sorrowing day  
And numbered every secret tear,  
And heaven's long age of bliss shall pay  
For all his children suffer here.

–William Cullen Bryant<sup>1</sup>

LEADER: Beloved in Christ, let us recall the mystery of our faith:

**ALL: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again!**

LEADER: Lent invites us to join Jesus in the first of these deep truths: choosing to die to self so that we might live with Christ.

And so in this season we name

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://readbookonline.net/readOnLine/13633/>

those things about which we are considering a change of mind,  
those things toward which we hope to turn our lives,  
those qualities of character we long to embrace as we become more like  
Jesus.

By feasting on Scripture, immersing ourselves in prayer, and fasting in ways that discipline the appetites which threaten to control us, we open ourselves to the One who will nurture and nourish the kind of repentance that "turns not so much away, as toward," and leaves us "surprised to find that sin is not so bad as it is a waste of time."

Let us be mindful of the presence of God as we begin this season  
and as we begin worship together.

*The first bell invites us to center ourselves silently in the presence of God.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXIyOnkYk4>

*The second bell invites us to pray together.*

Pastor: God of holiness: your day comes near, and we tremble,  
not out of fear, but from awe and gratitude.  
For on your day, we are fully known, completely restored, reconciled to you  
forever.

Jesus Christ, despised and rejected Grace-bearer,  
who suffered the weight of our illnesses and evils,  
who was wounded for our transgressions,  
and punished so that we could be made whole,  
open our hearts and minds to the meaning of our losses and teach us the holy  
work of mourning to which you call us.

Holy Spirit, cleanse our hearts from guilt and fill us with your power so that we  
may embrace the new lives we desire.

**ALL: God in Community, Holy and One, our Comfort and our Joy,  
hear us as we pray in unity this day:  
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.  
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever.  
Amen.**

Singing Together

God's Eye Is On the Sparrow

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Isj2YbuPy8>

Listening for God

Matthew 5:1-12

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

North: <sup>3</sup> "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

South: <sup>4</sup> "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

North: <sup>5</sup> "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

South: <sup>6</sup> "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

North: <sup>7</sup> "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

South: <sup>8</sup> "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

North: <sup>9</sup> "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

South: <sup>10</sup> "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

North: <sup>11</sup> "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

South: <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. <sup>2</sup>

Sermon

"Gladness in the Mourning!"

<http://stjohnsuccgr.org/join-us/worship/sermons/2015/2/22/sermon-gladness-in-the-mourning>

Making Confession

LEADER: We are a faithful people grieving many losses:

ALL: **having said goodbye to too many coworkers, friends and loved ones  
not being able to do or to remember like we used to,  
resisting change because one more loss feels like too much to bear,**

We

**ache with teens trying to find their place,  
weep at reports of neglect and abuse,  
sigh as species exhale last breaths.**

**Oh the lengths to which we go in our denial! But what slips past our defenses  
hurts our hearts. Oh what the Creator must feel over the world's present  
condition!**

Pastor: Jesus says to us: Blessed are you who mourn, for you will be comforted.  
Congratulations for opening your heart to the pain of the world.  
O the gladness that comes with deciding to do something about your bereavement.  
In those moments the comfort of God is yours.

<sup>2</sup> *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version*. (1989). (Mt 5:1–12). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

As we sing you are invited to a handful of dirt: a symbol of your turning toward the work of mourning to which Jesus invites you: a life lived in a new way, with compassion, comforting others with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

*We receive soil as a sign of our repentance  
and place our offerings in the plates in the center of the room as we sing.*

In Love You Summon

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CQJE8HP1rm8>

### Reconciling Ourselves

**LEADER:** So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.<sup>3</sup>

**ALL:** **In response to Christ's command, we reach out to one another in love, sharing a sign of Christ's peace together.**

*We welcome one another to the Table with a sign of peace.*

### We Join the Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

**Pastor:** As we step toward the mourning to which Jesus calls us, God offers us a feast. Broken bread brings us wholeness. Wine poured out fills us with hope. Here God's grace meets our deepest needs. Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, this feast is for you.

*(Singing:)* The Lord be with you!

**ALL SING:** **And also with you.**

**Pastor:** Lift up your hearts.

**ALL:** **We lift them to the Lord.**

**Pastor:** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**ALL:** **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**Pastor:** Among friends gathered around a table, Jesus took bread and having blessed it, he broke the bread and gave it to his disciples saying, "This is my body broken for you."

In the same way Jesus poured wine into a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to his friends at table saying, "Drink of it all of you. This cup is a new relationship

---

<sup>3</sup> *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version.* (1989). (Mt 5:23–24). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

with God, sealed with my blood which is poured out for the forgiveness of your sins.

God our Creator, it is fitting that we offer you our praise at all times and in all circumstances. For you comfort us. When we broke your heart by choosing our desires over your dreams for us, you did not turn away from us, but offered us Jesus as the Way to turn toward you again.

And so we offer you the living sacrifice of ourselves, and a sacrifice of praise as we recall Jesus' self-sacrifice for us:

**ALL: Holy, Holy, Holy, God of all power and might: heaven and earth are full of your glory! Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God. Hosanna in the highest! NCH #794**

Pastor: Jesus, as we do now what you did in an upstairs room, breathe your Spirit upon this bread and wine, that they may be heaven's food and drink for us: renewing, sustaining, and making us whole. As the bread and wine which we now eat and drink are transformed into us, we may be transformed into your Body on earth, loving and caring in the world. Amen.

*When worshipping in community, we circle the Table in small groups, and serve one another the bread and wine.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5g6Q-uSV714>

## Praying Together

### Departing

**ALL: Marked by a cross, cherished and forgiven, we are traveling home.**

North: Called to be holy,

South: called to be happy,

**ALL: We are traveling home.**

LEADER: God in our hearts, God in our lives

**ALL: We are traveling home.<sup>4</sup>**

*Pastor: Pastor offers a blessing to those departing.*

## Singing Together

Be Still My Soul

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p92fMgMt\\_Zw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p92fMgMt_Zw)



**St. John's United Church of Christ**

1934 Bridge St. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504

StJohnsUCCgr.org 616-453-2497 Office@StJohnsUCCgr.org

Rev. Dr. William M. Lyons, Pastor

---

<sup>4</sup> Ruth Burgess, "Marked by a cross" in *Eggs and Ashes*