

# Missional Church Convocation



July 26-28, 2012 - Chicago

the Center  
for Parish  
Development

# THE SUBVERSIVE ACT OF MISSIONAL WORSHIP

CONVOCATION  
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Dear ministry colleague:

Welcome to the 2012 missional church convocation!

For practical purposes in this early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, discerning and participating in God's mission involves *metanoia* – to turn around and go in another direction, conversion, re-visioning, transformation. This is the work of the Holy Spirit.

We anticipate the gifts and the fruits of the Spirit will be present here! As we engage together in worshipping and learning as a disciple community, we seek the Spirit to move among us. As we are attentive to the signs of the times in which we live, we expect God to be actively opening our hearts and minds. Through shared practices of Scripture study, worship, table fellowship, prayer, and service we anticipate God's presence and activity. May we experience afresh the adventure of learning as we risk the unknown, move beyond comfort zones, and take part in active and disciplined thinking of the faith. We anticipate over this limited time together an opportunity that points us toward transformation – cultivating afresh our experience, understandings, and vision of church.

The design of the convocation invites a mutuality in our time of learning – in which strangers are being formed into a community of friendship characterized by a togetherness of faith, hope, and love. While we are not “a church” we do come together *as church*, and thus we are invited to set aside this time and space to slow down and cultivate skills of listening for the Spirit in community.

We are grateful for you, for your ministry, and for contributing to these days together. We are grateful for Debra and for Jack and the gifts they share with us all. May we together testify to the power of God's Spirit calling, shaping and sending us as church for the sake of the world God loves.

Again, we say welcome!

Inagrace Dietterich  
Ray Schulte  
Dale Ziemer

Beckie Ziemer  
Jill Fenske

Jill Sanders  
Paul Dietterich

## Convocation Resource People

### Featured Speaker

**Debra Dean Murphy** is Assistant Professor of Religion and Christian Education at West Virginia Wesleyan College. Debra brings her wisdom to the 2012 convocation around the dynamic intersection of Christian formation and the church as a worshipping community. While she continues to write on this subject, her foundational work is, *Teaching that Transforms: Worship as the Heart of Christian Education*. Debra currently chairs the Board of Ekklesia Project [www.ekklesiaproject.org](http://www.ekklesiaproject.org) and is a frequent contributor to the EP's bLOGOS blog. She also contributes to *Sojourners*, *Theology Today*, *Cross Currents*, *Modern Theology*, and *Christian Century*. Debra likes books, movies, music, art, and politics – and likes to think and write about how religion intersects with all of these. Her own blog “Intersections: thoughts on Religion, Culture, and Politics” is a prime example.



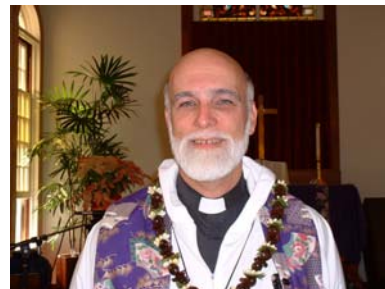
### Bible study leader



**Inagrace Dieterich** 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 has authored the book *Cultivating Missional Communities*, and 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 congregation Bible study resources published by the Center for Parish Development.

### Worship leader

**Jack Belsom** is pastor at Iao Congregational Church, Maui. “Exactly how does someone with a German Protestant heritage wind up as pastor of a Japanese-American congregation on Maui? Either God has a profound sense of humor, or the Holy Spirit is at work bringing an expansive set of gifts for ministry together (and maybe both).” Jack brings a strong background in music together with a commitment to worship as the work of the whole people of God. Jack continues to lead his congregation creatively seeking to live a missional church vision.



# THE SUBVERSIVE ACT OF MISSIONAL WORSHIP

## **Learning Objectives for this Convocation**

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

1. Discover how Christian worship forms, catechizes, and empowers the church as a missional community.
2. Identify forces and factors that block the church's faithful witness today as a redemptive community of gratitude and generosity.
3. Explore practices, habits, and dispositions that shape worshipping communities in fresh ways for the sake of the world God loves.

## **Realistic Expectations**

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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. Worship and pray 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

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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.

### **Re-imagining Reality**

It is possible to understand the Eucharist as an imaginative, strategic negation of the power structures everywhere taken for granted: powers that prize profitability above human flourishing, that seek to render invisible the poor and dispossessed, that place all hope in the unchecked advances of wealth and stigmatize simplicity and frugality, that desecrate the nature world in the name of progress and free enterprise. As the embodied proclamation of the gospel, the Eucharist turns secular power on its head: “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” the invitation to the banquet reads, “and those who mourn, the meek and those who hunger for righteousness; the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and those who are persecuted” (Matthew 5).

Debra Dean Murthy, *Teaching that Transforms: Worship at the Heart of Christian Education*

# Convocation Design

## Thursday, July 26

- 1:00 p.m. Gathering  
 1:30 **SESSION ONE:**  
     Worship  
     Presentation: “The Formative Power of Worship”  
     Bible Study  
 5:00 Worship  
 6:00 Dinner  
 7:00 **SESSION TWO:**  
     Bible Study  
     Group interaction and learning  
     Worship  
 8:30 Adjourn for the evening – wine and cheese

## Friday, July 27

- 8:45 **SESSION THREE:**  
     Worship  
     Presentation: “Communities of Gratitude and  
     Generosity”  
     Bible Study  
 12:30 Lunch  
 2:00 **SESSION FOUR:**  
     Presentation: “Consumption and Overconsumption  
     at Tables of Plenty”  
     Bible Study  
 5:00 Worship  
     Break  
 6:00 Dinner  
 7:00 **SESSION FIVE:**  
     The formative power of worship in a congregation’s  
     transformation journey  
 8:30 Adjourn for the evening – wine and cheese

## Saturday, July 28

- 8:45 **SESSION FIVE:**  
     Worship  
     Presentation: “Worship in a Foreign Land”  
     Bible Study  
 11:30 Closing Worship  
 12:30 Lunch



## The Dangerous Act of Worship

Everything. That's what is at stake in worship. The urgent, indeed troubling, message of Scripture is that everything that matters is at stake in worship.

*Worship* names what matters most: the way human beings are created to reflect God's glory by embodying God's character in lives that seek righteousness and do justice. Worship turns out to be the dangerous act of waking up to God and to the purposes of God in the world, and then living lives that actually show it.

*Worship*, then, refers to something very big and very small, and much in between. It can point to the meaning and work of the whole created order. Worship can also be in the cry of a mother or in the joy of a new disciple. Worship can name a Sunday gathering of God's people, but it also includes how we treat those around us, how we spend our money, and how we care for the lost and the oppressed. Worship can encompass every dimension of our lives.

True worship includes the glory and honor due God—Father, Son, and Spirit. It also includes the enactment of God's love and justice, mercy and kindness in the world. This is the encounter and the transformation that is worth the pearl of great price, both for our sake and for our neighbor's.

Worship sets us free from ourselves to be free for God and God's purposes in the world. The dangerous act of worshiping God in Jesus Christ necessarily draws us into the heart of God and sends us out to embody it, especially toward the poor, the forgotten and the oppressed. All of this is what matters most and is most at stake in worship.

Mark Labberton, *The Dangerous Act of Worship: Living God's Call to Justice*

# Convocation Design

**Daily schedule**

**Table Group Process**

**Worship**



**Thursday, July 14**

1:00 p.m. Gathering

**SESSION ONE**

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

2:30 Presentation: **The Formative Power of Worship:** “And they sang a new song”  
(Revelation 5:9) Debra Dean Murphy

We are shaped—body, mind, and spirit—by what we do in the worshipping assembly. Resisting the idea that worship is “useful” (its own purpose is to give glory to God), we’ll look at how prayer and preaching, song and sacrament—indeed all that we do when we gather as Christ’s body—make of us a people empowered and commissioned to participate in God’s mission in the world.

**SPACE FOR YOUR NOTES**

3:30 Break

4:00 Bible Study: **“Songs of A Pilgrim People:”** Introduction to the Book of Psalms

From the very first, Christians highly treasured the Book of Psalms. The title comes from the New Testament (Lk. 20:42; Acts: 1:20). The early followers of Jesus of Nazareth expressed their faith in the singing of “a new song,” yet this “new speech from the depths (Amos Wilder) drew deeply upon fountains that sprang up within Israel’s worship. Each psalm was carefully crafted in elegant poetry seeking form and style to be worthy of addressing God. With more chapters than any book in the Bible—including the longest and shortest chapters—Psalms devotes a majority of its words to prayer and is the greatest book of poetry and prayers ever assembled. Written by a variety of authors, the psalms provide a striking cross-section of believers wrestling with various aspects of faith. Inviting readers into the midst of a conversation, the Psalms enlighten the path of pilgrims, whether hearts are filled with thanksgiving and praise or emptied by sorrow and suffering. For both ancient Israelites and modern Christians, these ancient Hebrew poems nourish the life of faith.

There is a growing appreciation for the Book of Psalms as a *collection* or *book* of psalms. Psalms One and Two form an introduction that suggests (1) that one finds here a true torah piety that will show the way to go for those who love the Lord and the law, and (2) that these psalms also show the way of God’s rule over the larger human communities. These two psalms pave the way, they get us ready to pray. “Psalm 1 is quiet, gathering our distracted lives into an act of supreme attention. Psalm 2 is vigorous, countering the bullying world that intimidates us into hiding. By means of Psalm 1 we become a tree, putting down roots into the soil and streams of Torah, collected and recollected before God’s word. By means of Psalm 2 we observe Messiah, God personally involved in the world, often incognito, but *here*, and ruling. Psalm 1 concentrates our energies into listening attention. Psalm 2 expands our vision to take in the messianic revelation. At attention and in adoration, we are ready to pray. (Eugene Peterson, *Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer*).

### **Psalm One**

Have a member of the group read Psalm 1 aloud from his or her Bible. As the psalm is read, close your eyes and listen carefully. Share with the group the words or images that caught your attention as you listened.

Have a member of the group read the psalm again, following along with your own Bible. Use the following questions as a guide for your table group discussion.

1. The first word in the psalm is *blessed* (some translate it *happy*). What kind of expectations should this bring to the life of prayer?

2. Using your imagination, how are law-delighting people like trees?

4. In what ways are the wicked like chaff?

5. How does this meditation—listening to God speak to us through Scripture—prepare us for prayer?

### **Psalm Two**

Again, have a member of the group read Psalm 2 aloud from his or her Bible. As the psalm is read, close your eyes and listen carefully. Share with the group the words or images that caught your attention as you listened.

Have a member of the group read the psalm again, following along with your own Bible. Use the following questions as a guide for your table group discussion.

1. Compare the opening nouns and verbs in Psalm 1:1-3 with those in Psalm 2:1-3. What differences in orientation do they suggest between these two psalms?

2. What kind of issues does the psalmist deal with in Psalm 2? How do these things tend to keep the author—and us—from real prayer?

3. How does the Lord view the vaunted power of nations (vs. 4-6)? Do you maintain this perspective of light humor when you watch the news on television? Explain?

4. “Anointed One” in verse 2 is *Messiah* in Hebrew, *Christ* in Greek. What in this psalm reminds you of Jesus?

5. It is always easier to pray for personal needs than political situations. But Psalm 2 is entirely political. What responsibility do we have as American citizens living in Christ’s kingdom?

**Summary Question:** Psalm 1 offers instruction as to the path of true personal piety and ethics while Psalm 2 expands to the world of kings and empires—with God sovereign over the created order.

(a) How do these two psalms relate to our overall topic “The Subversive Act of Missional Worship”?

(b) How does viewing these two psalms as an introduction to the entire Book of Psalms relate to your current perspective about the nature and role of the Psalms?

### **The Psalms: Poetry and Prayer**

Poetry is language with personal intensity. It is not, as so many suppose, decorative speech. Poets tell us what our eyes, blurred with too much gawking, and our ears, dulled with too much chatter, miss around and within us. Poets use words to drag us into the depth of reality itself. They do it not by reporting on how life is, but by pushing-pulling us into the middle of it. Poetry grabs for the jugular. Far from being cosmic language, it is intestinal. It is root language. Poetry doesn't so much tell us something we never knew as bring into recognition what is latent, forgotten, overlooked, or suppressed. The Psalms text is almost entirely in this kind of language. Knowing this, we will not be looking here primarily for ideas about God, or for direction in moral conduct. We will expect, rather, to find the experience of being human before God exposed and sharpened.

Eugene Peterson, *Answering God*

5:00    Worship

          Break

6:00    Dinner

## SESSION TWO

7:00 Bible Study: **“Out of the Depths”** Personal and Communal Laments

The Book of Psalms contains more songs of lament than any other kind of psalm. About 70 psalms fit into this category. Some of these cries of anguish and rage would seem to violate all the rules of Christian prayer. The psalmists focus so much on themselves, they are not polite and may even accuse God of abandonment, of murder, or of falling asleep on the job. They may try to bribe God or sometimes just tell God to go away. Most offensively, the psalmists take an un-Christian attitude toward their enemies: they pray devoutly that terrible things will happen to them, even to little children. Nonetheless, the sheer number of these laments forces us to take them seriously as a biblical model for prayer.

The Psalms, like the Old Testament as a whole, is very earthy—all the moods and passions of human life find expression here. They do not point to a transhistorical world of pure ideals—the good, the true, and the beautiful—rather they are concerned with the historical scene of change, struggle, and suffering, where God meets the people and lays a claim upon them. It seems that ancient Israel believed that the kind of prayer in which we most need fluency is the loud groan, and they have bequeathed us a lot of material on which to practice. The language may be described as “dynamic” and “realistic,” for it simultaneously expressed tension between cosmos and chaos, order and disorder. Contemporary worship may be deformed by our failure to bring the language of suffering into the sanctuary as an integral part of our weekly liturgy. Seldom in our prayers to God, especially our corporate, public prayers, do we articulate our complaints. This is not true of the psalmists who often expressed displeasure and despair in the face of evil persons, grief, rejection and death.

### I. Psalms Lamenting Personal Distress

If we believe God to be Creator, Lord, Redeemer, and Protector, then it follows that when all is not well and feelings of defeat and despair are dominant in our present experience, we should complain (or lament) to God expressing those feelings of abandonment.

1. Working in small groups of 2 or 3, read first Psalm 3.
  - a. How is God addressed forthrightly and honestly?
  - b. Identify affirmations of belief in God.
  - c. What does the psalmist request of God?



2. Read Psalm 13.
  - a. How is God addressed forthrightly and honestly?
  - b. Identify affirmations of belief in God.
  - c. What does the psalmist request of God?
3. Share your reactions to these personal psalms of lament.

## II. Psalms Lamenting Community Distress

As with personal laments, it is because of the psalmist's absolute dependence upon and commitment to God that they are able to express their deepest feelings of distress to God without hesitation. Given the realities of wars and rumors of war, of injustice at home and abroad, of misuse of the environment and the economy, and of natural disasters all over the earth, it would be quite appropriate to express our laments to God. Yet, this seldom happens within the context of corporate worship.

1. Read Psalm 90, moving around the group for readers. (If time, scan Ps. 44 or Ps. 85)
  - a. Describe the complaints address to God.
  - b. How are God's past actions remembered?
  - c. What does the psalmist request of God?
2. Writing Our Communal Prayer of Lament
  - a. Working in groups of 2 or 3, identify concerns in church, community, nation, or world that really distress you.

- b. After brief sharing, select one contemporary concern to be the focus of your lament.
- c. Write a communal prayer of lament, using the psalms as a model: (Address to God, statement of complaint or concern, affirmation of belief in God, cry for help, expression of praise.) Be direct, honest, and brief as you can be.
- d. Be prepared to share your lament as a part of the closing worship.

### **Pain and Praise**

The Psalms model ways of talking to God that are honest, yet not obvious—at least, they are not obvious to modern Christians. They may guide our first steps toward deeper involvement with God, because the Psalms give us a new possibility for prayer; they invite full disclosure. They enable us to bring into our conversation with God feelings and thoughts that most of us think we need to get rid of before God will be interested in hearing from us. The point of the shocking psalms is not to sanctify what is shameful (for example, the desire for sweet revenge) or to make us feel better about parts of ourselves that stand in need of change. Rather, the Psalms teach us that profound change happens always in the presence of God. Over and over they attest to the reality that when we open our minds and hearts fully to the God who made them, then we open ourselves, whether we know it or not, to the possibility of being transformed beyond our imagining.

Ellen Davis, *Getting Involved with God: Rediscovering the Old Testament*

Worship

8:30 Adourn for the evening (wine and cheese)

## Friday, July 27

### **SESSION THREE**

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8:45 Worship

9:15 **Presentation: Communities of Gratitude and Generosity**: “Therefore let us be thankful” (Hebrews 12:28). Debra Dean Murphy

Much of popular culture (and pop theology) would have us believe that gratitude and generosity are personal attributes that can make us happier, healthier individuals. While not discounting the “therapeutic” value of such habits, we will go deeper into an exploration of worship’s capacity to engender gratitude and generosity communally—to make these virtues constitutive of our way of living God’s mission in the world.

#### **SPACE FOR NOTES**

10:30 Break

11:00 Bible Study: **Confessing our Faith:** Salvation History Psalms

Storytelling is a human art, as old and as universal as language itself. Whether a story is told for entertainment, to celebrate a victory, to explain the origin of a common experience, or for some other reason, the narrative creates a world and invites the audience into it. A story of “history” is appealing when it stirs our curiosity about something that happened “once upon a time” and touches upon, even illuminates our human experience in the present.

From early times Israel confessed its faith characteristically by telling the story of its life. There are four psalms that can be clearly identified as salvation history psalms (Ps. 78, Ps. 105, Ps. 106, Ps. 136). These psalms portray God’s saving action in the history or story of Israel. The story/history is not related with detachment but is told as a drama that is true “for me” and “for us.” They recite events fundamental to Israel’s self-understanding as a people and essential to Israel’s knowledge of God’s character.

The four salvation history psalms have several characteristics in common. Even though written in poetic form, they essentially present a narrative or story that has a beginning and an end. The events of the narrative are presented in chronological order. They have strong didactic overtones and appear to have been used to instruct the people about their heritage and to help them remember that heritage. The basic content of each psalm is the great deeds or mighty acts of God. These great deeds reveal God’s love for, judgment of, and deliverance of the people with whom God has established the covenant of faith.

### **Psalm 78**

Have a member of the group read Psalm 78:1-7 aloud from his or her Bible. As the psalm is read, close your eyes and listen carefully. Share with the group the words or images that caught your attention as you listened.

Have a member of the group read the psalm again, following along with your own Bible. Use the following questions as a guide for your table group discussion.

1. One author suggests that an entire educational theory could be based upon these seven verses. Working as a group identify:
  - a. The purpose of the teaching.
  - b. The content of the teaching.
  - c. The expectations included in the text.

2. Read Psalm 105 in a slow and meditative manner, moving around the group, then review the psalm and consider the following questions.
  - a. What are the beginning and ending points (events or persons) of the story?
  - b. In what other books of the Bible is this period of history recorded?
  - c. What are some of the connecting links that hold the whole story together as one story?
  - d. What do you think is the essential meaning or significance of this history?
  
3. In what way do the salvation history psalms shape or contribute to the subversive act of missional worship

### **God's Mighty Acts**

Israel's praises, were evoked in the first instance not by a general religious awareness of God's wisdom and power manifest in the broad expanse of creation or in the long sweep of human history, but rather by a particular experience of God's saving power and purpose in the life situation of a people. Divine intervention into the historical plight of a band of slaves—victims of the mightiest emperor of the time—had the wonder effect of creating a people “out of nothing” and opening a way into the future from a no-exit situation. Hence Israel's earliest songs, as in the case of the Song of Miriam (Ex. 15:21) or the Song of the Sea (Ex. 15:1-18), were jubilant cries of praise in response to the God who had acted with saving power.

Gerald Anderson, *Out of the Depths*

12:00 Worship

12:30 Lunch

## **SESSION FOUR**

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2:00 Gathering Worship

**Presentation: Consumption and Overconsumption at Tables of Plenty:** “O Taste and See” (Psalm 34:8). Debra Dean Murphy

For all that Eucharistic fellowship means and for all that it requires of those who share in it, there is this fundamental imperative: We are to nourish and care for our own bodies and the bodies of others. In light of this we'll consider how it is that all our sharing of food (and our withholding or wasting it), our complicity with unjust food systems, and, perhaps most unsettling of all, all our eating (and overeating) are implicated in our participation in the simple meal of bread and wine at the table of the Lord.

**SPACE FOR NOTES**

3:30 Break

4:00 Bible Study: **Singing A New Song:** Songs of Thanksgiving.

The most exuberant, extensive, and expansive indicators of who and what God is, and what God is about, are found and elaborated in the hymns and songs of thanksgiving that the people of Israel and individuals in the community uttered again and again in the course of Israel's history. There the sovereignty of God is given language and structure. There the power and majesty of the Lord are uncovered and made visible. In the songs of Israel the most elemental structure of the Old Testament faith is set forth. So in the praises of this people the foundation stones of both theology and piety of the Judeo-Christian tradition are laid down. In what is said we learn of the one we call Lord. In the way it is said—both shape and tone—we are given a model for our own response to God.

### **Psalm 103**

This psalm is a priceless treasure, a beautiful song of praise, which has four main parts: (1) personal blessings received from God (v.1-5), (2) national blessings received from God (v.6-14) (3) a reminder of our human frailty and utter dependence upon God (v.15-18), (4) a declaration that all creation praises God (v.19-22).

1. Three translations of this psalm are on your table. Give them to three members of your group. Read one portion at a time for all translations and then repeat the process for the next portion: (1) verses 1-5, (2) verses 6-10, (3) verses 11-14, (4) verses 15-18, (5) verses 19-22.

2. As you listen to the several translations, listen carefully for significant as well as subtle differences in the translations. You may want to jot these down.

3. What does this psalm tell us about human life?

4. What does this psalm tell us about God?

5. What does this psalm tell us about the way God relates to human beings?

## Psalm 107

One of the longest psalms of praise and thanksgiving, Ps. 107 has a striking structure and its content is quite provocative. “This Psalm in its interaction of form and content is virtually a theological paradigm for the Psalter. It sets forth in its formal structure and repetition the movement from cry for help to divine deliverance to human response of praise” (Miller, *Interpreting the Psalms*).

1. Have one member of the group read verses 1-3 and another, verses 33-43. Listen for key words and images.
2. Working with four sections of the psalm, pause and consider the following questions after each section:

### Verses 4-9

- a. Who is the subject?
- b. What is the distress?
- c. What is the plea to God?
- d. What is God’s response?
- e. What is the people’s response?

### Verses 10-16

- a. Who is the subject?
- b. What is the distress?
- c. What is the plea to God?
- d. What is God’s response?
- e. What is the people’s response?

### Verses 17-22

- a. Who is the subject?
- b. What is the distress?
- c. What is the plea to God?
- d. What is God’s response?
- e. What is the people’s response?

### Verses 23-32

- a. Who is the subject?
- b. What is the distress?
- c. What is the plea to God?
- d. What is God’s response?
- e. What is the people’s response?



3. Read again verses 1-3 and verses 33-43. What relationship do you see between the various sections and these opening and closing verses?
  
4. Using the form (introduction, expressions of distress, appeal to God for help, recalling God's past deliverance from distress, and concluding with praise) as a guide, spend 10 minutes (working as a group) writing your own prayer of thanksgiving. The goal is to write 4 to 7 sentences that incorporate elements of songs of thanksgiving.

Be prepared to share in the closing worship.

### **Looking into the Hearts of the Saints**

Where does one find finer words of joy than in the psalms of praise and thanksgiving? There you look into the hearts of all saints, as into fair and pleasant gardens, yes, as into heaven itself. There you see what fine and pleasant flowers of the heart spring up from all sorts of fair and happy thoughts toward God, because of his blessings. On the other hand, where do you find deeper, more sorrowful, more pitiful words of sadness than in the psalms of lamentation? There again you look into the hearts of all the saints, as into death, yes, as into hell itself. How gloomy and dark it is there, with all kinds of troubled forebodings about the wrath of God! So, too, when they speak of fear and hope, they use such words that no painter could so depict for you fear or hope, and no Cicero or other orator so portray them.

And that they speak these words to God and with God, this, I repeat is the best thing of all. This gives the words double earnestness and life....Hence it is that the Psalter is the book of all saints; and everyone, in whatever situation they may be, finds in that situation psalms and words that fit his case, that suit them as if they were put there just for their sake, so that they could not put it better themselves, or wish for anything better.

Martin Luther

5:00    Worship

Break

6:00    Dinner

## SESSION FIVE

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7:00 The formative power of worship in a congregation's transformation journey

Consider the New Testament picture of what happens when Christians gather together. For the Apostle Paul the primary goal is *mutual edification*, the sharing of gifts of the Spirit with one another in the building up and strengthening of the disciple community. The purpose of the community is participation in God's redemptive mission in the world. The reading of Scripture, liturgy, singing praises, preaching, partaking of the Lord's Table are all oriented to the glory of God. The principle focus is not private nourishment or enjoyment, but the visible, active, and corporate "priesthood of all believers" nurturing and utilizing their gifts in mutual ministry in order "to equip the saints for the work of ministry (Eph 4:12)".

Consider some practical implications. What if –

- worship were an entry point for the development of an ongoing conversation of discernment and formation.
- the real difference was the conversation, study, relationships, and community that forms and expands underneath the congregation's worship.
- worship planning that asks, "what is God doing here, and how do we proclaim and embody that reality with our gifts?" Possible key questions to ask in worship-related meetings:
  - How are the Scriptures directing us and how are we responding?
  - How do we evidence the hospitality of Christ and God's grace through our welcome and hospitality?
  - What gifts of Grace do we have to offer and proclaim?
  - What do we want people to learn from this worship experience, think, feel, and do? How are we being shaped into the image of Christ?"
- space and time is created for discerning what God is saying and what resources can be utilized to connect people with God's grace. Asking "What do we think God is doing and how is God asking us to respond? How can we communicate that and connect people?"
- worship planning that is not simply about the nuts and bolts of the worship service, but instead an ongoing discernment of the power of the Gospel message and how best to share that with the congregation.
- What if...

8:15 Wine and cheese

## Saturday, July 24

### **SESSION SIX**

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8:45 Worship

9:00 **Presentation: Worship in A Foreign Land:** “I urge you as aliens and exiles” (1 Peter 2:11). Debra Dean Murphy

What does it mean to worship a strange God (“love your enemies;” “sell all you have”) in a strange land (“for you were aliens in Egypt”)? How are Christians in America a people in exile? Our concluding session will examine how the church’s worship prepares us to engage the culture around us: to recognize powers and principalities; to side with the strangers in our midst. The radical, embodied, cruciform witness we offer is one that does not shun, denounce, or ridicule but which adheres to the missional impulse: to love the world as God loves it.

#### **SPACE FOR YOUR NOTES**

10:00 Break

10:30 Bible Study: **The Wonder of God's Creation** : Hymns of Praise

Psalms that express prayer to God out of concrete distress (laments) and praise to God for a particular act of deliverance (songs of thanksgiving) lead in the direction of *hymns* which praise God in general terms for God's greatness and faithfulness as creator of the cosmos and ruler of history. Hymns of praise usually fall into three sections: an opening invitation to praise God, a central delineation of the praiseworthy character and actions of God, and a concluding affirmation of faith or re-invitation to praise and worship.

1. Moving around the table group, have one member at a time read a section of Psalm 104 in a meditative mode. Listen for key words and images. Share what caught your attention as you listened to the psalm.

- a. What do we learn about God the creator from this psalm?

- b. What do we learn about the created world?

- c. How does praising God the creator lead to an affirmation of God's creation?

- d. In what ways could hymns of praise lead to the subversive act of worship?

2. Praising God the Creator

A collection of photographs or pictures are being made available that present a variety of expressions of the universe, world of nature, and people that God has created are being passed around the table groups. Each person is invited to select one picture that depicts God as creator. Return to your seats and spend a few moments in silence "reading" your selection. The following questions may aid your reflection:

- a. What beauty do you see in God's creation?

- b. What power do you see in God's creation?

- c. To what extent is God's creation quite fragile?

- d. What is the importance of what you are viewing to the created order?
  - e. What responsibilities do you and others have for preserving, fulfilling, and using this aspect of God's creation?
  - f. What words of praise would you use in a prayer responding to God for what God has created?
3. After a brief time of sharing, you are invited as a table group to write brief prayers of praise that can be shared during the closing worship.

### **The Wonder of God's Creation**

These psalms in various ways are *expressions of creation faith*. They affirm that the world is a well-ordered, reliable, and life-giving system, because God has ordained it that way and continues to preside effectively over the process. At the same time, there is a profound trust in the daily working of that system and profound gratitude to God for making it so. Creation here is not a theory about how the world came to be. That is not how the Bible thinks about creation. It is rather an affirmation that God's faithfulness and goodness are experienced as generosity, continuity, and regularity.

Walter Bruggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*

11:30 Closing Worship

12:30 Lunch

## The Old Testament Love of Life

A robust this-worldliness characterizes the faith of Israel. The notion that this world is only a preparation for the next, or that earthly existence is lower and therefore inferior to some higher realm of reality, is completely alien to the Old Testament. The view, which still prevails in much Christian thinking, originated under influence of Hellenistic philosophy that drew a sharp distinction between the eternal realm of unchanging reality and the temporal realm of change, flux, and contingency where eternal truth is, at best, only intimated in a shadowy form. The psalms, however, bear witness to the fundamental goodness of life as God has given it to us. All the senses—sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell—are to be employed in the enjoyment of life to the full, in whatever time is given. To be sure, this love of life is not a shallow sense of happiness such as modern people try to find in midst of sensual pleasures and technological benefits. There is a minor strain of grief, anxiety, and even God-forsakenness that runs through life's experiences. But even the sufferings and perplexities of everyday life are transmuted into praise by people of faith who expect to "see the goodness of Yahweh in the land of the living" (Ps. 27:13). This hope is not postponed indefinitely or transferred to an otherworldly existence. The songs of thanksgiving joyfully announce that the saving presence of God is experienced again and again in everydayness of human life. People of faith celebrate with joy and thanksgiving, knowing that "God's Yes is spoken in the midst of life" (Claus Westermann)

It is therefore highly appropriate that the Christian church, which has heard God's Yes pronounced decisively in Jesus Christ, should find its faith nourished by the psalms of Old Testament. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, martyred Christian whose life and thought have profoundly influenced Christian theology in our time, came to appreciate the life-affirming, this-worldly faith of the Old Testament more and more during his career. In an Advent meditation, composed in prison before his death, he wrote. "My thoughts and feelings seem to be getting more and more like the Old Testament, and no wonder, I have been reading it much more than the New for the last few months. It is only when one knows the ineffability of the Name of God that one can utter the name of Jesus Christ. It is only when one loves life and the world so much that without them everything would be gone, that one can believe in the resurrection and a new world. It is only when one submits to the law that one can speak of grace, and only when one sees the anger and wrath of God hanging like grim realities over the heart of one's enemies that one can know something of what it means to love and forgive them. I don't think it is Christian to want to get to the New Testament too soon and too directly.

Gerald Anderson, *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today*



# **Worship Resources**





## Opening Worship: Thursday, July 26, 2012

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**Alpha**

“God welcomes all”<sup>1</sup>

**God welcomes all, strangers and friends;  
God’s love is strong and it never ends.**

### **Call to Worship (Psalm 113)**

One: Praise be to God!  
Praise, O servants of God;  
praise the name of God.

**ALL: Blessed be the name of God  
from this time on and forevermore.  
From the rising of the sun to its setting  
the name of God is to be praised.**

One: God is high above all nations,  
and God’s glory above the heavens.

**ALL: Who is like God our God, who is seated on high,  
who looks far down on the heavens and the earth?**

One: God raises the poor from the dust,  
and make them sit with nobles,  
with the leaders of God’s people.

**ALL: God gives the childless woman a home,  
making her the joyous mother of children.  
Praise be to God!**

**\*Hymn**

“God of History—Recent, Ancient”<sup>2</sup>

**God of history recent, ancient,  
God of every yesterday,  
Still our God in this day’s moments,  
Where we go or where we stay:  
You have set us in this context,  
Time, relationship, and place,  
Hear our praise and glad thanksgiving  
For all signs of present grace.**

**You have called us from division  
Into unity and hope.  
Each and all belong together  
In the world’s kaleidoscope.  
Help us listen to the voices  
Daring us to be and do  
What you plan for church and people,  
Loving others, praising you.**

**How are we, then, called to answer  
 As we work and as we live,  
 Called to justice, called to mission,  
 Learning to receive and give?  
 Shall we build a bridge of promise?  
 Tear down walls that split, divide?  
 Fling wide doorways, open windows?  
 Let the Spirit come inside?**

**God, you point us toward the future  
 Where Christ leads and shows the way.  
 Here and now, work not yet finished  
 Needs our strength and will today.  
 Thus we move into tomorrow,  
 Called to live and work and be  
 Reconcilers, pilgrim people,  
 Called by Christ, by Christ set free.**

**Introductions** (hopes and expectations)

## **Gathering Prayer**

**Response** “Amen”<sup>3</sup>

**Amen, amen, amen, amen, amen.**

**Chant** “Listen to the Word”<sup>4</sup> Canadian, source unknown

**Listen to the word which God has spoken;  
 listen to the One who is close at hand;  
 listen to the voice behind creation;  
 listen even if you don’t understand.**

## **Scripture Reading**

One: A reading from Psalm 78:1–7

One: For the Scripture Reading in Scripture,  
 for the Scripture Reading among us,  
 for the Scripture Reading within us.

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

## Prayers

One: ...God, in your mercy,  
**ALL: Hear our prayer.**

## Benediction (Psalm 27:14)

One: Wait for God,  
**ALL: be strong:**  
 One: let your heart take courage,  
**ALL: Wait for God!**

## Omega

“We walk His Way<sup>5</sup>” Words and Melody: South African

### *Chorus:*

**Ewe, thina. (x4)**  
**We walk his way. (x4)**

1. *Sizowa nyathela amadimoni; ewe, thina.*
2. *Unarmed, he faces forces of demons and death; we walk his way.*
3. *He breaks the bonds of hell, dying on the cross; we walk his way.*
4. *The tree of freedom blooms by his empty grave; we walk his way.*

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## End of the Afternoon Worship: Thursday, July 26, 2012

## Alpha

“God Beyond All Names”<sup>6</sup> (lined out)

**God beyond all names, never fully known,  
 Mystery of Mysteries, calling us your own.**

## Prayer

“We Would Know More of You”<sup>7</sup>

## Scripture Reading

One: 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.**  
 One: A reading from Revelation Chapter 7, verses 9–11

## \*Hymn

"Bring Many Names"<sup>8</sup>

Brian Wren, 1989

Gen. 1:27

*Unison*

1 Bring man-y names, beau-ti-ful and good, cel-e-brate, in  
 2 Strong moth-er God, work-ing night and day, plan-ning all the  
 3 Warm fa-ther God, hug-ging ev-ery child, feel-ing all the  
 4 Old, ach-ing God, grey with end-less care, calm-ly pierc-ing

par-a-ble and sto-ry, ho-li-ness in glo-ry, liv-ing, lov-ing God.  
 won-ders of cre-a-tion, set-ting each e-qua-tion, gen-i-us at play:  
 strains of hu-man liv-ing, car-ing and for-giv-ing till we're rec-on-ciled:  
 e-vil's new dis-guis-es, glad of good sur-pris-es, wis-er than de-spair:

Hail and Ho-san-na! bring man-y names! great, liv-ing God!  
 Hail and Ho-san-na, strong moth-er God!  
 Hail and Ho-san-na, warm fa-ther God!  
 Hail and Ho-san-na, old, ach-ing God!

5 Young, grow-ing God, ea-ger,  
 on the move,  
 say-ing no to false-hood and  
 un-kind-ness,  
 cry-ing out for jus-tice,  
 giv-ing all you have:  
 Hail and Ho-san-na,  
 young, grow-ing God!

6 Great, liv-ing God, nev-er ful-ly known,  
 joy-ful dark-ness far be-yond our see-ing,  
 clos-er yet than breath-ing,  
 ev-er-last-ing home:  
 Hail and Ho-san-na,  
 great, liv-ing God!

*The author states that aspects of the divine are revealed in our maleness, femaleness, youth, and age in a moving, growing matrix of life in God. The tune Westchase was composed especially for this text.*

Tune: WESTCHASE 9.10.11.9.  
 Carlton Young, 1989

## Afternoon Prayers

One: ...God, in your mercy,

**ALL: hear our prayer.**

## Blessing<sup>9</sup>

One: And now unto the one who is able to keep us from falling  
and lift us from the dark valley of despair  
to the bright mountain of hope,  
from the midnight of desperation  
to the daylight of joy:  
to God be power and authority,  
for ever and ever.

**ALL: Amen.**

## Omega

“Amen”<sup>10</sup>

**Amen, amen, amen, amen, amen.**

## Evening Worship: Thursday, July 26, 2012

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### Alpha

“God Beyond All Names”<sup>11</sup>

**God beyond all names, never fully known,  
Mystery of Mysteries, calling us your own.**

### Psalm 46

God is our refuge and strength  
a very present help in trouble  
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea.  
though its waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.  
There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
the holy habitation of the Most High.  
God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;  
God will help it when the morning dawns.  
The nations are in an uproar, the empires totter;  
God’s voice resounds and the earth melts.  
The God of hosts is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our refuge.  
Come, behold the works of God;

see what desolations God has brought on the earth.  
 God makes wars cease to the end of the earth;  
 God breaks the bow, and shatters the spear;  
 God burns the shields with fire.  
     Be still, and know that I am God!  
     I am exalted among the nations,  
     I am exalted in the earth.  
 The God of hosts is with us;  
 the God of Jacob is our refuge.

**\*Hymn**

“O God, You Are my God Alone”<sup>12</sup>

**O God, you are my God alone, whom eagerly I seek,  
 though longing fills my soul with thirst and leaves my body weak.  
 Just like a dry and barren land awaits a fresh’ning show’r,  
 I long within your house to see your glory and your pow’r.**

**Your faithful love surpasses life, evoking all my praise.  
 Through every day, to bless your name, my hands in joy I’ll raise.  
 My deepest needs you satisfy as with a sumptuous feast.  
 So, on my lips and in my heart, your praise has never ceased.**

**Throughout the night I lie in bed and call you, Lord to mind;  
 in darkest hours I meditate how God, my strength, is kind.  
 Beneath the shadow of your wing, I live and feel secure;  
 and daily, as I follow close, your right hand keeps me sure.**

**Scripture Reading**

One: O God of the weak,  
     O God of the lowly,  
     O God of the righteous,  
     O shield of your people,  
**ALL: Speak now through your word.**

One: A reading of Psalm 41.

**Communal Laments**

**Response**

“On Eagle’s Wings”<sup>13</sup>

**You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord,  
 who abide in his shadow for life,  
 say to the Lord: “My refuge,  
 my rock in whom I Trust!”**

*Chorus*

*And he will raise you up on eagle's wings,  
bear you on the breath of dawn,  
make you to shine like the sun,  
and hold you in the palm of his hand.*

**The snare of the fowler will never capture you,  
and famine will bring you no fear:  
under his wings your refuge,  
his faithfulness your shield. *Chorus***

**You need not fear the terror of the night,  
nor the arrow that flies by day;  
though thousands fall about you,  
near you it shall not come. *Chorus***

**For to his angels he's given a command  
to guard you in all of your ways;  
upon their hands they will bear you up,  
lest you dash your foot against a stone. *Chorus and Coda***

*Coda*

*And hold you, hold you in the palm of his hand.*

**Blessing**

One: May God bless us  
in our sleeping with rest,  
in our dreaming with God's vision,  
in our waking with calm assurance,  
and in all our living the assurance of the Spirit's presence.

**ALL: Amen!**

**Omega**

“We walk His Way<sup>14</sup>” Words and Melody: South African

*Chorus:*

**Ewe, thina. (x4)**

**We walk his way. (x4)**

1. *Sizowa nyathela amadimoni; ewe, thina.*
2. *Unarmed, he faces forces of demons and death; we walk his way.*
3. *He breaks the bonds of hell, dying on the cross; we walk his way.*
4. *The tree of freedom blooms by his empty grave; we walk his way.*



## Opening Worship: Friday, July 27, 2012

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**Alpha**

“Give Thanks, Worship and Praise”<sup>15</sup>

**Give thanks,  
worship and praise the Lord,  
for God has done great things.**

### **Psalm 85**

O God, you were favorable to your land;  
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

You forgave the iniquity of your people;  
you pardoned all their sin.

You withdrew all your wrath;  
you turned from your hot anger.

Restore us again, O God of our salvation,  
and put away your indignation toward us.

Will you be angry with us forever?

Will you prolong your anger to all generations?

Will you not revive us again,  
so that your people may rejoice in you?

Show us your steadfast love, O God,  
and grant us your salvation.

Let me hear what God the Sovereign will speak,  
for God will speak peace to the people;

God will speak to the faithful,  
to those who turn to God in their hearts.

Surely God’s salvation is at hand for those who fear God,  
that God’s glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;  
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,  
and righteousness will look down from the sky.

God will give what is good,  
and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness will go before God,  
and will make a path for God’s steps.

**\*Hymn**

“I Waited Patiently for God”<sup>16</sup>

**I waited patiently for God, for God to hear my prayer;  
and God bent down to where I sank and listened to me there.**

**God raised me from a miry pit, from mud and sinking sand,  
and set my feet upon a rock where I can firmly stand.**

**And on my lips a song was put, a new song to the Lord,  
Many will marvel, open-eyed and put their trust in God.**

**Great wonders you have done, O Lord, all purposed for our good.  
Unable everyone to name, I bow in gratitude.**

### **Chant**

“Listen to the Word”<sup>17</sup>

Canadian, source unknown

**Listen to the word which God has spoken;  
listen to the One who is close at hand;  
listen to the voice behind creation;  
listen even if you don’t understand.**

### **Scripture Reading**

One: Listen for the reasons to give thanks in Psalm 96.

One: This is the Scripture Reading.

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

### **Prayers of Thanks**

One: ...let us give thanks to God.

**ALL: We give you thanks, O God.**

### **\*Hymn**

“On Wings of Morning”<sup>18</sup>

**On wings of morning our prayers and devotions are soaring.  
All of creation awakens, the Maker adoring,  
Join in the song. Harmonies blending along.  
Vigor and life now restoring.**

**God of our yesterdays, God of today and tomorrow,  
God of all joy, and yet present in trouble or sorrow,  
Emmanuel! “God with us!” Good news to tell!  
All earth our gladness may borrow!**

**Voices of praise join in song while the organ is sounding.  
Color and light play their part with the music surrounding.  
Hearts set afire! Artists our spirits inspire,  
Filling, oe’r-flowing, astounding!**

**Now as one people we gather in awe to implore you.  
Children and youth, men and women, we here bow before you.  
Partners we stand, Scattered or joined hand in hand,  
Seeking your will, we adore you.**

**God, grant us vision, as eagles high overhead flying.  
 Rest in your care with no thought of your pleasure defying.  
 Help us to see clearly what we're called to be  
 When on your Spirit relying.**

**We praise you, God, the creator of people and pleasure.  
 We praise you, God, for through Christ you show love beyond measure.  
 Sprit, abound! Godhead sufficient surround!  
 Making our life a rich treasure.**

**\*Closing Response** <sup>19</sup>

One: The peace of God,  
 the peace of God's people,  
 the peace of Mary mild, the loving one,  
 and of Christ King of human hearts,  
 God's own peace.

**ALL: Be upon each thing our eyes take in,  
 Be upon each thing our ears take in,  
 Be upon our bodies which come from earth,  
 Be upon our souls which come from heaven,  
 Evermore and evermore. Amen.**

**Omega**

“Amen” <sup>20</sup>

**Amen, amen, amen, amen, amen.**

## **Prayers at Noon: Friday, July 27, 2012**

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**Alpha**

“Jubilate Deo”

Praetorius

**Jubilate Deo. Jubilate Deo. Alleluia.**

### **Psalm 34:1–8**

I will bless God at all times;  
 God's praise shall continually be in my mouth.  
     My soul makes its boast in God;  
     let the humble hear and be glad.  
 O magnify God with me,  
 and let us exalt God's name together.

I sought God, and God answered me,  
 and delivered me from all my fears.  
 Look to God, and be radiant;  
 so your faces shall never be ashamed.  
 This poor soul cried, and was heard by God,  
 and was saved from every trouble.  
 The angel of God encamps around those who fear God;  
 God's angel delivers them.  
 O taste and see that God is good;  
 happy are those who take refuge in God.

### **Sharing Praise and Thanks**

#### **Omega**

“Give Thanks, Worship and Praise”<sup>21</sup>

**Give thanks,  
 worship and praise the Lord,  
 for God has done great things.**

## **Gathering Worship: Friday Afternoon, July 27, 2012**

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#### **Alpha**

“God welcomes all”<sup>22</sup>

**God welcomes all, strangers and friends;  
 God's love is strong and it never ends.**

#### **Opening Responses<sup>23</sup>**

One: The world belongs to the Lord,

**ALL: The earth and all its people.**

One: How good and how lovely it is

**ALL: to live together in unity.**

One: Love and faith come together.

**ALL: Justice and peace join hands.**

One: If the Lord's disciples keep silent,

**ALL: These stones would shout aloud.**

One: Lord, open our lips,

**ALL: And our mouths shall proclaim your praise.**

## \*Hymn

"Colorful Creator"<sup>24</sup>

*Unison* *Ruth Duck, 1992*

1 Col-or-ful Cre - a - tor, God of mys - ter - y,  
 2 Har-mo-ny of a - ges, God of lis - tening ear,  
 3 Au-thor of our jour - ney, God of near and far,  
 4 God of truth and beau - ty, Po - et of the Word,

thank you for the art - ist teach - ing us to see glimps - es of the  
 thank you for com - pos - ers tun - ing us to hear ech - oes of the  
 praise for tale and dra - ma tell - ing who we are, strip - ping to the  
 may we be cre - a - tors by the Spir - it stirred, o - pen to your

mean - ing of the com - mon - place, vi - sions of the  
 Gos - pel in the songs we sing, sounds of love and  
 es - sence strug - gles of our day, times of change and  
 pres - ence in our joy and strife, ves - sels of the

ho - ly in each hu - man face.  
 long - ing from the deep - est spring.  
 con - flict when we choose our way.  
 ho - ly cours - ing through our life.

*This hymn was written for the 1992 installation of Linda Clark as Houghton Scholar of Sacred Music at Boston University, where Ruth Duck earned her Th.D. degree. It praises the Artist who inspires our creativity.*

Tune: HOUGHTON 11.11.11.11.  
 Carlton R. Young, 1992

## Scripture Reading

Reader: This is the Scripture Reading, and it can be trusted.  
A reading from First Corinthians Chapter 11, verses 17–34.

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

## Omega

“Amen”<sup>25</sup>

**Amen, amen, amen, amen, amen.**

## Closing Worship: Friday, July 27, 2012

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### Alpha

“Give Thanks, Worship and Praise”<sup>26</sup>

**Give thanks,  
worship and praise the Lord,  
for God has done great things.**

### Gathering Prayer (How are we right now?)

One: I come...God, in your mercy,  
**ALL: hear our prayer.**

### \*Song

“Let the Giving of Thanks”<sup>27</sup>

#### *Antiphon*

**Let the giving of thanks be our sacrifice to God.  
Let the giving of thanks be our sacrifice to God.**

1. **God, the Lord, has spoken  
God has summoned all the earth  
from the sun at rising  
to its setting in the west. *Antiphon***
2. **God shines out from Zion,  
the place of perfect beauty.  
God, our God, is coming  
and refuses to keep silent. *Antiphon***

3. **Fire consumes before God  
and a storm is raging all around.  
Heaven and earth God summons  
to the judging of God's people.**
4. **“Call to me, my people,  
when the hour of trouble strikes.  
I shall come to help you  
that you may ever praise me.” *Antiphon***
5. **“Those who give me honour,  
whose sacrifice is thanksgiving,  
those who walk behind me  
shall see my great salvation.” *Antiphon***

### **Scripture Reading**

Listen for the word of God in First Thessalonians 5:16–18.

### **Writing and Sharing Prayers of Thanks**

#### **Closing Responses**

One: Always be joyful

**ALL: and never stop praying.**

One: Whatever happens, keep thanking God because of Jesus Christ.

**ALL: This is what God wants us to do.**

### **Omega**

“We walk His Way<sup>28</sup>” Words and Melody: South African

*Chorus:*

**Ewe, thina. (x4)**

**We walk his way. (x4)**

1. *Sizowa nyathela amadimoni; ewe, thina.*
2. *Unarmed, he faces forces of demons and death; we walk his way.*
3. *He breaks the bonds of hell, dying on the cross; we walk his way.*
4. *The tree of freedom blooms by his empty grave; we walk his way.*

## Morning Prayer: Saturday, July 28, 2012

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**Alpha** “God Beyond All Names”<sup>29</sup> (lined out)

**God beyond all names, never fully known,  
Mystery of Mysteries, calling us your own.**

### Scripture Reading

A reading from Psalm 137.

### Prayers for the Day

One: 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...

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

One: And let us pray for ourselves...

One: 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.**

**Omega** “Amen”<sup>30</sup>

**Amen, amen, amen, amen, amen.**

## Closing Worship: Saturday, July 28, 2012

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**Alpha** “God welcomes all”<sup>31</sup>

**God welcomes all, strangers and friends;  
God’s love is strong and it never ends.**

**Prayer** “We will not keep silent”<sup>32</sup>



**Psalm 150**

One: Shout praises to the LORD!  
Praise God in the temple.

**ALL: Praise the Holy One in heaven,  
God's mighty fortress.**

One: Praise our God!

**ALL: God's deeds are wonderful,  
too marvelous to describe.**

One: Praise God with trumpets  
and all kinds of harps.

**ALL: Praise the Holy One with tambourines and dancing,  
with stringed instruments and woodwinds.**

One: Praise God with cymbals,  
with clashing cymbals.

**ALL: Let every living creature  
praise the LORD.  
Shout praises to the LORD!**

**\*Hymn**

“O God of Time, Yet Timeless Too”<sup>33</sup>

**O God of time, yet timeless too,  
And present daily in our need,  
Our breath, our strength in all we do,  
The bread of life on which we feed:**

**We praise you now for music, art,  
For all enrichment of our lives,  
For word and thought, for mind and heart,  
The rooted depth on which life thrives.**

**Our hymns, expressions of our souls,  
Our boldest visions, inmost dreams,  
We offer all our cherished goals  
In trust that Christ forgives, redeems.**

**The words we speak, the praise we sing,  
The prayers our hearts may dare to raise,  
Accept, we pray, each thought we bring  
In worship, adoration, praise.**

**Our praise begins with morning light,  
Continues through the noonday sun,  
And echoes still as shadowed night  
Repeats the song, Most Holy One.**

## Prayer of Thanks

One: For..., let us give thanks.

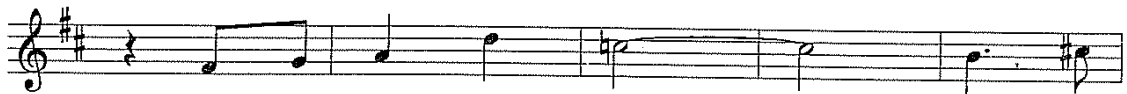
ALL: We give you thanks, O God.

### \*Song

“Take This Moment”,<sup>34</sup>



1. Take this mo - ment, sign, and space;
2. Take the time to call my name,
3. Take the tired - ness of my days,
4. Take the lit - tle child in me,
5. Take my tal - ents, take my skills,



Take my friends a - round;	Here a -
Take the time to mend	Who I
Take my past re - gret,	Let - ting
Scared of grow - ing old;	Help him/her
Take what's yet to be;	Let my



mong us make the place Where your
am and what I've been, All I've
your for - give - ness touch All I
here to find his/her worth Made in
life be yours, and yet, Let it



love is found.
failed to tend.
can't for - get.
Christ's own mold.
still be me.

**Prayer**

“The grace to be haunted”<sup>35</sup>

**Scripture**

One: In the beginning was the Word,

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

One: A reading from Genesis Chapter 12, verses 1–8.

One: For the Scripture Reading in Scripture,  
for the Scripture Reading among us,  
for the Scripture Reading within us.

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

**Invitation to Commitment****Sign of Commitment and Promise****\*Affirmation**<sup>36</sup>

One: We are not alone;  
we live in God’s world.

**ALL: 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

One: God, in your mercy,  
**ALL: hear our prayer.**

## The Lord's Prayer

### \*Hymn

“May the Sending One Defend You”<sup>37</sup>

Brian Wren, 1989; rev. 1993

Unison

1 May the Send - ing One de - fend you, may the Seek - ing One a - mend you,  
 2 May the Giv - en One re - trieve you, may the Gift - ed One re - lieve you,  
 3 May the Bind - ing One u - nite you—may the One Be-loved in - vite you—

May the Keep - ing One be - friend you, in your glad - ness and in your griev - ing.  
 May the Giv - ing One re - ceive you, in your fall - ing and your re - stor - ing.  
 May the Lov - ing One de - light you— Three-in - One, joy in life un - end - ing.

Brian Wren wrote this text during a visit with composer Mikkel Thompson on Bainbridge Island, Washington. When he first heard the tune, Wren said, “It cried out for a text, and suggested the style of ancient Celtic blessings.”

Tune: ROLLINGBAY 8.8.8.9.  
 Mikkel Thompson, 1989

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### \*Closing Responses<sup>38</sup>

One: Look at your hands, see the touch and the tenderness,  
**ALL: God's own for the world.**  
 One: Look at your feet, see the path and the direction,  
**ALL: God's own for the world.**  
 One: Look at your heart, see the fire and the love,  
**ALL: God's own for the world.**  
 One: Look at the cross, see God's Son and our Saviour.  
**ALL: God's own for the world.**

One: This is God's world,  
**ALL: And we will serve God in it.**

**\*Promise and Blessing**

One: Jesus said, "I am with you always."  
 May God the creator bless you.  
 May God the redeemer walk with you.  
 May God the spirit lead your lives with love.  
**ALL: Amen.**

**Omega**

"We walk His Way"<sup>39</sup> Words and Melody: South African

***Chorus:***

**Ewe, thina. (x4)**

**We walk his way. (x4)**

1. *Sizowa nyathela amadimoni; ewe, thina.*
2. *Unarmed, he faces forces of demons and death; we walk his way.*
3. *He breaks the bonds of hell, dying on the cross; we walk his way.*
4. *The tree of freedom blooms by his empty grave; we walk his way.*

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