

# A Liturgy for Cumberland Presbyterian Church Ministries

June 12, 2016

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**Call to Worship**      *(the responses are based on the hymn, Whosoever Will, by Philip P. Bliss)*

Leader: We come from the east, the west, the north and the south.

**People: Whosoever will, may come!**

Leader: We come as wanderers, looking for a place to call home.

**People: Whosoever hears, shout, shout the sound!**

Leader: We come to hear the story of Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

**People: Jesus is the true, the Living Way!**

Leader: We come to hear the good news, news that offers hope and healing.

**People: Spread the blessed tidings all the world around!**

Leader: So let us come to worship, to sing, to pray, to listen and to be challenged,  
to follow the God who calls us to come!

**People: Whosoever will, may come!**

## Call to Confession

The psalmist reminds us that living faithfully all the time, which is what we are called to do, is difficult: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (*Psalms 139:23-24, NRSV*)

Admitting our failures and seeking God's grace, let us come before God as we confess our sins.

## Prayer of Confession (responsively)

Gracious God, we are your people called Cumberland Presbyterian. We are but a small part of your larger Church, called to serve the world by sharing your good news. Since the 1800's, we have attempted to follow your call by reaching all over the globe with a message of hope, a message of love, a message of grace. As individual congregations, our community is limited but as the larger Church, our community expands to include countries from east to west and north to south. However, sometimes our pride and righteous indignation gets in the way of our ability to serve. So, we come to you, seeking your forgiveness and desiring your strength as we struggle to be faithful.

For the times when our prejudices against race, gender, sexual orientation and theological differences cause us to turn persons away.

**Have mercy on us, O Lord. . . .** (*Silent reflection*)

For the times we ignore or close our eyes to the struggles of those who are homeless, poor and hungry.

**Have mercy on us, O Lord. . . .** *(Silent reflection)*

For the times we have hurt the larger Church by refusing to do our share out of anger or resentment or frustration.

**Have mercy on us, O Lord. . . .** *(Silent reflection)*

For the times we were too weak to stand up for what was right because we were afraid.

**Have mercy on us, O Lord. . . .** *(Silent reflection)*

For the times we have refused to forgive others.

**Have mercy on us, O Lord. . . .** *(Silent reflection)*

For hurtful words said and helpful words unsaid, for unfinished tasks and unfulfilled hopes,

**Have mercy on us, O Lord. . . .** *(Silent reflection)*

Have mercy on us, O Lord, as we humble ourselves before you. Look upon us with kindness and grace. Rule in our churches, our homes and in all the world; show us how we should walk in your paths, through the mercy of our Savior. **Amen.**

### **Assurance of Pardon**

Hear the good news! “I will cleanse them from all the guilt of their sin against me, and I will forgive all the guilt of their sin and rebellion against me.” (*Jeremiah 33:8, NRSV*) Know that in Jesus, God embraces us, forgives us, and strengthens us to live a renewed life.

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

### **Prayer for Illumination**

Inspiring God, you have given us this word, your word, a word that instructs, empowers and challenges us as your people and your Church. May this word that we hear with our ears, move our hands and feet, inspire our spirits and stir our hearts to be the people you have called us to be. Amen.

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

- Exodus 3:1-15
- Joshua 24:14-28
- Matthew 28:16-20
- Luke 15:1-10
- Luke 18:15-17

- Galatians 2:15-21
- Ephesians 1:3-14
- Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16

### **Prayers of the People**

We praise and thank you, O Lord, that we are part of your family of faith. We share our gifts with your whole Church, offering messages of hope and grace. And we are thankful to be part of the family known as Cumberland Presbyterians. As part of a larger Church, we are able to share in ministry, not only in our community, but in communities around the world. So, we remember the ministries of which we are a part, and in which we support...

*For the Office of the General Assembly, which handles the administrative duties of the church, serves as a liaison for ecumenical ministries of God's larger Church and sees that the decisions of the Church are done neatly and in accordance with the Confession of Faith ... (silence)*

*For the Ministry Council, who seeks Christ's vision, supports ministry development and serves the Church through the ministry teams they encourage ... (silence)*

*For the Communications Ministry Team, who strives to communicate with the Church in a way that is consistent with our faith and reinforces our connectional nature ... (silence)*

*For the Discipleship Ministry Team, who seeks to educate and nurture all ages in their development as people of faith by providing information, resources and events for children, youth, adults and families ... (silence)*

*For the Mission Ministry Team, who encourages and supports the women's ministry, helps establish cross-cultural churches in the United States, resources and encourages evangelism in our local congregations, and works to establish new congregations all over the world ... (silence)*

*For the Pastoral Development Ministry Team, who offers nurture and care for ordained ministers and probationers, and provides resources and events to improve their pastoral ministry ... (silence)*

*For the Board of Stewardship, which oversees the financial responsibilities of the church, including opportunities for health insurance and retirement for ministers, and offers congregations a place to invest for future ministries ... (silence)*

*For the Historical Foundation, which houses, preserves, protects, and maintains the records of the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches so that the past will never be lost to the future ... (silence)*

*For the Children's Home, which has served children and families by providing healing and hope since 1904 ... (silence)*

*For Bethel University, which has, since 1842, provided opportunities for men and women to develop their greatest potential, intellectually, spiritually, socially and physically, in a Christian environment ... (silence)*

*For Memphis Theological Seminary, which educates and sustains men and women for ordained and lay Christian ministry in the Church and the world through shaping and inspiring lives devoted to scholarship, piety and justice ... (silence)*

*For the Unification Task Force, which is working to bring together the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America, who already share a common heritage, a common Confession of Faith and work together in some areas of ministry, with the hope that two shall become one ... (silence)*

God, these entities remind us that we are a part of something greater than ourselves and we lift their work to you and each person who commits their time to these ministries. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

### **Invitation to the Offering**

We know that as a part of this congregation, it takes the gifts of every member to keep God's ministry alive in our community. Likewise, God has made us a part of a larger family, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, which allows us to minister not just here, but all over the world. Let us bring before God a portion of what we have been blessed to receive so that we may continue to share the good news, both here and beyond.

### **Prayer for our Offerings**

Gracious and loving God, for 206 years, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church has been sharing the gospel with any who will listen. It has taken the commitment of many generations from all over the world to keep this message alive. May these offerings that we bring this day offer one more opportunity to make a difference in a broken world, bringing a message of hope and love through your son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

### **Charge and Benediction**

God called the apostles to go and share the good news. They shared that message of hope and encouraged those who listened to go and share as well. Each of us are called to go and do likewise, but we cannot do it alone. Be thankful that we, as a church family, are sharing our gifts with Cumberland Presbyterians all over the world, offering Christ's love to the farthest reaches. Together, let's shine some light in this dark and broken world, in the name of Jesus Christ, who calls us. Amen.