

## **Gathering for God's Word**

Prelude

Choral Introit

#2022, "Great is the Lord"

Refrain:

Great is the Lord  
He is holy and just  
By His power we trust  
In His love  
Great is the Lord  
He is faithful and true  
By His mercy He proves  
He is love

Great is the Lord  
And worthy of glory  
Great is the Lord  
And worthy of praise  
Great is the Lord  
Now lift up your voice  
Now lift up your voice  
Great is the Lord  
Great is the Lord

Great are you Lord  
And worthy of glory  
Great are you Lord  
And worthy of praise  
Great are you Lord  
I lift up my voice  
I lift up my voice  
Great are you Lord  
Great are you Lord

Welcome & Announcements

Time of Silence & Ringing of the Bell

Call to Worship

[based on Colossians 1:15-17]

Leader: Let us come together to worship Christ our Lord, the visible image of the invisible God.

**People: He is the firstborn of creation, the eternal God: the one through whom all things were created, and in whom all things are held together.**

Leader: This is our Savior and our God!

**People: And through him, God has reconciled all things.**

Leader: Let us worship Christ together!

### **Preparing for God's Word**

#### Hymn of Adoration

#319, "Shout to the North"

Men of faith rise up and sing  
Of the great and glorious King  
You are strong when you feel weak  
In your brokenness complete

Chorus:

Shout to the north and the south  
Sing to the east and the west  
Jesus is Saviour to all  
Lord of heaven and earth

Rise up women of the truth  
Stand and sing to broken hearts  
Who can know the healing power  
Of our awesome King of love

Rise up church with broken wings  
Fill this place with songs again  
Of our God who reigns on high  
By His grace again we'll fly

Bridge:

We've been through fire, we've been through rain  
We've been refined by the power of His name  
We've fallen deeper in love with You  
You've burned the truth on our lips

#### Prayer of Confession

**All: God of love, we confess that we are not always faithful to our covenant with you and with one another. We are guilty of making and worshiping other gods: money, power, consumerism, convenience, safety and ease.**

**Too often we have served our own self-interest instead of serving only you and your people. We have not loved our neighbor as you have commanded, nor have we rightly cared for ourselves. Forgive us, gracious God, and bring us back**

**into the fullness of our covenant with you and one another. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

*[silent personal prayers of confession]*

Leader: In praise and gratitude for you and the grace you offer us we say,  
**People: Amen**

Assurance of Pardon

[based on 2 Corinthians 1:20-22]

Leader: Hear the Good News. All the promises of God find their "Yes" in Christ.

**People: That is why we utter the "Amen" through him, to the glory of God. It is God who has put his seal upon us. He gave us his Spirit as a guarantee.**

Leader: In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, we are redeemed. Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

### **Hearing God's Word**

Children's Message

Hymn of Preparation

#475, "Come Thou Font of Every Blessing"

Come Thou fount of every blessing  
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace  
Streams of mercy never ceasing  
Call for songs of loudest praise  
Teach me some melodious sonnet  
Sung by flaming tongues above  
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it  
Mount of God's unchanging love

Here I raise my Ebenezer  
Hither by Thy help I've come  
And I hope by Thy good pleasure  
Safely to arrive at home  
Jesus sought me when a stranger  
Wandering from the fold of God  
He to rescue me from danger  
Interposed His precious blood

O to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let that grace now like a fetter  
Bind my wandering heart to thee  
Prone to wander Lord I feel it

Prone to leave the God I love  
Here's my heart, O take and seal it  
Seal it for thy courts above

### Prayer of Illumination

### New Testament Reading: Acts 8:26-38

26 Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road — the desert road — that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." 27 So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, 28 and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. 29 The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it." 30 Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked. 31 "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. 32 The eunuch was reading this passage of Scripture: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. 33 In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth." 34 The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?" 35 Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. 36 As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" 38 And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

### Sermon

"The Invitation is in the Mail... Don't Forget to RSVP"

### Responding to God's Word

### Profession of Faith

[from Colossians 1:15-20]

Leader: Who is Jesus for those who know him?

**All: Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible. All things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.**

## Hymn of Response

#518, "Lamb of God"

Your only Son no sin to hide  
But You have sent Him from Your side  
To walk upon this guilty sod  
And to become the Lamb of God

Refrain:

Oh Lamb of God, Sweet lamb of God  
I love the Holy Lamb of God  
Oh wash me in His precious Blood  
My Jesus Christ the Lamb of God

Your gift of love we crucified  
We laughed and scorned Him as he died  
The humble King we named a fraud  
And sacrificed the Lamb of God

I was so lost I should have died  
But You have brought me to Your side  
To be led by Your staff and rod  
And to be called a lamb of God

## Prayers of the People

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them up to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right for us to give thanks and praise.**

*[particular prayers]*

Leader: Lord in your mercy

**People: Hear our prayers.**

## The Lord's Prayer

**All: 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. Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## Anthem

"Hold Me Fast"

## Benediction

### Benediction Response

#543, "O Christ, Surround Me" vs. 1,4

God be the love to search and keep me  
God be the prayer to move my voice  
God be the strength to now uphold me  
O Christ, surround me, O Christ, surround me

Walking behind to hem my journey  
Going ahead to light my way  
And from beneath, above, and all ways  
O Christ, surround me, O Christ, surround me

### Postlude