

WORSHIP RESOURCES

BY REV. BERE GIL SOTO

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Beloved, as we gather today, let us open our hearts so that we may see glimpses of God as we worship here.

People: We will sing praises, for the God of peace is here!

Leader: Friends, let us open our ears so that we may hear God's voice of truth, setting us all free.

People: We will sing praises, for the God of justice is here!

Leader: Finally, beloved, let us open our hearts so that we may feel God's pure love transforming us all.

People: We will sing praises for the God of grace is here!

INVOCATION

Gracious and loving God, we gather in your name today, seeking your presence to move among us and within us. Open our ears to hear your truth, open our eyes to see with love, and open our hearts to live with compassion.

Holy One, we have heard your voice in the whispers of creation and the loud sounds of cries around the nations.

May our worship today be honorable and pleasing to you as we receive your Word and prepare our hearts to respond to your calling.

In your Holy name, we pray, Amen.



PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Prayer: God we have seen the disastrous realities of tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, and fires. We have heard your children cry in places where greed and thirst for power have destroyed homes and hearts. Help us to be a beacon of your love, justice, and compassion.

Response: *May your Spirit compel us and move us to respond.*

Prayer: Living God, we pray for all who hunger today, for all who know housing insecurity, for all who had to flee their homes to find their way in a new country, and for all whose hope is fading. Help us to be a beacon of your love, justice, and compassion.

Response: *May your Spirit compel us and move us to respond.*

Prayer: Gracious God, we pray for those who are waiting to experience calm after the storm, for those recovering from disasters, from the Middle East to Mozambique, from Appalachia to Afghanistan. Help us to be a beacon of your love, justice, and compassion.

Response: *May your Spirit compel us and move us to respond.*

Prayer: Holy One, we give thanks for the lenses of the Gospel that help us see that when one is suffering, we all suffer, that when one is in need, we all are in need, that no one is free, until all your children and creation are free. Help us to be a beacon of your love, justice, and compassion.

Response: *May your Spirit compel us and move us to respond.*



COMMUNION MEDITATION

For some of you parents or caregivers of little ones, the concept of “object permanence” may ring a bell. It is the concept that objects continue to exist even when they are not visible. This means a toy is there even if they don’t see it. It is the understanding that even though babies don’t always see their parents, they know that their parents are around and will respond and be present when they need it, whether or not they hear or see them. This developmental process creates what is called a “secure attachment,” a sense of love and safety that goes beyond what we can hear or see.

As Disciples, we have a general ministry that helps you, me, and so many people around the globe to create a sort of secure attachment to faithful response. We are able to feel the love of God even when there seems no way it can be heard or seen because all around us is chaos, disaster, or suffering.

For instance, even though you and I are not in Ukraine or Palestine, we know that people can hear and see the love of God through Week of Compassion, helping refugees resettle and find new homes in the midst of war. Even though you and I are not in the Philippines or Afghanistan, we know that people suffering from drought or floods have heard and seen God’s love through Week of Compassion’s accompaniment.

And just in the same way that even though none of us heard or saw Jesus break bread and share the cup, we all believe, receive, and embrace God’s grace shared at this table every time we gather to worship. And yes, we receive, but we, too, commit to sharing what we receive so others can hear and see.

Let us pray for this bread and this cup, symbols of our secure attachment in Christ and one another, that God’s love is ever-present and everlasting beyond what we can hear or see.

Let us pray.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Eternal God, we give you thanks for the holy mystery of your love beyond what we have heard and seen. We thank you that as we break bread and share the cup, you assure us of your presence and compel us to share what we have received, so that all Creation may hear you and see you.

In Jesus’ name, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Friends, as we’ve reflected on God’s ever-present love – a love that persists even when we cannot directly hear it or see it – we are now invited to participate in making that love tangible for others around the world.

Our offering today supports Week of Compassion, a vital ministry of our whole Church that serves vulnerable communities globally. Through this ministry, we extend our reach, our fellowship, our communion far beyond these walls. Our faithful giving allows God’s love to be heard and seen in places of great need – in war-torn regions, in areas devastated by weather-related disasters, and in communities struggling with poverty and injustice.

Let us give generously and joyfully, knowing that through our offering, others will hear and see God’s love in action.

PRAYER FOR THE OFFERING

Loving Creator,

As we offer these gifts, transform them into beacons of Your presence. May our offerings become instruments of your love, heard in words of comfort and seen in acts of compassion. We pray that through our shared work with Week of Compassion, these gifts will amplify the whispers of hope in a world hungry for your love.

In Your Holy Name, Amen.

BENEDICTION

Go forth from this place, beloved children of God, With your ears attuned to the whispers of Divine love, with your eyes open to the wonders of God’s grace. May we all be living testimonies of what we have heard and seen:

The love that knows no bounds, the hope that never fades. Amen.

SPECIAL OFFERING February 16 - 23

As the relief, refugee, and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Week of Compassion works with partners to alleviate suffering throughout the world, with a vision of a world where God’s people transform suffering into hope.