



ORDER OF WORSHIP

PREPARATION

September 13, 2020

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“There’s only one race, but over time we’ve elevated things like skin color, hair texture, language, and ethnicity to a level where they become the main criteria we use to judge entire groups of people. And then we take those classifications and assign them values that we use to include or exclude, to normalize or to stereotype, to celebrate or denigrate. We use these things to determine who we hire, the boundaries of neighborhoods, who gets pulled over by police, the length of prison sentences, and on it goes. This is wrong. This is sin. But sadly, we’ve let it creep into our churches as well. So, when I say the American church has color-coded Christianity, what I mean is that we’ve allowed our brokenness around race and class to define how we express our faith and how we value one another.”

—JOHN PERKINS

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Almighty and eternal God, grant that we may grow in faith, hope, and love; and that we may obtain what you promised, make us love what you command; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS

FIRST READING: Exodus 14:19-31

PSALM: Psalm 114

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

ORDER OF WORSHIP

In Scripture, the Call to Worship comes from God. We need to be called because it is not our natural response to come to God. God takes the initiative, moves towards us with grace, and invites us to worship him.

WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP

Revelation 7

LEADER After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number,

PEOPLE **From every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages,**

LEADER Standing before the throne and before the Lamb,

PEOPLE **Clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands,**

LEADER And crying out with a loud voice,

PEOPLE **“Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”**

HYMN

All Creatures of Our God and King

St. Francis of Assisi · David Crowder · Arr. Dan Galbraith

All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice, and with us sing;
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Thou burning sun with golden beam,
Thou silver moon with softer gleam.
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

All ye who are of tender heart,
Forgiving others, take your part,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Ye who long pain and sorrow bear,
Praise God, and on Him cast your care!
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Let all things their Creator bless,
And worship Him in humbleness;
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three in One!
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Aware of God's holiness and our sinfulness, the Prayer of Confession invites us to honestly confess our sins. We are free to confess even our most grievous faults because no matter how deep our sin may be, God's grace in Jesus Christ is deeper still. Confession both acknowledges our need for grace and celebrates its abundant provision in Christ.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord God, your will is that all your children should be one in Christ. We pray for the unity of your church. Pardon all our pride and our lack of faith, understanding, and charity, which are the causes of our divisions. Deliver us from our narrow-mindedness, from our bitterness, from our prejudices. Save us from considering as normal that which is a scandal to the world and an offense to your love. Teach us to recognize the gifts of grace among all who call upon you and confess faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

The Words of Assurance should be received with gratitude and joy because these words of Scripture assure us that God has promised to forgive and restore those who confess their sins through the finished work of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

1 John 4.10-11

In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

LEADER Hear and receive the good news of the gospel: in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

ALL **Thanks be to God!**

HYMN

Hosanna

Brooke Fraser

I see the King of glory,
Coming on the clouds with fire;
The whole earth shakes,
The whole earth shakes.

I see His love and mercy,
Washing over all our sin.
The people sing,
The people sing:

*Hosanna, Hosanna,
Hosanna in the highest!
Hosanna, Hosanna,
Hosanna in the highest!*

I see a generation,
Rising up to take their place,
With selfless faith,
With selfless faith.

I see a near revival,
Stirring as we pray and seek.
We're on our knees,
We're on our knees. *Chorus*

Heal my heart and make it clean;
Open up my eyes to the things unseen.
Show me how to love,
Like You have loved me.
Break my heart for what breaks Yours;
Everything I am for Your kingdom's cause,
As I walk from earth into eternity. *Chorus*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We regularly pray for needs in our congregation, our neighborhood and city, and the world. Please let the prayer ministry know of your prayer requests by visiting centralchurchnyc.org/prayerrequest.

OFFERING

Please text [centralchurchnyc](https://www.centralchurchnyc.org) to 77977 or visit our website in order to give electronically.

OFFERTORY HYMN

See the Love

The Brilliance

Every day we go to war again
We assume we know so much more than them
Before we hear what they have to say
Headline breaks and we start to hate again
Callin' them names again
We give our peace away

I hope they see it
'Cause I wanna see it
I hope we believe it

*I wanna see, I wanna see the love
All around you, all around you
I wanna know, I wanna know that love
Is all around you
It's all around*

Shout day by day
Hope fades away and then
We know that there is pain within
We cannot medicate
Learn to feel, learn to begin again
Open our eyes again
To see our brother's pain

I hope they see it
'Cause I wanna see it
I hope we believe it *Chorus*

See how it lights you up
It lights you up *Chorus*

THE DOXOLOGY

Old Hundredth LM

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye Heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

The Word of God is the primary means by which God speaks to us and the ultimate authority for what we believe and how we live.

All Scripture passages are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV) unless otherwise noted.

SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 12:1-3 and Revelation 5:9-10

Genesis 12

¹Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ²And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Revelation 5

⁹And they sang a new song, saying,

“Worthy are you to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation,
¹⁰and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God,
and they shall reign on the earth.”

LEADER The word of the Lord.

ALL **Thanks be to God!**

The Spirit makes the reading and preaching of God's Word a powerful means of challenging, comforting, and strengthening God's people and awakening people to new faith.

SERMON

Us AND Them | God's Plan to Bring Us All Together

Rev. Jason Harris

THE THANKSGIVING

From the earliest days of the church a prayer of Thanksgiving preceded Holy Communion. The Thanksgiving includes the "Sursum Corda" which means "Lift up your hearts" or literally, "Hearts lifted," in Latin. The Thanksgiving bids us to acknowledge our absolute dependence on the God who desires to commune with us.

LEADER Lift up your hearts.

PEOPLE We lift them up to the Lord.

LEADER Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

PEOPLE It is right to give him thanks and praise.

LEADER It is indeed right, our duty and joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, Lord, holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Holy Communion (also called the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist) is a covenant renewal meal, instituted by Jesus Christ the night before his crucifixion. When we partake of the bread and the cup by faith, we remember Jesus' sacrificial death on our behalf in the past, we anticipate the day when Jesus will return and make all things new in the future, and the Spirit lifts us up to enjoy real communion with Jesus in the present.

We take it as a sign of a healthy congregation to have regular attenders who love our community but who do not profess faith in Christ and so refrain from receiving the elements. If you are a Christian and have not yet been baptized, please talk with our pastor. We would be honored to baptize you.

For health reasons, an individually packaged wafer and cup can be found in the pew for those who wish to participate in the Lord's Supper. Once consumed, please place empty cups in the back of the pew.

Children are welcome to partake of communion. To receive the Lord's Supper, a child must have been baptized and been formally received as a communing member by the Session of this church or the governing body of the church to which you belong.

Holy Communion (also called the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist) is the family meal of baptized Christians. We invite all to partake of this sacrament who trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, who are at peace with God and with their neighbor, and who seek strength to live more faithfully for Christ. If you are not a Christian, or if you are not prepared to share in this meal, we encourage you to use the prayers printed below and spend this time in reflection or prayer. We hope that this time is helpful to you as you consider your relationship with Jesus Christ and with his people, the church.

Prayer for Those Searching for Truth

Lord Jesus Christ, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus Christ, I acknowledge that you are so holy and I am so sinful that you had to die for me. Yet you are so merciful and I am so loved that you were willing to die for me. I confess that I have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed by what I have done and by what I have failed to do. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayer of Commitment

Lord Jesus, I know that if I do not love you with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength, I shall love something else with all my heart and mind and soul and strength. Grant that by loving you first I may be liberated from all lesser loves and loyalties and have you as my first love, my chief good, and my final joy. Amen.

We sing the prayer that
Jesus taught us to pray
to our Heavenly Father.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name.
Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors,
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever,
Amen.

We begin our worship
with God's gracious
invitation, and we
conclude with God's
blessing, his good word.

It is appropriate to
look up and open our
palms as we receive
the Benediction to
symbolize how Jesus
Christ lifts our heads
and to demonstrate our
eagerness to receive
God's blessing.

BENEDICTION

God never draws us
into relationship with
himself without also
sending us out into
the world to be his
representatives and
ambassadors.

DISMISSAL

LEADER Let us go forth to serve the world as those who
love our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

ALL **Thanks be to God!**