

in the big love living liturgies

“Peace Be with You” • John 20:18-22

Invoking Peace Worship Service for Home or Group Use

prepared by Rev. Kathryn M. Schreiber

Preparations

- Read through this service before beginning. Make copies if needed.
- Assemble props and materials including a “Christ Candle” which can be any sort of candle, or another item, to represent Christ’s presence. Carefully read italic notes for more props.
- Review our Song List suggestions below or make your own selections. Assemble sheet music, hymnal, recorded music, or instruments before beginning worship.
- Dedicate an uninterrupted place for worship. Decorate it as an expression of intentionally welcoming God’s presence.
- You may wish to arrange with others who are also privately worshipping to begin at the same time and check in afterward.

Invoking Peace Worship

Please adapt to make this worship your own. Your intention is all that is important.

We Gather

Prayer of Gathering *(responsive)*

One: We call upon the disciples
who went into hiding
after Jesus’ death on the cross...

All: Come, join us. We are scared, too.

One: We call upon the mystics
who have always heard God speaking
in the midst of chaos...

All: Come, join us. We want to hear God, too.

One: We call upon our loved ones
unable to be with us in body,
but who are with us in spirit...

All: Come, join us. We need you, too.

Light the Christ Candle

**All: Come, Jesus Christ, join us.
We need you most of all. Amen.**

Song of Invitation *(see Song List)*

We Unburden

Statement of Burden

If one than one is gathered, tell each other what weighs on your soul right now. Be as honest as feels safe. If you are alone, talk to God out loud. Name your worries, concerns, and burdens no matter how odd they might seem. God is listening.

(cont’d next page)

Silent Prayer

In the quietude of your soul, share with God what you wish was different - especially about yourself. Tell God what you need from God. Thank God for listening.

Act of Unburdening

Place pebbles or small items at the base of the Christ Candle silently or speaking out-loud what you are offering to God for release.

Blessing of Grace (unison)

Let us pray:

Before we uttered a word,
before we put a label on our discomfort,
You, O Lord, knew what we were carrying
and called us forward to release
awaiting this moment
when You could fully forgive us.
Merciful One, Thank You. Thank You.
Amen.

We Listen**Gospel Reading (responsive)**

*Our scripture reading is from the Gospel of St John (NRSV).
The Resurrected Christ has gone to comfort his frightened disciples.*

One: When it was evening on that day,
the first day of the week,
and the doors of the house where the disciples had met
were locked for fear of the Jews,
Jesus came and stood among them and said,
All: "Peace be with you."

One: After Jesus said this,
he showed them his hands and his side.
Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.
Jesus said to them again,
**All: "Peace be with you.
As the Father has sent me, so I send you."**

One: When Jesus had said this,
he breathed on them and said to them,
All: "Receive the Holy Spirit."

May God add a blessing to the reading and reflecting upon this Holy Word. Amen.

Reflection Upon Fear and Peace

*Please turn away from all clocks. Let this recounting unfold as it will unfold.
Remember a time, or times, when divine help appeared when you were anxious.
Stories may be shared verbally, or written down, or recorded as artwork, song, or movement.*

Looking back on what you recalled:

*What do you need to remember and carry forward today?
Where do you sense the Peace of Christ being spoken today?
Who or what calls your soul to peace?
(cont'd next page)*

*You may wish to listen to the sounds of nature or special music before moving on.
When your reflection time is done, simply say: "Amen."*

We Pray

Prayers of Petition

This entire service is prayer, communication with God, however, there is a type of prayer for lifting up specific joys and concerns. If others are present, especially anyone who is especially vulnerable, please listen to their prayer requests very carefully.

For whom or what do you wish to pray right now? Don't forget to lift up joys. You may place additional pebbles or small items at the base of the Christ Candle as you offer these prayers.

Song of Prayer (see Song List)

The Lord's Prayer (unison)

*Let us gather with souls in all places in all languages
who are currently praying this prayer Jesus taught us to pray:*

(Please use the version most familiar to you)

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

We Give Thanks

Offering

Do something to show your love of God. Write a check or make an online donation, put something beautiful beside the Christ Candle. (Please see the Donation note at the end of this document)

Song of Gratitude (see Song List)

We Continue in Peace

Practice of Peace (responsive)

One: Take a deep breath.

Let some place or person who is anxious come to mind.

Put your hands out, palms up, in front of your chest.

Imagine Jesus here saying to them:

All: "Peace be with you."

One: Take a deep breath.

Think of the people you are missing right now.

Put your hands out on your sides, as before joining hands.

Imagine Jesus here saying to the completed circle:

All: "Peace be with you."

One: Take a deep breath.

Think of yourself and how hard this time is.

Put your hands over your heart.

Imagine Jesus here saying to you:

All: "Peace be with you."

Song of Peace (see Song List)

(cont'd next page)

Benediction

Julian of Norwich, a 14th century English spiritual guide, survived three bouts of the plague, horrible civil disruptions, and various personal challenges. God was always with her.

Julian wrote:

“And all shall be well.
And all shall be well.
And all manner of things shall be exceedingly well.”

All shall be well. Go forth in Peace. Amen.

(the worship service is concluded)

Song List (suggestions)

online aids: <https://hymnary.org/> YouTube: google by title AND one of the authors

Song of Invitation

“Come and Fill our Hearts” - Taizé Community, Bro. Jacques Berthier
“You’re Welcome in This Place” - Maverick City Music, by C Moore, N Raine, A Eugene

Song of Prayer

“O Lord Hear My Prayer” - Taizé Community
“Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying” - Ken Medema

Song of Gratitude

“Gloria Patri”-- Doxology
“Great Is Their Faithfulness” - Thomas O Chisholm, William M. Runyan
“Let All Things Now Living” - Katherine K Davis, Welsh folk melody (Ash Grove)

Song of Peace

“Dona Nobis Pacem” - Traditional Latin chant
“Shalom Chaverim” - Traditional Hebrew blessing, Israeli melody
“Let There Be Peace on Earth” - Sy Miller and Jill Jackson

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