

# **A Liturgy for Worldwide Communion Sunday**

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## **Call to Worship**

Worldwide Communion Sunday is an opportunity to celebrate the body of Christ universal. Today we have the opportunity to appreciate and celebrate the uniqueness of his church, where diversity and difference reflect his glory and unity. We rejoice in the mystery of God and the amazing way in which Christ reflects God's glory.

Today God's people all over the world are called to the table where all nations and tribes are fed by Christ.

From all races, ethnicities, languages, and cultures we are called to worship together the God that offers open arms to anybody.

From all ages—children, young adults, women, men, and elders—we are called to join in a community where God's people live and serve one another.

From all economic stations, from all denominational affiliations, from all political perspectives we are called to honor the king of kings who is the only one who rules with perfect justice.

In all situations we may find ourselves in, we are called to a journey where God's love and hope are the essential ingredients for bringing peace into a shattered and fragmented world.

## **Suggested Song**

"How Great is Our God" by Kris Tomlin (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KBD18rsVJHk>)

## **Call to Confession**

Let us have a silent moment to think about the ways in which we contribute to the fragmentation in our families, in our church, in our community, our society, our nation, and in all nations.

## **Prayer of Confession**

**Congregation: O God, we declare that you are light, that there is no darkness in you, and that on the contrary, spiritual darkness is in us.**

Leader: We are here to confess our sins to you. We have broken the old commandment that we heard from the beginning: to love you and to love one another.

**Leader and Congregation: We allowed pride in our lives and withheld forgiveness from those who wronged us. We pretended to walk in the light, but we have been a stumbling block to our fellow believers. We have missed our path of light, allowing and promoting fragmentation, hate, pride, and division—in our families, in our communities, and among the nations.**

**Having been blinded by the darkness, we ask for forgiveness. We ask that you create in us a clean heart, that you renew a loyal spirit in us, and that you make us willing to obey you. Have mercy on us, O God, because of your unfailing love, because of your great compassion.**

*(Silent confession)*

Leader: Amen.

### **Assurance of Pardon**

The blood of Jesus, God's son, cleanses us from all sin. But if we confess our sins to God, God is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. Christ himself is the sacrifice that atones for our sins—and not only for our sins, but the sins of the world.

—based on 1 John 1:7, 9, 2:2

As God's word affirms:

We have been loved. Let us love.

We have been forgiven. Let us forgive.

We have been blessed. Let us bless.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

### **Sharing the Peace**

While we live in this world, we will always encounter crisis and be weighed down by cares. Let us follow the counsel of these words of scripture found in Colossians 3:15: "And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful."

Even as we deal with many different challenges, we trust in God, we seek God, we let our complex lives rest in God's hands because we know that God will always care for and guide us.

As Christ gave us his peace, let us share that peace with one another as one body.

*(Here, the leader may encourage the people to share different gestures and words of peace like Shalom, Irene, paz, taking of hands, hugs, etc.).*

### **Communion Reading**

- Revelation 5:9; 19:9; 21:22-25

In the celebration of communion, the symbol of the table invites us to travel through time. First, we remember the past, as we celebrate the time when Jesus Christ gave the ultimate sacrifice for us. Second, we celebrate the present, as we experience today the fruit of his works—love and salvation. Third, we are encouraged to proclaim the future, when his people from all nations, of all ages, and all affiliations will participate in a tremendous communion together with the lamb of God. We pray and we are thankful for the bread and the wine that represent the blood and body of Christ.

**Suggested song:** “Bigger Than My Imagination” by Marcos Witt  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=op8xmeNFsjQ>)

### **Prayer for Illumination**

Father, we trust in the Holy Spirit’s workings in our lives. As we prepare our hearts to listen to your voice, we ask that our spiritual senses be opened. We ask that your word will awaken us to our lives so that we can see as you see and love as you love. Amen.

### **Scripture Possibilities for the Sermon**

- Romans 12:9-21
- Matthew 5:1-12
- 1 John 3:11-18

### **Prayers of the People**

*Before the worship service, the leader may wish to make copies of the following declarations, one to a page and numbered. Give one to each of seven different persons from the congregation. At this point in the service, ask each to read their verse aloud, one after the other, in order.*

1. Because God has comforted us, we can comfort our families and communities.
2. Because we have received mercy, we can be merciful with strangers.
3. Because even when we were enemies of God, we were loved, and so we can love other nations that are our enemies.
4. Because Christ is our peace, we are able to be peacemakers in a world where violence is the culture.
5. Because Christ is humble, we are called to be humble in a world where pride is a value.
6. Because God is one, the Church is called to be one in a fragmented world.
7. Because Christ is perfect justice, we have the responsibility to proclaim his justice in a world governed by injustice.

**Unison:** We declare that we are not capable of accomplishing these declarations by ourselves, but we know that by the power of your Holy Spirit we are equipped to do so. We open our lives to your power, Holy Spirit. Lead us in the path of love, reconciliation, and hope in this fragmented world. Make your church one so that the world may believe. Amen.

### **Invitation to the Offering**

As we have worshiped God with our hearts, minds, and bodies—with our songs, our prayers, and our presence—let us now honor God by returning part of this provision through our tithes and offerings.

## **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Loving God, we present now this offering to you. Help us to use these resources in such a way that hope, reconciliation, and peace are spread throughout this world. Amen.

## **Charge**

*Congregation or the choir will sing the chorus of the hymn "Here I Am, Lord" by John Michael Talbot (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcXOkht8w7c>)*

**Leader:** We have been fed by God's word. We are now instructed to go into the world. We are sent as sheep in the midst of wolves. Let us be wise enough to discern what is good and right, and let our actions and thoughts manifest the love that we have received.

**Congregation or choir:** "Here I Am, Lord" (chorus)

**Leader:** We have been encouraged to live in unity as our God lives as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Let us follow God's unity model in such a way that a fragmented world will see and believe.

**Congregation or choir:** "Here I Am, Lord" (chorus)

**Leader:** We have been filled with the Holy Spirit. Let us experience and then reflect this power so that a world full of pride, hate, violence, brokenness, and injustice, through us can experience humility, love, peace, reconciliation, and justice.

**Congregation or choir:** "Here I Am, Lord" (chorus)

## **Benediction**

Jesus is blessing us with his glory: With power to overcome evil with good, with love to share with our enemies, with peace with which to comfort others, with the joy we need to deal with adversity, and with courage to proclaim his justice. Amen.