

Date: July 30, 2023
Season of the Holy Spirit

Prayer of Preparation

Anne Osdieck

Lord, what is that pearl of great price? A Mercedes, a portfolio, oil wells, honor and praise and awards, kinship over everything we survey? Or could it be no wall: all people's brothers and sisters, clean air, water and food for everyone? Neighbor serving neighbor? Dinner with friends? A kind word? Finding you in all things? Give us wisdom to know real treasure. Amen.

Gathering in the Presence of God

**Please stand as able, in body or in spirit*

Gathering Music

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Welcome

***Call to Worship** (responsively)

Liturgist

The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed.

It is a small seed, but has some surprises in store for us.

When it is grown, it is a very large shrub.

Even the birds can find places in its branches for their nests.

God's transforming love begins in small ways to enter our hearts.

Lord, plant those amazing seeds of transforming love in us that they may grow into deeds of service to others in your name. AMEN.

*Hymn

Seek Ye First

GTG 175

Confessing Our Separation from God (unison)

Liturgist

We confess, O God, that we do not look for Your kin-dom to be at hand. We are still waiting. We confess that at times we are wanting a kin-dom that doesn't look much different than the world we are in, except in that vision we have all the power and possessions we desire. We confess that we are making the kin-dom of God in our own image, and it is still very much like a worldly kingdom. Forgive us for not abandoning the ways of this world so we might hunt for Your reign like a treasure hidden in a field. Forgive us for not letting go of the possessions and greed and privilege that holds us back from seeking You like a great pearl. Forgive us for not planting the seeds of Your kin-dom. Forgive us for our foolish ways.

Call us into Your ways of love, restoration, and reconciliation, in the name of Christ, who laid down his life and all the world's foolishness for Your eternal love, and who offers us this eternal life. Amen.

***Assurance of Forgiveness** *Jesus, Draw Me Close* Rick Founds
Jesus, draw me close; Closer, Lord, to You.
Let the world around me fade away.
Jesus, draw me close;
Closer, Lord, to You.
For I desire to worship and obey.

***Passing the Peace of Christ**

We Hear God's Word

Prayer of Illumination Liturgist

Anthem XXXX

Gospel Lesson Matthew 13:31-33,44-52 Liturgist
Source: New International Version

Reflection XXXX

We Respond to God's Word

***Affirmation of Faith** *I Believe in Jesus* Marc Nelson

Joys and Hopes of the People of God

Offertory: XXXX
The Act of Gratitude

Presentation of Prayer Shawls Sid Simon & Don Foraker Bonnie Ekas

***Doxology: An Expression of Faith to God**

GTG 606

Tune: Old Hundredth

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

***Prayer of Thanksgiving (unison)**

Liturgist

God of all blessings, Jesus inspired us through his teaching to see your kingdom as a place where small things can have a mighty impact: a tiny mustard seed planted, or a bit of yeast mixed into the flour. We ask you this day to bless the gifts we offer, so that they may have a powerful impact when used according to your purposes. Bless us that we might see glimpses of your kingdom through our giving and grow in generosity in the process. In name of Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer, we pray. Amen.

We Follow God's Word into the World

***Hymn**

Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness

GTG 291

***Benediction**

Postlude

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Next Week's Liturgist: David Norton