



Messiah Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Coffeehouse Worship: Recharge for the Week Ahead!

A Collaborative Liturgy by Rev. Dustin Wright, Douglas J. Chilton, Jill Becker and the Messiah Lutheran Church Worship and Music Committee

The purpose of this service is to provide a safe, open and meditative space for Christians and “spiritual but not religious” folks alike to experience God in community and thereby recharge for the week ahead. The service draws on the most ancient of Judeo-Christian traditions and learnings to proclaim the universal presence of the Divine in our contemporary life.

The evening begins with the lightly incensed Fellowship Hall’s lights dimmed, all candles being extinguished with the exception of one large pillar candle at the presiders table. Chairs are placed around small individual tables with tablecloths reflecting the colors of the season. “Menu Cards” with a basic outline of the liturgy are placed on each table while small cruets of homemade wine and baskets of locally prepared bread are placed on the presider’s table. An offering plate is located by the sanctuary door, as is a votive stand with unlit candles.

God Gathers Us

Prelude

- Meditative music is played while the Assembly enters.

Welcome

Presider welcomes everyone and introduces the service, explaining the history and use of the ancient Christian flow of worship, the ordo (God Gathers Us, God Speaks to Us, God Breaks Bread with Us, God Sends Us Out to Serve a Troubled World).

Phos Hilaron / Joyous Light

The Assembly is invited to either assist in lighting the window candles, the votive stand candle and center table candles using tapers from the pillar candle or to sing the Phos Hilaron (the basis for “Joyous Light of Heavenly Glory” from *Holden Evening Prayer*), the most ancient of Christian hymns. If no one volunteers to light candles, the Deacon is prepared to do so.

Focus Question

The focus question, related to that Sunday’s gospel message, is introduced.

A Prayer of Saint Catherine of Siena

The Presider leads the Assembly in the following prayer:

O Creator, help us. O Wisdom, enlighten the eyes of our understanding. Tender mercy of the Spirit, unite our hearts to you. Eternal God, restore health to the sick and life to the dead. Give all gathered here a voice, your own voice, to cry out to you for mercy for our troubled world. You, O Light, give us light. You, O Wisdom, give us wisdom. You, O Supreme Strength, strengthen us. Amen.

God Speaks to Us

Reading

A secular passage pre-selected by a member of the Assembly which enlightens the focus question or gospel message for the Sunday is read.

Sacred Music

Music in some way inspired by the appointed theme or gospel message for the Sunday is played while the Assembly prayerfully contemplates the reading and how it relates to the focus topic for the evening.

Gospel

The Deacon reads the appointed Gospel for the Sunday.

Discussion

After prayerfully pausing, the Presider briefly provides background for the focus question of the evening and begins to discuss how the reading and gospel might illuminate that topic. The Presider then opens up the topic for wider discussion by the Assembly.

Song of the Day

The Assembly is led in either a hymn or secular song inspired by the appointed Gospel for the Sunday or theme.

Prayers of the People

The Presider creates open space for the Assembly to pray aloud or in their hearts in the following general areas:

- For the Universal Church and the mission of the Gospel.
- For the wellbeing of creation.
- For peace and justice in God's world.
- For all who suffer in body, mind or spirit.
- For the congregation and special concerns.
- Space allowed for the Assembly to lift any others concerns they may have aloud or in their hearts.
- Prays of thanksgiving, especially for the saints and those who have recently died.

God Breaks Bread with Us

Dialogue & Preface

After the Assembly regathers, the Presider continues with the following. All who know the words are invited to respond:

P. The Lord be with you.

A. And also with you.

P. Lift up your hearts.

A. We lift them to the Lord.

P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

A. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P. It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy)

The Cantor leads the Assembly.

Epiclesis of Saint Basil

The Presider continues with the following words:

P. We come to You, O God, as flawed, imperfect people, freed from our doubts and fears and sins by your unfailing and liberating love, not because of our own doings but because of the mercy and compassion you have richly poured upon us. We pray to You and call upon You, O Holy of Holies, that by the favor of Your goodness, Your Holy Spirit may come upon this assembly, in, with and under the gifts here presented, making this simple meal of bread and wine the precious Body and Blood of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Words of Institution

The Presider in a narrative form proclaims the following:

P. On the night of his betrayal, Jesus gathered with his friends, in simple room for a simple meal as we do this evening. He took bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave to all saying: "Take and eat; this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." Again, at the close of the night, he took a cup of wine, gave thanks again and gave it for all to drink, saying: "This cup is God's new promise in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

Lord's Prayer

The Presider continues, inviting all to use the orans posture:

P. Let us pray as our Liberator taught us:

A. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy

will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of Bread and the Sharing of Wine

The Presider continues,

- P. Sisters and brothers, Christ is with us at this meal, a banquet where all are welcome.

The Presider breaks the loaf of bread in half and holds it high. S/he then passes out the baskets of bread and cruets of wine to each table while the Agnus Dei or similar music is played. Wine is poured in each cup and then the bread & wine is shared in a circle at each table.

Table Blessing

Once everyone concludes with communion, the Presider continues,

- P. May the body and blood of Jesus Christ bring you peace in the week ahead, and always.

God Sends Us Out to Serve a Troubled World

Blessing

The Presider blesses the Assembly:

- P. May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face; the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of Her hand.

- A. Thanks be to God!**

Postlude

The Assembly may share a sign of peace as a festive postlude is played. All assist in extinguishing candles, putting back chairs, etc.