

A Liturgy for Outdoors Ministries Sunday

July 8, 2018

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Call to Worship

Leader: With the psalmist, we lift our eyes to you, God.

People: You live in heaven and here on earth.

Leader: We celebrate the wonders of your creation here on earth—vast skies, life-giving waters, sandy beaches, the stark beauty of the desert, the lush greenness of growing things, shade-giving trees, and the lovely uniqueness of each flower.

People: The sheer size of your cosmos stirs us to wonder and praise.

Leader: We celebrate your relational nature of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit that spills out into your relationship with us and each other.

People: We especially thank you for times when we can deepen those relationships with you and others in spaces set away from our usual places of living, even right here in this sacred space.

Leader: Meet us here in these moments of worship and astound us with your presence and the realities of your kingdom.

People: Let us worship God!

Call to Confession

God has given us a world of beauty and grace to tend and protect, but we ignore that responsibility. God has given us human relationships so that we may respect and cherish each other, but we do the very opposite. God has given us an everlasting covenant with God's own self that is expressed especially in Jesus' life, death, resurrection and the ongoing presence of God's Holy Spirit, but we turn away. May we go to God in a time of confession?

(time for silent confession)

Prayer of Confession (unison)

Forgive us, great God, for the many ways we throw away all that you give us—our world, our brothers and sisters, and even our chances to grow closer to you. Open our eyes, ears and hearts to the many ways you continually seek to be in relationship with us. Help us to truly see you. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news: The grace of God knows no boundaries; God readily meets our contrite hearts. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.

Prayer for Illumination

Speak to us, God, in these moments in ways that are so astounding that these mere words become your living word, who is beyond anything we can express. Amen.

Scripture Possibilities for the Sermon

- 2 Samuel 5:1–5, 9–10
- Ezekiel 2:1–5
- Psalm 48
- Psalm 123
- 2 Corinthians 12:2–10
- *“But I do know that I was caught up to paradise and heard things so astounding that they cannot be expressed in words...” --2 Corinthians 12:3 (NLT)*
- Mark 6:1–13

Prayers of the People

For the destruction of your land, sea and skies,

Response: Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.

For the hatefulness of your children against your children,

Response: Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.

For hard-hearts that refuse to see your loving goodness.

Response: Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.

For your beloved children who need healing, comfort, and guidance,

Response: Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.

For leaders here and throughout the world,

Response: Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.

For the victims of disasters around the world,

Response: Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.

For spaces and times for refreshment and renewal,

Response: Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.

Hear us as we pray the prayer your son taught to pray together, saying, **“Our Father....” Amen.**

Invitation to the Offering

As God has given to us, we are invited to give in return.

Offertory Prayer

Gracious and most-loving God, thank you. Thank you for this wonderful world you've given us. Thank you for loving relationships that help us understand your love for us. Thank you for this opportunity to show our gratitude by returning to you these tithes and offerings. Please use them to further your kingdom here on earth. In the name of Jesus and through the power of the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.

Charge & Benediction

Go forth from this place, seeking places and times of renewal that will cause you to be so filled with the glory of God in Christ that mere words cannot do it justice.

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Amen.