

This liturgy is designed for use in your homes, your gardens or anywhere else you may find yourselves. Some of you may be in small groups, others may be alone- either is fine. What follows is a framework that you can alter if the desire arises, and which contains a few additional elements you can opt to partake of.

The framework here is just that; it is not an entry into worship in and of itself. Therefore, I suggest you ready yourselves by finding somewhere as comfortable, spacious, and beautiful as possible, and still yourselves before you begin. You may like to light a candle to be a focus as you worship, and to remind you that you gather in the presence of Christ.

As you gather, you might like to have some pens/pencils/markers and paper with you to engage fully. If you are worshipping with a small group, you might like to elect one person to lead, or take turns leading through the different sections. I suggest you at least take turns praying out loud and divide up the scripture reading among you. Be prepared to pray extemporaneously (that is prayer that is not pre-written or prepared) at times, and to bring the person that you are into this time of worship.

And remember, you are none of you alone.

A Service of Worship

Call to Worship

We're pausing.
We are taking this time,
Spreading it out like a rug on the grass
To picnic with our Lord.
We are sitting up, sitting comfortably;
We are paying attention.
We are looking directly into the face of God,
In words, in sounds, in the hands of those beside us
Or in the stillness of our own.

We are here to give ourselves
To this moment of
Noticing
Awe
Holiness.

So let's gather around,
Settle in,
Take a breath
And open ourselves to the grandeur and the simplicity of this moment.

We sing: Lord of all Hopefulness, Lord of all Joy

See video

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever child-like, no cares can destroy,
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe,
Be there at our labors, and give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.

Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome, your arms to embrace,
Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm,
Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

A time of prayer and reflection

There are many moments, small and large, quiet and loud, in which we can see the face of God or feel the touch of God, or simply the quiet breath of God.

I invite you to still yourselves, take a walk in your memory, or your experiences of right now, and bring to mind a moment, a glimpse you've had of God this week, this day or right moment.

Take as long as you need. You might like to move out of doors and take in the glory you see there.

Notice the moment or the memory, and say thanks.

Silent or spoken prayer and reflection

Today's lectionary reading and reflection is about how we might be more like Christ, more of who we are really, by loving each other well and embracing the holy humility of Christ.

We don't always do this well, do we?

We fumble and falter and make so many mistakes. We are loved and forgiven no matter what, but we are also offered the chance to be honest about who we are, and to unburden ourselves of that which weighs us down.

Take this time to pray quietly about whatever you'd like to, held by the knowledge that you are in the presence of a loving God.

Silent or spoken prayer and reflection

Assurance:

Nothing can separate us from the love of God. Know yourself loved and made whole. Hallelujah!

A collect (short prayer) written by my friend Julie, which you might like to pray together now:

Bird Song Maker,
Whose twitters, calls and whoops
Have made all places holy-
Give us ears to hear diminished presence,
Courage to reclaim the sacred places of habitat,
To call 'enough!'
Emboldened by that swooping Holy Dove.
Amen.

Early Word: noticing things

For this you might want some paper and pens. And maybe you want to be outside, if possible!

How much do you notice? I bet you notice a lot. Let's spend some time noticing.

Take your time doing this, there's no rush.

Get yourself very still. Have a look around you.

What can you see?

There'll be all the obvious things, walls, a door, chairs, your family maybe.

Beyond that, what can you see? How many different colours?

List them on your paper, or just our loud as you look around you.

How many shadows? How many shapes are nearby?

What colours or shapes or textures do you like the most?

Notice if there is sunlight falling on anything nearby.

Now close your eyes and notice how the air feels on your skin.

Notice what you can smell!

Name every smell out loud or write them down.

Are they nice smells or bad?

Now think about what you can hear? Birds?

Wind? Parts of your house? Music? Your own voice?

See if you can write them all down, or **better yet, if you can make some of them!**

Noticing things is both easy and difficult. There are always so many things around us. Sometimes we only notice the obvious things or the things we are looking for. But when we pause and slow down, we can look around with care, or listen deeply, we can notice things more. We believe that God is everywhere around us, and when we do this we can find God.

A poet called Mary Oliver thought this was really important. She said life was about paying attention.

This is a good thing to do every day to remind ourselves how big and colourful and loud and soft and lovely the world is and how many places and ways we can see and feel and hear and smell God around us.

So see what you can notice this week! Go slow sometimes!

Scripture Reading

Philippians 2:1-13

“If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should

bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”

Reflection: Paying attention, being humble

See video link

Prayer of response

Lord of all moments, small and large, help us pause and notice the lives we are living. Help us remember what it is to be a human, and remind us of the joy of that experience. Call us back to ourselves, call us down to our knees, remind us we are here to bear witness to the glory found everywhere around us.

Amen.

We sing: I Danced in the Morning

I wanted a worship song that reminds us of the joy, the playfulness of the life and person of Jesus. A joy and a playfulness, a humanity that we are invited into.

I danced in the morning
When the world was begun,
And I danced in the moon
And the stars and the sun,
And I came down from heaven
And I danced on the earth,
At Bethlehem
I had my birth.

Dance, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said he

I danced for the scribe
And the pharisee,
But they would not dance
And they wouldn't follow me.
I danced for the fishermen,
For James and John
They came with me
And the Dance went on.

Dance, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said he

I danced on the Sabbath
And I cured the lame;
The holy people
Said it was a shame.
They whipped and they stripped
And they hung me on high,
And they left me there
On a Cross to die.

Dance, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said he

I danced on a Friday
When the sky turned black
It's hard to dance
With the devil on your back.
They buried my body
And they thought I'd gone,
But I am the Dance,
And I still go on.

Dance, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said he

They cut me down
And I leapt up high;
I am the life
That'll never, never die;
I'll live in you
If you'll live in me -
I am the Lord
Of the Dance, said he.

Prayers of the People

O Lord our God,
you hear our prayers before we speak,
and answer before we know our need.
Although we cannot pray as we ought,
may your Spirit pray in us,
drawing us to you and towards our neighbours.
Amen.

We pray for the whole creation:
may all things work together for good,
and may we honour it by giving it our notice and our love.
Let the whole creation praise you, Lord our God.

We pray for the Church of Jesus Christ;
that, begun, maintained and promoted by the Holy Spirit,
it may be true, engaging, joyful, and active,
doing your will.
Let the Church be always faithful, Lord our God.

We pray for those who govern us,
for those who make and administer our laws.
Grant them wisdom to lead us through

These times of sickness and economic uncertainty.

Govern those who govern us, O God.

We pray for those who are poor, those who are hungry,
in need of employment, homes or education.

Increase in us, and in all who prosper,
passion for the disinherited.

Care for the poor, O God.

We pray for sick people who suffer pain,
or struggle with demons of the mind,
who silently cry out for healing:
may they be patient, brave, and trusting.

Heal the sick and troubled, O God.

We pray for those whose tears are not yet dry,
who listen for familiar voices and look for familiar faces:
in their loss, may they affirm all that you promise in Jesus,
who prepares a place for us within your spacious love.

Comfort those who mourn, O God.

We pray for people who are alone and lonely,
who have no one to call in easy friendship:
may they be remembered, befriended,
and know your care for them.

Visit lonely people, O God.

We pray for young and old:
give impatient youth true vision,
and experienced age openness to new things.
Let both praise your name.

Join youth and age together, O God.

Take some time now to unfurl the names of those you carry within your heart.

We pray for people everywhere:
may they come into their own as children of God,
and inherit the kingdom prepared in Jesus Christ,

the Lord of all and Saviour of the world.
**Hear our prayers, almighty God,
in the name of Jesus Christ,
who prays with us and for us,
to whom be praise for ever. Amen.**

We are Blessed and Sent

As we pack up our picnic rug
And fold up this time of quiet worship
We are emboldened by the love given us
By the forgiveness shown us,
By the remembrance of who we are.

You are called to be a child of God
Made in the image of the truly human one, Jesus.
Go well, go slowly, go to look around you and to
Pay attention.
Friends, be astonished, and tell about it.

Amen.