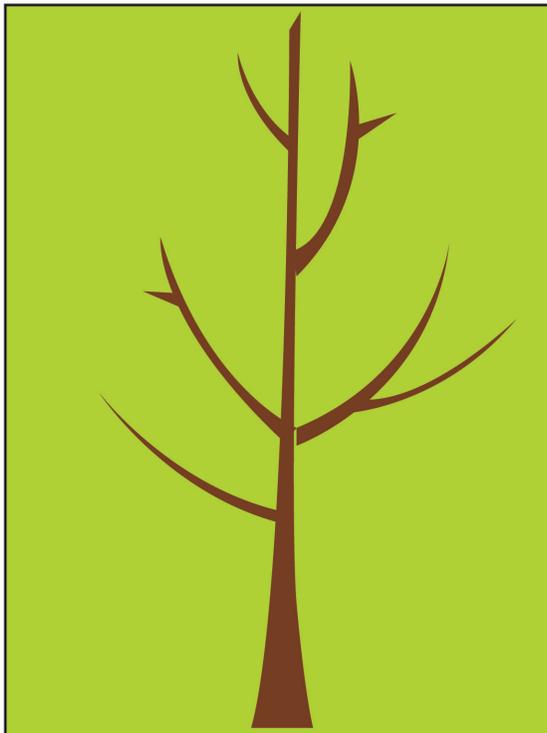


Missional Church Convocation



The
SIMPLE
Life

God's Quiet
Revolution
of Love,
Forgiveness,
and Unity



July 14-16, 2011 - Chicago

the Center
for Parish
Development

**THE SIMPLE LIFE:
GOD'S QUIET REVOLUTION OF
LOVE, FORGIVENESS, AND UNITY**

CONVOCATION
July 14-16, 2011

**the Center
for Parish
Development**



www.missionalchurch.org

Dear colleague,

Welcome to the convocation, *The Simple Life: God's Quiet Revolution of Love, Forgiveness, and Unity*. Church leaders increasingly are recognizing the need for fresh and compelling vision and faithful shared practices if the church is to fulfill its missional calling in our day. Indeed God calls each generation to discern God's mission and discover how to live out this vocation in a credible and redemptive manner. We look to open our hearts and minds afresh to what God is doing in the world and how God is calling the church to participate.

May fresh winds of the Spirit blow through these days together! We are excited to partner with Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove in this convocation. Jonathan has gifts for bringing thoughtful biblical and historic perspectives to bear on the concrete habits, patterns, and priorities of how we think and do church. Expect to be blessed – and also challenged – by his presentations and interaction with him.

A particular feature of the convocation is the engagement together with Scripture. Through Ephesians, we will be drawn into the overarching narrative that is good news for the world and the church's call to a particular way of life and witness. Finding our place in God's drama and learning our parts is what Christians do together. As a communal practice it shapes both the thinking we bring to particular subjects of shared concern as well as our behavior together as church.

We hope you will experience the times of worship during these days as central to what we do here – not an add-on but key to how the Spirit is seeking to call us, shape us, and send us. We are grateful to Tom Wuest who will lead us in worship at frequent intervals throughout these two days.

Finally, we are blessed by your presence and are eager to learn with you what faithful vision and fruitful life we are called to as the church. We invite you to embrace this time of convocation – called together – as a rich learning and growth-full experience.

Again, we say welcome!

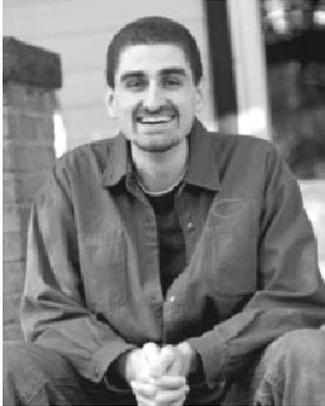
Inagrace Dietterich
Ray Schulte
Dale Ziemer

Beatrice Vansen-Saines
Jill Fenske

Jill Sanders
Paul Dietterich

Convocation Resource People

Featured Speaker:



Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove is a native of North Carolina, and is a graduate of Eastern University and Duke Divinity School. Jonathan is an Associate Minister at the historically black St. John's Baptist Church, and is engaged in peacemaking and reconciliation efforts in Durham, North Carolina. The Rutba House, where Jonathan lives with his wife Leah, their son JaiMichael, and other friends, is a new monastic community that prays, eats, and lives together, welcoming neighbors and the homeless. Jonathan directs the School for Conversion, an alternative seminary that hosts courses around the country. He is Editor of the New Monastic Library Series (Cascade Books) and Associate Editor of the Resources for Reconciliation Series (InterVarsity Press). As a grassroots intellectual and popular theologian Jonathan is a leader in conversations about Christianity in the 21st Century.

Bible study leader:



Inagrace Dietterich is director for Theological Research at the Center for Parish Development and Bible study leader for this Convocation. She is a theologian, researcher, consultant, and teacher with a deep commitment to the transformation of the church in today's world. She is a contributing author to *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*, *Stormfront: The Good News of God*, and *Missional Evangelism*. Inagrace has authored numerous Bible study resources published by the Center for Parish Development.



Worship leader:

Tom Wuest comes from the Jacob's Well community in Vancouver, B.C., and is a uniquely gifted contemporary liturgist and liturgical musician. Tom has trained at Regent College in Vancouver. Four of Tom's songs were included in the songbook in *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals* (2010), for which Jonathan has shared authorship. Tom and Karen and their children are currently in transition as they move from Vancouver to Ohio.

THE SIMPLE LIFE: GOD'S QUIET REVOLUTION OF LOVE, FORTIVENESS, AND UNITY

Learning Objectives for this Convocation

As a result of your participation in this convocation you can expect to:

1. Consider anew the scope and power of the simple life – God's quiet revolution of love, forgiveness and unity.
2. Explore the implications of God's simple way for the practice of Christian life in community.
3. Engage afresh the cosmic and practical perspectives of Ephesians for embracing the church's identity and calling in today's world.
4. Experience the blessing of richly connecting in a learning community seeking to think in new ways, perceive in new ways and act on the basis of shared learning.

Realistic Expectations

You can realistically expect to:

1. Work in a variety of groupings: in the plenary group, working alone, with one or two others, but mostly as a table group.
2. Engage in worship and prayer together.
3. Participate in communal Bible study processes.
4. Be stimulated by thought provoking presentations.
5. Share your experience and learn from others as they share.
6. Discover a range of perspectives that can broaden your horizons.
7. Explore common ground for responding to the challenges and opportunities facing the church today.
8. Meet and link arms with others, sharing stories of transformation and hope.

Proposed Norms

In this convocation, it is important to identify those norms that will help to create and sustain a learning environment. Therefore, at the outset, let us declare that it is OK to:

1. Take responsibility for your own learning.
2. Use your best active listening skills.
3. Make room in your table conversation for each other, making sure everyone has opportunity to speak and to listen.
4. Disagree with each other, share a divergent point of view.
5. Welcome each other with your words and actions.
6. Try out new ways of thinking, behaving, and perceiving in a safe environment.
7. Build on each other's ideas—and give them credit for it.
8. Have fun while working hard.

God's Quiet Revolution

The revolutions we read about in newspapers and history books aren't usually quiet. They're fueled by the power of military alliances of the "power of the people." The point of any revolution is to turn things around—to change the world that is into the world that ought to be. But the revolutions we hear about are the loud ones....The "quiet revolution" of God's kingdom doesn't spring up big and tall, parading its supremacy over all the other kingdoms of the earth. Instead, it spreads underground. It thrives beneath the surface. When you whack some little piece off, it just spreads somewhere else. And in the end, God's kingdom wins.

Jonathan Wilson-Hargrove

Convocation Design

Thursday, July 14

- 1:00 p.m. Gathering
 1:30 **SESSION ONE: Starting with Stuff.**
 Worship
 Presentation
 Bible Study
 5:00 Worship
 6:00 Dinner
 7:00 **SESSION TWO: The Heart of the Matter**
 Bible Study
 Group interaction and learning
 Worship
 Wine and cheese
 9:00 Prayer at close of day

Friday, July 15

- 8:45 **SESSION THREE: Finding Our Place**
 Worship
 Presentation
 Bible Study
 12:30 Lunch
 2:00 **SESSION FOUR: Getting the Rhythm Right**
 Worship
 Presentation
 Bible Study
 5:00 Worship
 Break
 6:00 Dinner
 7:00 Cultivating the missional church – a Journey of the People of God

Saturday, July 16

- 8:45 **SESSION FIVE: Keeping our Ears to the Ground**
 Worship
 Presentation
 Bible Study
 11:30 Closing Worship
 12:30 Lunch

The Ongoing Drama of God's Victory

[We will explore] Ephesians as a drama, a gospel script that invites performance by communities of people. Paul's letter is a narrative account of the victory of God in Christ over the powers that have hijacked God's world. And like any drama, it contains some twists and surprises. It involves subversion. Paul undoes and overturns our expectations of how things ought to work. We love stories of triumph, and we want to be on the winning side, but God does not defeat his enemies in the way we might anticipate. In fact, God subverts human triumphalism in that he wins by losing. He unleashes resurrection life on his world through the dying and rising again of Jesus Christ. Because of God's surprising ways, God's people will play subversive roles in the gospel drama as we resist the corruptions of the present age.

This is also a theological reading of Ephesians in that the drama is set within the wider context of the Christian narrative of creation, fall, and redemption. God is on a mission to reclaim his broken creation and doing so through Jesus Christ and his people, the church. The main problem in the drama of Ephesians is that suprahuman cosmic powers have hijacked and perverted the world. They have corrupted creation so that there is conflict, oppression, division, exploitation, and destruction. God had promised that he would restore all things so that creation once again flourishes, and he is fulfilling these promises in Christ. Christ has dealt a death blow to the powers in the death and resurrection of Jesus. He has broken their stranglehold over creation, freeing it from their destructive grip. And God has installed Jesus Christ as cosmic Lord, exalted far above the powers that rule the present evil age. We do not yet see the full and final effects of Jesus' reign—the kingdom of God has not yet come in its fullness. But God has begun his work of restoring creation by giving life to people once trapped in death and by uniting a formerly divided humanity. And God is building the multiracial, multiethnic, multigenerational church of Jesus Christ, which stands as monument to his triumph over the powers of darkness.

Timothy G. Gombis

Convocation Design

Daily schedule

Table Group Process

Worship

Thursday, July 14

1:00 p.m. Gathering

SESSION ONE

1:30 p.m. Welcome, Introductions, Worship (p.30)

2:30 **Presentation: Starting With Stuff.** Jonathan Wilson-Hargrove

When we think about the difference God makes in our lives, we often think first about ideas, emotions, or a sense of purpose. But the story of Jesus begins with incarnation — God taking on human flesh and getting tied up with stuff. To be Christ’s body in the world is to take seriously the material conditions of our daily lives and of the life we share in common as local congregations. A key aspect of the simple life is a spirituality of “stuff.”

SPACE FOR YOUR NOTES

3:30 Break

4:00 Bible Study: **The Fullness of God's Cosmic Vision**

PART I

Paul's great prayer at the opening of Ephesians is a celebration of the larger story within which every single Christian story—stories of commitment, faith, obedience, and hope—is set. Every community tells a story about itself. Every nation has a history. Many Americans trace their history back to Christopher Columbus, the pilgrims, and the vision of the "Founding Fathers." In the first chapter of Ephesians Paul tells of a new history based in God's cosmic vision. Christians rightly understand themselves when their history begins with the mission of God passionately to pursue and redeem humanity and to restore them to their proper flourishing in God's good world for the glory of God's name.

Read Ephesians 1:1-14.

1. How does Paul trace the history of the people of God?

2. How is this gift of a new history both a challenge and a wonderful encouragement?

PART II

Paul prays that readers might see themselves and their situations from a renewed perspective, "having the eyes of your hearts enlightened." He attempts to give a heavenly interpretation of reality. The transforming and life-giving vision that Ephesians portrays functions to expand the horizons of our imaginations so that we can envision reality from the perspective that Jesus Christ rules this world and longs for us to enjoy his redemptive reign. On a stage that includes both heaven and earth, Paul seeks radically to alter and reorient our vision of reality in the most comprehensive sense.

Read Ephesians 1:15-18

According to Paul's prayer, we acquire wisdom as we get to know God. How does knowing Jesus more help us see things differently?

PART III

The characters that Paul calls the “powers and authorities” have a long history in Scripture and Jewish tradition. They are utilized in order to provide a comprehensive account of how radically and completely the cosmos has become corrupted by sin. Rather than uphold God's shalom, they rebelled and seek to incite the basest human desires. God has decisively broken their iron grip of enslavement over the world, defeating the powers and freeing creation in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Read Ephesians 1:19-23

1. Identify areas of life where you see the influence of “powers and authorities” distorting or blocking the fulfillment of life as intended by God.

2. Why is it important for us to know that whatever powers exist—real or imaginary, human or nonhuman—they are *all* subject to Christ?

3. What difference does the power and authority of Christ make for the identity and purpose of the church?

A Gospel-Shaped Imagination

The gospel calls us to put off destructive, oppressive, and idolatrous roles that we have adopted to this point in our lives and to enter the truth fully, taking on and inhabiting roles that are supplied to us by the gospel of Jesus Christ. According to Ephesians, the fallen powers that rule the present evil age seek to dominate and enslave our imaginations so that we inhabit narratives of oppression and enslavement. Paul calls us to have our imagination shaped by the truth of the gospel, so that we can enjoy more and more of the life of God on earth.

As the Spirit-empowered body of Christ on earth, the church participates in and performs the drama of God's victory over the powers and authorities. This mission demands that we develop the skills of cultural analysis and cultivate a shrewd and critical vision of the world. Living in hostile territory where our identity is always being contested, the church must develop and foster patterns of life that can become performances of the redemptive power of God in the world.

Timothy G. Gombis

5:00 Worship (p.34)

Break

6:00 Dinner

SESSION TWO

7:00 Bible Study: **The Church as the Household of God**

PART I

Paul begins Ephesians 2 by portraying in dark tones the threatening situation in which the people of God are found. In an economy of words—only three verses—Paul depicts an extremely complex and tangled situation in which a variety of factors work together to produce the oppression of this present evil age. We have here our own captivity, the involvement of Satan, and the dynamics of the present evil age, along with the role played by the human will.

Read Ephesians 2:1-10.

1. We live in a world where human beings, left to themselves, not only choose the wrong direction, but remain cheerfully confident that it is in fact the right one. What forces lure or compel us to go in the wrong direction?

2. What has God done to get us on the right road? Why?

3. As God's workmanship, Christians are at the center of God's new creation. What difference does it make that the church is God's artistic creation?

PART II

Paul narrates how God has overcome another horrible perversion of God's good world—the division and self-destruction of humanity. Rather than utilizing our differences to enrich and bless one another, our differences have been hijacked by the powers to serve their own ends of enslaving and oppressing humanity.

Read Ephesians 2:11-12

What was the situation of the Gentiles before Christ?

Worship (p.37)

Wine and Cheese

Prayer at the Close of the Day (p.40)

9:00 adjourn for the evening

Friday, July 23

SESSION THREE

8:45 Worship (p.43)

9:15 **Presentation: Finding our Place.** Jonathan Wilson-Hargrove

When Israel is set free from the bondage of Egypt, they move from a death-dealing system into a new way of living. But that way of living requires a place—a holy land. When Israel goes into exile, they learn to “seek the peace of the city” where they are—to see that every place can be made holy in God’s kingdom. God’s revolution recalls the ancient practice of stability and its lessons for the contemporary church as we seek to find a place for a simple life with God and other friends to happen.

SPACE FOR NOTES

- b. How is this message viewed by the “powers and authorities” of the world?
- c. What is the challenge to the church in this prayer?
- d. What is the opportunity?

The Manifold Wisdom of God

In the face of the powers and authorities who are powerless to create and whose rule over this present evil age is characterized by destruction, division, exploitation, and oppression, God demonstrates his power by his ability to create his one new people and to make them flourish in the midst of enemy territory, thus confounding the evil powers.

God’s people are to confess their own brokenness and weakness and seek to be transformed by God’s power. Thus Paul does not envision a confrontational approach to the world but one that is gracious, nonthreatening, and non-coercive. Cruciform communities draw on and release the resurrection power of God. Because of this, there is no need to cultivate a sales-pitch approach to relating to outsiders. We can trust the power of the Spirit to work through us to bless the world.

This is great news, of course. God is in the process of setting us free and restoring creation! But Ephesians calls us to be a discerning people, since God’s triumph looks nothing like what we would expect. Jesus Christ is not a Superman figure who defeats his enemies through sheer power, and God’s victory in Christ absolutely rules out triumphalism among God’s people. God’s way of working is radically subversive, overthrowing perverted human reasoning. God triumphs through the death of Jesus Christ. That is, Jesus wins by losing. This confounds our fallen human reasoning, since we are used to winning by winning. We triumph through trouncing our enemies. But this is not God’s way. God give himself up, taking on the brokenness of the world and going to death on our behalf. God raised Jesus from the dead and exalted him as cosmic Lord, indicating that the mode of life for God’s people is cruciformity—purposefully patterning our lives after the cross of Jesus Christ.

Timothy G. Grobis

SESSION FOUR

2:00 Worship (p.46)

Presentation: Getting the Rhythm Right. Jonathan Wilson-Hargrove

The desert tradition tells a story about how Abba Antony struggled with prayer in his cell until he saw in a vision another monk going into his cell to pray, then coming out to weave baskets, then going into pray again. This rhythm of “prayer and work” became a touchstone of the monastic tradition. What does it mean for a congregation to find healthy rhythms of prayer and work to share in common? How does this lead us deeper into God’s quiet revolution. The simple life embodies a practical theology of prayer and work.

SPACE FOR NOTES

3:30 Break

Read Ephesians 4:17-31

1. How does Paul describe the pagan mind and heart and what behavior resulted?
2. What does it mean to be “renewed in the spirit of your mind”?
3. What new behaviors are we to put on instead, and what reason does Paul give for each.
4. Scan through the “new behaviors” found at the end of Ephesians 4, reading them as a description of how God acts toward us. How does that make us think and feel differently about the passage?

A Being Transformed Community

The new reality brought about by the resurrection of Jesus has been “created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the truth” (Eph. 4:24). The new humanity is an inaugurated form of the fully renewed creation. It is what the entire world will be like when God comes to finally make it fully new. In the present age the church lives in this already but not yet tension. Even though raised up into the new humanity, joined to Christ by the Spirit of God, we also participate in the old humanity. Thus ongoing transformation—being renewed in the spirit—is required.

Church leaders are to be drama directors. They guide and direct the community in transformation by isolating and identifying poor performances and helping to renew the community’s imagination. They also take the initiative to help create redemptive practices and habits of life that become faithful performances of the gospel.

The dynamic of transformation involves three elements (1) churches are to identify practice, habits and patterns of life that are characteristic of the old humanity and take steps to rid them from their lives and their communities. (2) They are to renew their imaginations, reminding themselves of the drama they inhabit and the characters they have become. A renewed imagination is powerful, since it shapes how we view ourselves, our place in this world and our relationships with others. (3) We must imagine, create and then cultivate practices, habits of mind and patterns of thought, speech and action that are characteristic of the new humanity.

Timothy G. Gombis

5:00 Worship (p.47)

 Break

6:00 Dinner

7:00 Evening Session: Cultivating the missional church as a Journey of the People of God
(followed by wine and cheese)

Saturday, July 24

SESSION FIVE

8:45 Worship (p.51)

9:00 **Presentation: Keeping Our Ears to the Ground.** Jonathan Wilson-Hargrove

Central to any community's decision making process is the practice of discernment. We know the life we're made for and see the road ahead as we listen to the Spirit. But how do we learn to hear God in community? Who tells our story? Whose needs are heard? God's quiet revolution calls for the posture of obedience that gets people and congregations in touch with those things that touch the heart of God.

SPACE FOR YOUR NOTES

10:00 Break

10:30 Bible Study: **Walking Together in Love**

PART I

For Paul the church performs its role faithfully when it cultivates an ongoing dynamic of transformation—identifying destructive practices and patterns and putting them off; renewing our imaginations according to the drama of redemption and creating new communal practices that become faithful performances of the life of Jesus on earth. Using the images of light and darkness, he describes the behavior of community life transformed by God’s love and power.

Read Ephesians 5:1-5:20

1. Describe the difference between the life of darkness and the life of lightness.

2. How are those “filled with the Spirit” to relate to one another? How does this behavior manifest the church’s identity as the dwelling place of God in Christ by the Spirit?

PART II

The household code found in Ephesians 5 has often been used to justify aggressively manipulative and controlling behavior. But what if Paul is laying out a manifesto for a New Humanity, painting in broad strokes a vision for how believers ought to conduct themselves in new creation communities, thus epitomizing the triumph of God in Christ. Then rather than allowing intimate relationships to be defined by the chaotic, destructive, and divisive social patterns created and fostered by the evil powers, they are to be defined by the command in 5:18-21 to “be filled with the Spirit.” As “the household of God,” as players in God’s gospel drama, the church is to adopt cruciform postures toward one another. God’s new people are to love and honor others, give themselves for the sake of others and operate through weakness and curciformity.

Read Ephesians 5:21-6:9

1. How have you experienced these texts being used?

2. What is the meaning of verse 21: “Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ”?

3. Placing these texts within the context of the whole of Ephesians, has your interpretation of these texts changed? In what way?

PART III. The whole armor of God 6:10-23

According to Ephesians, the church performs the cosmically significant role of divine warfare through mundane embodiments of God's life on earth. Cosmic conflict does not involve defiant chest thumping in the face of defeated powers. On the contrary, we are called to purposeful, humble, cruciform faithfulness as we perform Jesus for the good of the world. Paul does not derive the armor of God from his pondering the armor of a Roman soldier, but from a consideration of the Scriptures. Just as God waged warfare in the past to vindicate his name, to rescue his people or to judge his people, so now God wages warfare against the powers through the church. The people of God are to put on God's own virtues because the church now plays the role of divine warrior on earth. Putting on the whole armor of God is an aspect of putting on Christ, that is, being united with Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit, recognizing the riches that God has lavished upon us and responding appropriately by standing firm as a united church against those dark forces that strive against God's will.

Viewed as a summary of the entire book of Ephesians, this text gives a sober, realistic assessment both of the struggle the church is engaged in and the weapons at its disposal.

Read Ephesians 6:10-23. Then read Isaiah 59:15-19.

1. Drawing upon this passage, but also from all aspects of the Convocation, describe what have you learned about the influence of "powers and authorities"? In other words, identify the forces that are attempting to block God's quiet revolution of love, forgiveness, and unity.

2. What does it mean to talk about the church as engaged in "divine warfare"? In other words, how is the church to cultivate the simple life of God's quiet revolution?

3. Use the various aspects of the armor of God to pull together your learnings about the way in which the church's is called and empowered to participate in God's drama of redemption: the simple life found in God's quiet revolution of love, forgiveness, and unity.

a. The belt of truth

b. The breastplate of righteousness

c. The shoes of peace

d. The shield of faith

e. The helmet of salvation

f. The sword of the Spirit

g. Prayer in the Spirit

11:30 Closing Worship (p.53)

12:30 Lunch

The Whole Armor of God

Paul situates the church *as* the divine warrior, carrying our spiritual warfare in the world. As the presence of God on earth, a reality brought about by the Spirit, the church is the place where the world encounters Jesus Christ and the agency through which Jesus Christ blesses the world with his love and grace. By putting on the whole armor of God, the church is called to inhabit the victory that God has already accomplished in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Belt of Truth: Roman soldiers wore belts to hold up their togas so they could run and not trip. The truth of God keeps us from tumbling into error. God's truth is deeper than our experience of this life. To put on the belt of truth is to have the courage to stand on God's truth in the face of the experience of life.

The Breastplate of Righteousness. The Breastplate covers the vital organs. God's love protects the core of our being. God is the source of righteousness which is to be reflected in the lives of believers.

Shoes of Peace. The Roman Army wore shoes to fight, but Christians are to wear shoes to spread peace. This unconventional use of armor reminds us that God's ways are not our ways.

The Shield of Faith. Roman shields were interlocking which made an army nearly invincible, because there was no gap. Christians cannot stand alone against opposing forces; we need each other in order to live faithfully. A Christian community helps us stand strong. Faith knows that our worth is derived from the One to whom we belong, that God's love embraces us, sets us free to be truly ourselves, and helps us accept the people around us.

The Helmut of Salvation. A helmet covers the head and thinking. Remembering that salvation comes by hearing and believing in Christ protects us from those who want to lead us astray. To be reminded of God's grace encourages us when our thoughts may not be honorable, wholesome, or pure.

The Sword of the Spirit. The Sword is word of God, only offensive weapon mentioned in Ephesian's imagery. We are not to use weapons of metal but God's word, which tells of God's love through Jesus. The divine gift of the gospel, the word heard and believed, continues to change lives as believers use Scripture to build up one another in unity.

Prayer. Prayer ought to be like breathing, something done at all times with or without consciousness. Prayer is not an event that you go to and then leave. It is the way of being for those who would be disciples of Jesus Christ.

With these seven weapons of the Spirit, we are perfectly equipped for standing firm, no matter where we are. Following Jesus is not easy. It takes the whole armor of God to live together in Christian community, witnessing to God's triumph over the powers and authorities.

Hollie M. Holt-Woehl

Worship Resources

Opening Worship: Thursday, July 14

(**bold** parts are response of the people)

CALL TO WORSHIP

God is with us. **We are not alone.**

Christ is present here. **The Spirit moves among us.**

Let us give thanks to God. **In memory and in hope.**

SING PRAISE TO GOD¹

Sing praise to God, who has shaped and sustains all creation!

Sing praise, my soul, in profound and complete adoration!

Gladsome rejoice – organ and trumpet and voice –

Joining God's great congregation.

Praise God, our guardian, who lovingly offers correction,

Who, as on eagle's wings, saves us from sinful dejection.

Have you observed, how we are always preserved

By God's parental affection?²

Sing praise to God, with sincere thanks for all your successes.

Merciful God ever loves to encourage and bless us.

Only conceive, what godly strength can achieve:

Strength that would touch and caress us.

Sing praise, my soul, the great name of your high God commending.

All that have life and breath join you, their notes sweetly blending.

God is your light!

Soul, ever keep this in sight:

Amen, amen never ending.

PRAYER OF ORIENTATION

Everlasting God, you alone are the Lord

over all the kingdoms of the earth.

You bring out the starry host one by one

and call them each by name.

You guided your people in the desert

with a cloudy pillar by day and a pillar of fire by night.

You led your people into the land you had prepared for them,

the mountain of your inheritance, the sanctuary your hands established.

Bring your people together in perfect peace

and establish the work of our hands for us –

yes, establish the work of our hands. **Amen.**

ALL CREATURES OF OUR GOD AND KING²

All creatures of our God and king

Lift up your voice and with us sing

Alleluia, Alleluia, Thou burning sun with golden beam

Thou silver moon with softer gleam

O praise him, O praise him, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

Thou rushing wind that art so strong

Ye clouds that sail in heav'n along

O praise him, Alleluia, Thou rising morn in praise rejoice

Ye lights of evening find a voice,

O praise him, O praise him, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

Thou flowing water pure and clear, make music for thy Lord to hear

Alleluia, Alleluia, Thou fire so masterful and bright

That givest us both warmth and light,

O praise him, O praise him, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

And all people of tender heart, forgiving others take your part

O sing ye, 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

OVERVIEW OF THE CONVOCATION

MEETING AND CONNECTING WITH ONE ANOTHER – PASSING THE PEACE

In table groups: Go around the table and share about yourself – who you are, your ministry setting, your hopes for this convocation. When each has finished, say to her/him:

All: The peace of the Lord be with you.

She/he responds: His peace be with you.

SCRIPTURE READING

Reader: In the beginning was the Word,

**ALL: And the Word was with God,
 And the Word was God.**

Reader: A reading from Ephesians, chapter 1 verses 1-14

Reader: For God's word in Scripture.
 For God's word among us.
 For God's word engaging the world.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

PRAYER FOR THE CONVOCATION

Leader: ...God, in your mercy,

ALL: Hear our prayer.

HE SHALL REIGN³*Isaiah 61; Philippians 2*

Tom Wuest

$\text{♩} = 45$

Verse 1

C2 G/B Am9 G

Come Bro - ken Come Ca - pive Come all you who — mourn. —

5 C2 G/B D/A C2

Oh groa - ning cre - a - tion re - joice A chi - ld

10 G/B Am9 G C2 G/B

A Sa - voir Our hea - ling He — brings. — What free - dom What con - sol - a -

15 D/A **Chorus** G C G/B

tion. He shall reign — He shall reign — He shall

20 Am G D C G

reign — He shall reign — He shall reign — He shall reign —

25 G C G/B Am G

He shall reign — He shall reign — He shall reign —

29 D C G

He shall reign — He shall reign — He shall reign —

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 6/8 time signature. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 45. The score is divided into Verse 1 and a Chorus. Verse 1 consists of 14 measures, and the Chorus consists of 15 measures. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words underlined. Chords are indicated above the notes.

Verse 2

He'll order His Kingdom with justice and peace.
 O merciful One, O lamb of God.
 All nations, all people, all heaven and earth,
 Will bow down and to Him proclaim.

UNLESS THE LORD BUILDS⁴*Psalms 127*

Unless the Lord builds
 Unless the Lord builds this house
 We labor in vain, in vain
 We labor in vain, in vain

BENEDICTION

Holy God, grant us your blessing as we begin our time together.

Confirm the truth which guides our lives.

Confront us with the truth that we may turn toward your way.

We do not ask for what we want but for what we need, and we offer who we are and what we will do here to you, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Thursday 5pm Worship

CALL TO WORSHIP

God is with us. **We are not alone.**

Christ is present here. **The Spirit moves among us.**

Let us give thanks to God. **In memory and in hope.**

CREATOR OF ORION⁵

(Amos 5, Colossians 1, John 1, Psalm 147, Revelation 21)

Creator of Orion and the Pleiades

One who turns the shadow of death into day

Voice beheld in the morning psalm of creation

Lord of all crucified from the dawn of time

You are the Lamb of God

Who takes away the sin of the world

You are the Lamb of God

King of Kings, Lord of Lords

You will gather us in and bind up our broken

You will loosen the chains on all our oppressed

You will lead us to living fountains of water

You will wipe away all tears from our eyes

O LORD HAVE MERCY⁶

Tom Wuest



PRAYER OF ORIENTATION**SCRIPTURE READING**

Reader: O God of the weak,
 O God of the lowly,
 O God of the righteous,
 O protector of your people,

ALL: Speak through your Word.

Reader: A reading from Ephesians in chapter 1, verses 15-23

THANKSGIVING FOR THE MATERIAL CONDITIONS OF OUR DAILY LIVES⁷

Lord God, Creator of All, in your wisdom,
 you have bound us together so that we must depend on others
 for the food we eat,
 the resources we use,
 the gifts of your creation that bring life, health and joy.

Creator God, we give thanks.

Holy be the hands that sew our clothes so that we do not have to go naked;
 Sacred be the hands that build our homes so that we do not have to be cold;
 Blessed be the hands that work the land so that we do not have to go hungry.

Creator God, we give thanks

Holy be the feet of all who labor so that we might have rest,
 Sacred be the feet of all who run swiftly to stand with the oppressed,

Blessed be the feet of all whose bodies are too broken or weary to stand.

Creator God, we give thanks

Holy be the sound of children laughing to take away our sorrow,

Sacred be the sound of water falling to take away our thirst,

Blessed be the sound of your people singing to heal our troubled hearts.

Creator God, we give thanks

Holy be the bodies of those who know hunger,

Sacred be the bodies of those who are broken.

Blessed be the bodies of those who suffer.

In your mercy and grace,

Soften our callous hearts and

fill us with gratitude for all the gifts you have given us.

In your love,

Break down the walls that separate us and

guide us along your path of peace—

That we might humbly worship you in Spirit and Truth. **Amen**

BE THOU MY VISION⁸

Be thou my vision O Lord of my heart

Naught be all else to me, save that thou art

Thou my best thought by day or by night

Waking or sleeping Thy presence my light

Riches I heed not nor vain empty praise

Thou my inheritance now and always

Thou and thou only first in my heart

Great God of heaven my treasure thou art

Be thou my wisdom and thou my true word

I ever with thee and thou with me Lord

Heart of my own heart whatever befall

Still be my vision O ruler of all

BLESSING

On us and our learning community,

the blessing of God.

On speaking and listening,

the peace of God.

On our living and believing,

the love of God.

At our end and our beginning,

the arms of God to welcome us and bring us home. Amen.

Thursday Evening Worship⁹

WALK IN THE LIGHT

Walk in the light, the beautiful light.

Come where the dew drops of mercy shine bright.

Shine all around us by day and by night.

Jesus, the light of the world.

ALL SAY IN UNISON:

O gracious Light,

Pure brightness of the ever-living Father in heaven,

O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!

Now as we come to the setting of the sun,

And our eyes behold the evening light,

We sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 2:13-14

ALL THINGS RECONCILED¹⁰

Ephesians 2

You are our peace
 You have made us one
 You have broken down the barrier walls
 And abolished our hate

You put to death the enmity
 Preached peace far and near
 Strangers no longer now but brothers and sisters
 We believe Lord and we await
 Strangers no longer now but brothers and sisters
 We believe Lord and we await

All things reconciled, All things reconciled
 by the blood
 of Jesus

All things reconciled, All things reconciled
 through the cross
 of Christ

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 2:19-22

ALL SAY IN UNISON:

**You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
 O Son of God, O Giver of life,
 Your glory fills the whole world.**

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

Congregation offers prayers for others.

Following each prayer, all say: **Lord, hear our prayer**

Our Father...

BLESSING

Leader: God, give us the lamp of love which never fails, that it may burn within and through us, shedding its light on those around us. By its brightness give us a vision of that holy city where the true and never-failing Light, Jesus Christ, lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

ALL: **May the Lord bless us and keep us from all harm, and may God lead us to eternal life. Amen.**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God, all creatures here below.

Praise God above, ye heavenly host.

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen

Prayer at the Close of the Day

After a time of fellowship, all are invited to gather for prayer...

ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT¹¹

Psalms 42, 91

Your song will go with us

Your song will go with us

Your song will go with us

All through the night

All through the night

Your wings will cover us...

All through the night..

Hope thou in God my child...

All through the night.

I HEARD THE VOICE OF JESUS SAY¹²

I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto me and rest;

Lay down, thy weary one, lay down Thy head upon my breast."

I came to Jesus as I was, Weary and worn and sad;

I found in Him resting place, And He has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Behold, I freely give

The living water; thirsty one, Stoop down and drink and live."

I came to Jesus, and I drank of that life giving stream;

My thirst was quenched my soul revived, And now I live in Him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say, "I am this dark world's light;

Look unto me, thy morn shall rise, And all thy day be bright."

I looked to Jesus, and I found in him my star, my sun;

And in that light of life I'll walk, Till traveling days are done

LAUDATE OMNES GENTES¹³

Laudate omnes gentes

Laudate Dominum.

Laudate omnes gentes

Laudate Dominum.

Sing praises, all you peoples

Sing praises to the Lord.

Sing praises, all you peoples,

Sing praises to the Lord!

Canten todas alabanzas

Canten las al Señor!

Canten todas alabanzas

Canten las al Señor!

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Reflecting the wideness of God's mercy for the whole of the world...

Leader: We offer prayers for God's mission, the whole church, communities of faith everywhere...

After each petition: God in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

Leader: We offer prayers for this learning community, our speaking and listening, our living and believing...

After each petition: God in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

Leader: We offer prayers for the nations, and those in need. Special concerns...

After each petition: God in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

Leader: Into your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

UNDERNEATH THE SHADOW¹⁴*Psalm 91*

Underneath the shadow of Your wings,
 we dwell underneath the shadow of your wings
 Hidden close to thee
 We find rest

EVERLASTING GOD¹⁵*Psalms 65, 146 - 147; Luke 1*

Everlasting God, You alone are the Lord
 Over all the kingdoms of the earth.
 You bring out your starry host one by one
 And call them all by name.

Everlasting God, you weigh clouds with heavy dew,
 Pour spring rains over barren land.
 You warm soil with golden light,
 Rolling hills you drape in silken moss.

Your grace holds us near
 Your mercies rise
 Long will our hearts behold You
 Everlasting God

Everlasting God, You grant us daily breath,
 Guide our feet along the path of peace.
 You preserve the poor outcast, hear prisoner's cries,
 And soothe our broken hearts.

Everlasting God, You alone are the Lord
 Over all the creatures of the earth.
 You will seal our lands with peace

You cover us, Your mercy shall endure.

BLESSING UPON ONE ANOTHER

ALL: I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. Amen.

Friday Morning Worship

CALL TO WORSHIP

O Lord, let my soul rise up to meet you

as the day rises to meet the sun.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen

Come, let us bow down and bend the knee: Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY¹⁶

Holy holy holy Lord God almighty

Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee

Holy holy holy merciful and mighty

God in three persons, blessed Trinity

Holy holy holy all the saints adore thee

Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea

Cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee

Which wert and art and ever more shalt be

Holy holy holy tho the darkness hide Thee
 Tho the eyes of sinful ones your Thy glory may not see
 Only Thou art holy there is none beside Thee
 Perfect in power, in love and purity

Holy holy holy Lord God almighty
 All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea
 Holy holy holy merciful and mighty
 GOD IN THREE PERSONS, BLESSED TRINITY

PRAYER OF ORIENTATION¹⁷

We will rejoice in You our Maker!

We will be joyful in You, our King!

You who count the number of the stars and call them all by name,

Free us to rejoice and be glad in all you create.

You, who cover the heavens with clouds, prepare rain for the earth and make grass grow upon the mountain tops,

Free us to rejoice and be glad in all you create.

You, who shelter your beloved creatures in homes and satisfy every beast with the fruit of your works,

Free us to rejoice and be glad in all you create.

You, who make wine to gladden the hearts of your people and fill them with the finest wheat,

Free us to rejoice and be glad in all you create.

We will rejoice in You our Maker!

We will be joyful in You, our King!

You, who will lead the wolf and the lamb to feed together,

Lead us on your path towards restoration.

You, who will make your peace flow like a river and break down the dividing walls between all nations,

Lead us on your path towards restoration.

You, who will restore the waste places to dwell in and mend every breach,

Lead us on your path towards restoration.

You, who will gather the outcasts to your bosom and cradle the desolate in your lap,

Lead us on your path towards restoration.

Until the day when your glory will pour over your creation like a mighty rushing stream,

We will hope in your mercy.

With each breath that you give us,

We will praise your holy name.**SCRIPTURE**

Leader: Listen to the Word of the Lord in Ephesians chapter 3, verses 7-13.

Leader: Word of God, Word of life.

ALL: Thanks be to God

CREATOR OF ORION¹⁸

(Amos 5, Colossians 1, John 1, Psalm 147, Revelation 21)

Creator of Orion and the Pleiades

One who turns the shadow of death into day

Voice beheld in the morning psalm of creation

Lord of all crucified from the dawn of time

You are the Lamb of God

Who takes away the sin of the world

You are the Lamb of God

King of Kings, Lord of Lords

You will gather us in and bind up our broken

You will loosen the chains on all our oppressed

You will lead us to living fountains of water

You will wipe away all tears from our eyes

SCRIPTURE

Leader: Listen to the word of the Lord in Ephesians chapter 3, verses 14-21.

Leader: Word of God, Word of Life.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

PRAYERS FOR THE DAY: THE WORLD, OTHERS, OURSELVES

After each petition: ...God, in your mercy,

ALL: hear our prayer.

UNLESS THE LORD BUILDS¹⁹

Unless the Lord builds

Unless the Lord builds this house (repeat)

We labor in vain, in vain

We labor in vain, in vain

BENEDICTION

May our glimpse of God's future propel us forward.

May the memory of our past give us courage.

May Christ's presence carry us through this day.

And may the Spirit equip us for every task.

Amen. **Amen.**

Friday 2 pm Worship

UNDERNEATH THE SHADOW²⁰

Psalm 91

Underneath the shadow of Your wings,

we dwell underneath the shadow of your wings

Hidden close to thee

We find rest

SCRIPTURE READING

Reader: Listen to the Word of the Lord in Ephesians chapter 4, verses 1-6.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord!

All: **Thanks be to God**

BLESSING

On us and our learning community,

the blessing of God.

On speaking and listening,

the peace of God.

On our living and believing,

the love of God.

At our end and our beginning,

the arms of God to welcome us and bring us home. Amen.

Friday 5pm Worship

CALL TO WORSHIP

God is with us. **We are not alone.**

Christ is present here. **The Spirit moves among us.**

Let us give thanks to God. **In memory and in hope.**

COME THOU ALMIGHTY KING²¹

Come Thou almighty King,

help us thy name to sing,

help us to praise!

Father all glorious,

o'er all victorious,

come and reign over us, Ancient of Days!

Come, thou incarnate Word,

gird on thy mighty sword,

our prayer attend!

Come, and thy people bless,

and give thy word success,

Spirit of holiness, on us descend!

Come, holy Comforter,
 thy sacred witness bear
 in this glad hour.
 Thou who almighty art,
 now rule in every heart,
 and ne'er from us depart, Spirit of power!

To thee, great One in Three,
 eternal praises be,
 hence, evermore.
 Thy sovereign majesty
 may we in glory see,
 and to eternity love and adore!

SCRIPTURE READING

Reader: This is the Scripture Reading, and it can be trusted.
 A reading from Ephesians chapter 4 verse 25 through chapter 5 verse 2.

Reader: This is the Scripture Reading, and it can be trusted.

ALL: Amen.

CONFESSION²²

Blessed are you, Lord!
 For You build up what has been torn down.
 You gather together those who have been outcast.
 You make peace at borders.
 You keep truth forever.

But we turn rivers into wilderness.

We push the hungry into wastelands.

When the possessions of the poor are seized, we are silent.

Though we do not sow, we reap;

Though we do not plant, we harvest.

Have mercy on us Lord.

We wait for your loving kindness
to mend what has been broken
so your light will dawn in our darkness. Amen

LAMB OF GOD²³

Tom Wuest

Part 1 $\text{♩} = 70$

C G Am C/G F C G

(Skip 1x) () world. Oh Lamb of God You take a-way the sin of the

Part 2

Have Mer - cy on us and grant us peace Have

Part 3

Be - hold Him the Lamb of God Be

WORDS OF RECONCILIATION

Jesus taught us to speak of hope as the coming of God's kingdom.

We believe that God is at work in our world, turning hopeless and evil situations into good.

We believe that goodness and justice and love will triumph in the end and that tyranny and oppression cannot last forever.

One day all tears will be wiped away; the lamb will lie down with the lion, and justice will roll down like a mighty stream.

True peace and true reconciliation are not only desired, they are assured in Christ.

This is our faith! This is our hope!

THANKSGIVING FOR LIFE TOGETHER IN COMMUNITY*Giving thanks with Bread and Cup*

Leader: We believe in the creative power of the Holy Spirit present in our lives and in our actions and in our presence to each other as the Church.

Right Side: Gracious God we thank you for this community of faith and friendship. We have come to know you and your truth in the sharing of your Word, in the sharing of our lives this day. Come Holy Spirit, be with us to open our minds and hearts in gratitude as we prepare to share bread and wine, symbols of the many ways you bless and nourish us.

Left Side: Jesus you have made sacred all meals shared in faith and friendship. Bless us in this sharing of ground grain and crushed grape, bread and wine. We remember Jesus' broken body and shed blood which point to the unbelievable gift of love that comes to us in Jesus. Bless the meal

that will follow and all those who have worked to bring it to us.

All: Lord God, in gratitude for the gift of life and faith, we offer ourselves as more loving disciples. Strengthen us to be courageous persons facing the complexities of life, to be insistent on the rights of the oppressed, to be effective instruments of your peace, to be hopeful and joyful people confident in your grace.

Leader: Grace us this evening so that we may be a faithful reflection of your presence among us.

You are now invited to send two people from your table to take a portion of bread and take a goblet for your table. Pass the bread around, each person serving the next while offering a prayer of thanksgiving for that person. Pass the wine, each person serving the next while offering a prayer of thanksgiving to God, until everyone has received.

GOD IS WITH US²⁴

God is with us, we are not alone

Christ is present here, the Spirit moves among us

Let us give thanks to God in memory and hope.

BENEDICTION²⁵

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you: **wherever he may send you;**

May he guide you through the wilderness: **protect you through the storm;**

May he bring you home rejoicing: **at the wonders he has shown you;**

May he bring you home rejoicing: **once again into our doors.**

Friday Evening Song

ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT²⁶ *Psalms 42, 91*

Your song will go with us

Your song will go with us

Your song will go with us

All through the night

All through the night

Your wings will cover us...

All through the night...

Hope thou in God my child...

All through the night.

Saturday Morning Worship

CALL TO WORSHIP²⁷

O Lord, let my soul rise up to meet you

as the day rises to meet the sun.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen

Come, let us bow down and bend the knee: Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

FOR THE BEAUTY OF THE EARTH²⁸

For the beauty of the earth, For the glory of the skies,
For the love which from our birth, Over and around us lies:

Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise.

For the wonder of each hour, Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale and tree and flower, Sun and moon and stars of light:

For the joy of human love, Brother, sister, parent, child;
Friends on earth and friends above; For all gentle thoughts and mild:

For Thy Church that evermore, Lifteth holy hands above,
Offering up on every shore, Her pure sacrifice of love:

For Thyself, best gift divine, To our race so freely given;
For that great, great love of Thine, Peace on earth and joy in heaven:

PRAYER OF ORIENTATION

Leader: Let us prepare ourselves for the day before us and claim its potential for
God's reign. Let us pray. We bring to God our concerns for today:

(congregation invited to offer prayers...)

Leader: We bring to God the people of today...

(congregation invited to offer prayers...)

Leader: And let us pray for ourselves...

(congregation invited to offer prayers...)

Leader: Let us pray together.

ALL: Holy God, give us wisdom in our speaking,

understanding in our listening,
 sensitivity in our relating
 and a continual focus on your rule.
**Bring us to this day's end
 blessed by having shared this beginning.
 We pray in Christ's name. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READING

Reader: A reading from Ephesians in Chapter 5, verses 15-21.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

HOLY HOLY HOLY²⁹

Sanctus (Argentina)

Holy, holy, holy. My heart , my heart adores you!
 My heart is glad to say the words: You are holy Lord

Santo, santo, santo. ¡Mi corazón te adora!
 Mi corazón te sabe decir: ¡santo eres Señor!

Dieu saint, Dieu saint, Dieu saint:
 mon coeur, mon coeur t`adore!
 Mon coeur le sait, mon coeur te le dit:
 Tu est saint Seigneur

BENEDICTION

“May the Sending One Defend You”³⁰

May the Sending One defend you, may the Seeking One amend you,

**May the Keeping One befriend you, in your gladness and in your
 grieving.**

May the Given One retrieve you, may the Gifted One relieve you,

May the Giving One receive you, in your falling and your restoring.

May the Binding One unite you—may the One Beloved invite you—

May the Loving One delight you—Three-in-One, joy in life unending.

Saturday Closing Worship

SING PRAISE TO GOD³¹

Sing praise to God, who has shaped and sustains all creation!
 Sing praise, my soul, in profound and complete adoration!
 Gladsome rejoice – organ and trumpet and voice –
 Joining God's great congregation.

Praise God, our guardian, who lovingly offers correction,
 Who, as on eagle's wings, saves us from sinful dejection.
 Have you observed, how we are always preserved
 By God's parental affection?

Sing praise to God, with sincere thanks for all your successes.
 Merciful God ever loves to encourage and bless us.
 Only conceive, what godly strength can achieve:
 Strength that would touch and caress us.

Sing praise, my soul, the great name of your high God commending.
 All that have life and breath join you, their notes sweetly blending.
 God is your light!
 Soul, ever keep this in sight:
 Amen, amen never ending.

(Other songs may be added)

CALL TO WORSHIP

God is with us. **We are not alone.**
 Christ is present here. **The Spirit moves among us.**
 Let us give thanks to God. **In memory and in hope.**

COME, THOU FOUNT OF EVERY BLESSING³²

Come, Thou Fount of every blessing,
 Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
 Streams of mercy, never ceasing,

Call for songs of loudest praise.
 Teach me some melodious sonnet,
 Sung by flaming tongues above;
 Praise the mount; I'm fixed upon it,
 Mount of God's unchanging love.

Here I raise my Ebenezer;
 Hither by thy help I come;
 And I hope by Thy good pleasure,
 Safely to arrive at home.
 Jesus sought me when a stranger,
 Wandering from the fold of God;
 He, to rescue me from danger,
 Interposed with precious blood.

O to grace how great a debtor
 Daily I'm constrained to be!
 Let that grace now, like a fetter,
 Bind my wandering heart to Thee:
 Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
 Prone to leave the God I love;
 Here's my heart, O, take and seal it;
 Seal it for thy courts above.

PRAYER OF ORIENTATION

Everlasting God, you alone are the Lord
over all the kingdoms of the earth.
 You bring out the starry host one by one
and call them each by name.
 You guided your people in the desert
with a cloudy pillar by day and a pillar of fire by night.
 You led your people into the land you had prepared for them,
**the mountain of your inheritance, the sanctuary your hands
 established.**
 Bring your people together in perfect peace
and establish the work of our hands for us--
 yes, establish the work of our hands. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Reader: In the beginning was the Word,

**ALL: And the Word was with God,
And the Word was God.**

Reader: A reading from Ephesians in chapter 6, verses 10-24.

Reader: For the Word of God in Scripture,
for the Word of God among us,
for the Word of God engaging our world,

ALL: Thanks be to God.

SHARING LEARNINGS FROM TABLE GROUPS

Summaries, sharing of insights and perspectives, gifts experienced in this time together.

AFFIRMATION

We are not alone;
we live in God's world.

We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.
We trust in God.
We are called to be the church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God. Amen.

PRAYERS FOR THE JOURNEY

After each prayer offered by the congregation: ...God, in your mercy,

ALL: hear our prayer.

Our Father....

GOD IS WITH US³³

God is with us, **we are not alone**

Christ is present here, **the Spirit moves among us**

Let us give thanks to God, **in memory and hope.**

ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT³⁴

Psalms 42, 91

Your song will go with us

Your song will go with us

Your song will go with us

All through the night

All through the night

Your wings will cover us...

All through the night.

Hope thou in God my child...

All through the night.

BENEDICTION³⁵

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you: **wherever he may send you;**

May he guide you through the wilderness: **protect you through the storm;**

May he bring you home rejoicing: **at the wonders he has shown you;**

May he bring you home rejoicing: **once again into our doors.**

Credits for Worship elements

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