

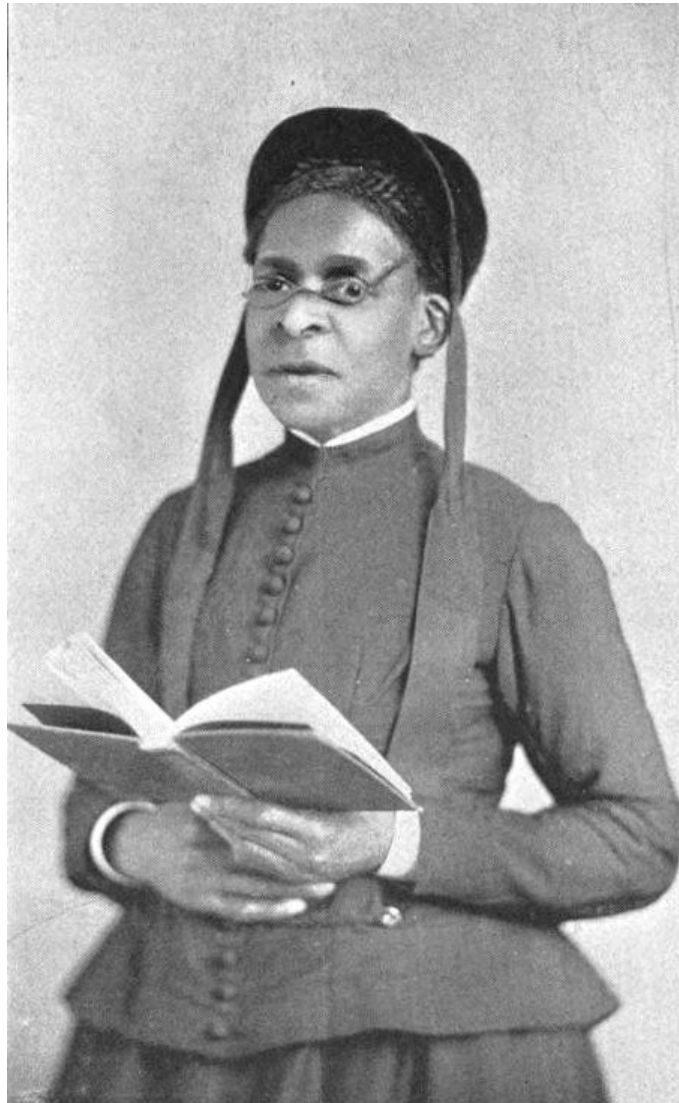
SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

March 24 and 27, 2021



*"In the Lord woman is not independent of man
or man independent of woman."*

~ 1 Corinthians 11:11 (NRSV)



Gathering as the Body of Christ.

CENTERING SONG

“IN SOLITUDE”

NCH 521

In solitude, in solitude, I come to God in prayer.
In silence and simplicity, my spirit blossoms there.
When e're the world is troubling me, and stress is all around,
I seek the presence of my God, and healing light is found.
In seasons of perplexity, in times of deep despair,
I light a candle in the night and turn to God in prayer.

And when my heart is burdened down with cares for those I love,
Too deep for words, with groans and sighs, descends the holy dove.
With psalms and hymns and songs of praise before my God I'll come,
Till death itself is past and gone, and I arrive at home.

GREETING

PRESIDER

CALL TO WORSHIP

A table is set before us. A feast is prepared for us,

A meal of bread and wine.

Our Redeemer calls us to this supper of remembrance.

Our Triune God calls us to serve and to be served.

As we break the bread and share the cup,

our understanding may fail us.

But we will never forget Christ's example.

We will never forget the full extent of God's love.

OPENING HYMN

“SISTER, LET ME BE YOUR SERVANT (ST. 1-3)”

NCH 539

Sister, let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you;
Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant, too?

We are pilgrims on a journey, we are travelers on the road;
We are here to help each other go the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you in the shadow of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.

CONFESSION & WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Let us join our voices together in a unison prayer of confession:

Merciful God, whenever we seek you, love is what we find.

But you do not always find the same when you seek us.

Love is patient, **but often we are impatient.**

Love is kind, **but often we are rude.**

Love is not envious, **but we often covet.**

Love does not insist on its own way, **but we often do just that.**

Love does not rejoice in wrongdoing, **but we often celebrate violence.**

Love never ends, **and yet we do not always seek your love as our ultimate purpose.**

Help us, loving God, **to shed our sin and reflect the light of your love.**

Guide us that we might have faith in your presence, that we might hope in your providence, and, above all, that we might live with your love as our muse. **Amen.**

Hear the good news:

Christ died for us, Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power

Christ prays for us.

Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation.

The old life has gone; a new life has begun. Thanks be to God!

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

You are invited to pass the peace to each other by waving or by typing in the chat function in Zoom.

Peace be with you! **And also with you!**

Let us share this peace with one another.

Service of the Word

POEM

“A PRAYER FOR THE WOMAN PREACHING”

BY MARIAM WILLIAMS

Loving, life-giving God,
God of Tamar, Rahab, and Ruth,
God of Miriam, and Your many Marys;
God of our mothers, our wives, our sisters,
where men have preceded, succeeded,
pleaded that they do not need us;

while the world learns to walk
without us, away from us,
You remember us as
the woman who anointed Your anointed one.

Ah, God,
Mother of all gods,
remember your daughter
in the name of Your Son,
loosen her tongue,
bear her spirit above
the waters of creation:
let her utter Your Word.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

[READER](#)

Please, join me in prayer.

[Pause for 2 deep breaths.]

O God, beautifully Divine, in you are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Open our eyes that we may see the wonders of your Word; and give us grace that we may clearly understand and freely choose the way of your wisdom; through Christ our Lord. Amen

I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions just as I handed them on to you. But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the husband is the head of his wife, and God is the head of Christ. Any man who prays or prophesies with something on his head disgraces his head, but any woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled disgraces her head—it is one and the same thing as having her head shaved. For if a woman will not veil herself, then she should cut off her hair; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or to be shaved, she should wear a veil. For a man ought not to have his head veiled, since he is the image and reflection of God; but woman is the reflection of man. Indeed, man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for the sake of woman, but woman for the sake of man. For this reason a woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man or man independent of woman. For just as woman came from man, so man comes through woman; but all things come from God. Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head unveiled? Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair, it is degrading to him, but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering. But if anyone is disposed to be contentious—we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.

Hear what God is saying to the people. **Thanks be to God!**

PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

We come together to give you honor and praise.
We ask that you would help us to draw close to you.

Creator, hear us

Please come and speak your words of wisdom into our lives.
Help us to embrace one another, our similarities, our differences, our concerns and
our joys.

Redeemer, hear us

We long for your touch on our lives, that we might be your hands and feet to the world.
Inspire our hearts, heal our wounds, bring your peace into our worries and your hope
into our disappointments.

Sustainer, hear us

Come Lord and weave your love into our fellowship together, that we may overflow
with grace and allow your truth to light up our lives anew.

Amen.

Service of the Table

ANYONE WHO WOULD LIKE AN ECUMENICAL PRAYER DURING COMMUNION WILL BE PLACED IN A BREAKOUT ROOM AT THE END
OF OFFERTORY.

OFFERTORY SONG “SISTER, LET ME BE YOUR SERVANT (ST. 4-6)”

NCH 539

**I will weep when you are weeping; when you laugh, I'll laugh with you.
I will share your joy and sorrow till we've seen this journey through.**

**When we sing to God in heaven we shall find such harmony,
Born of all we've known together of Christ's love and agony.**

**Won't you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you;
Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant, too?**

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

The Holy One be with you

And also with you

Open your hearts to the One who is Love

We open our hearts to you, O God

Let us give thanks to God who takes risks for love

For the courage of the Holy that lives in us, we give thanks

Throughout history, O God, we have struggled to remember who we are. When forces of evil work to shape our understanding of you, ourselves, and one another, we get lost. We hide parts of ourselves. We keep the things that make us vulnerable buried deep. We cling to security and safety. We turn from meaningful connection with one another. We take cover under the patterns of our culture.

But you have created us for so much more.

In Jesus we saw a life lived in all its potential.

Life that is abundant, life that is collective, life that is tender and full.

But we saw, also, in him, what can happen to a life when power and norms are exchanged for truth, collective justice, and integrity. And so we wonder.

If we live true to our authentic selves, will we be condemned?

In proclaiming truths that confront unjust power, do we stand a chance of survival?

How will it go for us, if we are willing to risk everything for love?

You have never promised us safety, but you have shown us what is possible.

The Spirit brings new life even to places of death.

Jesus, knowing the dangers ahead, kept proclaiming his truth.

There was nothing worth his silence, not even his life.

And so he turned to community for companionship in the struggle.

On the night of his arrest, he gathered around table with his companions.

He took bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to his disciples and said,

"This is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

He did the same with the cup after the supper, saying,
"This cup that is poured out is the new covenant."

In Jesus, God came out to the world, challenging systems and norms. And though great violence was done and unfathomable loss was felt, Love presses on still today, transforming life after life.

And so we pray, pour out your Spirit on this bread and this cup. Through these gifts, fill our hearts with courage to live boldly for one another, proclaiming the truths that set us free. Blessed be this meal of hope. Amen.

Those who have requested an ecumenical prayer of blessing will now be placed in a breakout room with the preacher.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Going Forth as the Body of Christ

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us join our voices in thanksgiving.

God, we give you thanks for the invitation to your Table. No matter who we are, no matter our struggles or regrets, we are never turned away. Like all the gifts you give us, may we never be content to keeping them to ourselves. May this meal compel us to invite others - especially those who are turned away from the tables of their families, their churches, their communities - to our own tables, overflowing with love and nourishment abundant. Amen.

CLOSING SONG

"WE WALK IN LOVE"

DEANNA WITKOWSKI

BENEDICTION

SENDING & POSTLUDE

*Go and search diligently where God resides,
And pay homage to all in whom the Spirit lives.*

Cover Art: Unidentified. *Julia A. J. Foote*, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN.
<http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=55931> [retrieved July 21, 2020]. Original source:
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Julia_A._J._Foote.jpg.

Julia Foote, 1823-1900, was the first woman deacon in the AME Zion church.

Call to Worship: Bill Hoppe, Ministry Matters, 1(March 2020) <https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/2478/worship-elements-holy-thursday-2015>, accessed July 23, 2020, edited by the LTS Worship Team.

Poem: Rosalind C Hughes, "A Prayer for the Woman Preaching," <https://rosalindhughes.com/2019/02/21/a-prayer-for-the-woman-preaching/>, accessed July 23, 2020.

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Prayer of the Community: Original prayer by: https://www.lords-prayer-words.com/family/prayers_for_women.html, accessed July 23, 2020, edited by LTS Chapel Team.

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****The worship planning team creates all other parts of the liturgy except where noted.***

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THE WORSHIP TEAM SEEKS:

To serve the universal church of our Creator.
To minister to the unique and diverse needs of the seminary community.
To foster an expansive culture of worship that values difference and challenges the normative.