

## A Liturgy for Pastor Appreciation Sunday

October 8, 2017

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### Call to Worship

One: The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims God's handiwork.

**Many: We come together to sing of God's glory.**

One: We come today to rejoice in God's work.

**Many: We come today to give thanks for God's call and to those who said yes.**

One: We come to worship the God who calls and ordains; the God who loves and redeems.

**Many: Let us worship in spirit and in truth. Amen.**

*—based on Psalm 19:1*

### Call to Confession

Proverbs 28:13 says, "Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy." May we seek God's mercy together.

### Prayer of Confession (unison)

**Gracious and loving God, every day we fail to live in the way you have called us to live. Instead of love and grace, we show anger and impatience. Instead of looking out for the least of these, we look over them for our own benefit. Those you have placed in our lives to help, we have taken for granted. Forgive us for not seeking your heart daily. Forgive us where and when we overlook and take for granted. Forgive us when we do not love as Christ first loved us. (Take time for silent confession) Amen.**

### Assurance of Pardon

"Take heart, the good news is that even while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Through the love of God, we are indeed forgiven and redeemed. Praise God!

*—Romans 5:8*

### Prayer for Illumination

God, may we have ears to hear and eyes to see. As we experience your word today, may it teach us and reach us in a new way so that we can better live out the call you have on all our lives. Amen.

### Scripture Possibilities for the Sermon

- Exodus 32:1-14
- Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23
- Psalm 23
- Isaiah 25:1-9

- Matthew 22:1-14
- Philippians 4:1-9

The lectionary is ripe with readings for Pastor Appreciation Sunday. The gospel reading or the New Testament reading are my personal choices. In both, I would urge you not to seek to show how hard it is to be a minister, but to show that God's call is worth it. Not just the call to be a minister, but that the call to know Christ, the call to serve Christ, and the call to love others are joyous things.

### **Prayers of Intercession**

Merciful God, as we come together today we are thankful. Thankful for the many blessings you have given us—blessings of love and grace, blessings of community and belonging, blessings of leaders and people we learn from. Today, Lord, we thank you for pastors—for those we have now and those we have had in the past—those men and women who answered your call to serve you and to serve others. We thank you for their families who become ours. We pray for their strength and vision. We pray that in the midst of life they will not lose sight of you in all that they do.

Lord, even in our blessings we know there are many people and many things that need you. Hear our prayers, O Lord:

*(Allow time for silent prayers or petitions)*

God, may you move in each of these situations. May your love and grace be present with each person, each family, and in each community. May your Spirit move and your will be done. In Christ name, Amen.

### **Invitation to the Offering**

As we join together our tithes and offerings may we hear these words from scripture, "All shall give as they are able, according to the blessing the Lord your God has given you."

*—Deuteronomy 16:17*

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Bountiful God, you truly bless us more than we deserve. Take these tithes and offerings and bless them to be used to advance your kingdom; used to show love and grace to those around us and to be the church you have called us to be. Amen.

### **Charge**

Go therefore into the world proclaiming the cross of Christ. Go and give thanks for the amazing men and women God has blessed us with. Go and tell of the goodness of God.

### **Benediction**

May the Lord bless you and keep you,

May the Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

May the Lord's countenance be upon you and bring you peace. Amen.