

Order of service: Let love flow



Call to Worship

One: We are yearning for the day...

**All: The day of God's hope made real!
The day when nobody is hungry, nobody thirsty!
The day of God's Love flowing freely!**

One: Shade from Sun and Shelter from the Wind,
The Compassionate One guides us to the springs of living water
in the Word and in mighty deeds!

All: Let us worship our God and Let Love Flow!

Opening Prayer

Source of Love-Made-Flesh, we stream to you from East and West seeking the right and holding on to the holy. Settle us body and soul in the land of hope your prophets proclaimed. Free our hearts and minds to hear anew the call to compassion, the challenge of community, the needs of our neighbors. Call to us in this One Great Hour that we may gather in Spirit and in Truth and be changed. Seated and settled now, this we pray in Jesus' name: Amen.

Prayer of Confession

God of grace and abundance: we confess that we have stored up the blessings meant for all, and kept them too close. We have pretended that we have done enough for our neighbors, when still we see their need. For the ways in which we ruin relationships through neglect, and for the ways we obstruct the love you would let flow for all, we ask your forgiveness and a new way to live. Transform our hearts so that our actions may follow. In our abundance, free us from the fear of scarcity, and open our hands to heal your people and your land. Set our feet on new paths and guide us to the up-welling spring of your grace. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Words of Assurance

One: Friends, believe this good news: nothing can dam the waters of God's love. The Compassionate One guides all those who seek the better way and will shelter us from the winds of recrimination. God's mercy frees us to make our broken places whole, reconnecting us to a higher call and new life. Love flows to us this day, and by God's power we are forgiven!

All: Thanks be God!

Pastoral Prayer

When we have crouched in fear, most holy, loving One, your presence has given us strength. When we have been alone and unsure, you have sent companions and messengers across deserts, across seas, across time itself to remind us that no one is forgotten. When we have hung our heads in despair, you have raised up children, generation after generation, who have proven that with you, all things are possible. We thank you for your unrelenting pursuit of our well-being; for the drops of mercy within us that make great rivers of compassion when we join them together. You immerse us in healing waters, and we are glad. Guide us to take part in shaping a world where all people know such joy. Let hunger end by the open hands of generous hearts. Let none be thirsty, as your love freely flows through each of your people! Let health be restored to the sick of body, mind or spirit, and in Jesus' name, let us help. We who have known mercy are a people of mercy, strengthened through you and through your Son, Jesus. With a renewed and holy Spirit, we are joyful; we pledge justice; and we will make peace on all of your mountains and plains. May such love flow through all your people, now and always. Amen!

Litany

(For the litany consider using a table-top fountain to provide the sound of living water. A worship leader could also pour water between two pitchers as the congregation responds. If the service will be online or if you can project images in your worship space, this litany is appropriate for use with a series of images beginning with a single drop and proceeding to a large waterfall, river, or ocean. Using photos or videos of bodies of water near and familiar to your congregation will give depth and power to the meditation.)

One: Almighty God, your compassion washes over your people.
People made in your image, yet weak when alone...

All: Small as drops, but love flows.

One: And like drops your people gather, seeking the way to you: drops make streams...

All: Wearing away the stone to let love flow!

One: Joining in a murmur of praise, the stream unites ...

All: In ever-flowing current to let love flow!

One: From the banks of hillside creeks and the streams that irrigate our fields,
may our love converge

All: in a mighty river of mercy to let love flow!

One: For this we know: drops alone may dry too soon,
but drops together are a flood of love!

All: In this and every hour: Let Love Flow!

Invitation to Communion

One: Come to the table where all are made welcome.

All: Let none hunger or thirst in the presence of our God!

One: The table is prepared! From East and West, North and South, come to the feast.

**All: The people of God gather in thanksgiving and praise.
Together we are made whole. Together we remember Christ's
life, love, and promise.**

One: Come to the table, friends. All is ready!

Communion Prayer

God of earth and stars, you breathed on the waters and brought forth life. Like springs in the desert, you sent forth prophets and teachers filled with wisdom to wash over your people. Beside the rivers they preached. With your word they liberated our hearts and helped us cross the divides to your promise. In the fullness of time, you sent Jesus to be our Christ, who offered the water of eternal life to all who would hear. The clear flow of your unending grace washes over us now, and we join in the river of praise and love together with angels and mortals alike:

(Use a Sanctus hymn appropriate to your tradition or this one as you choose)

Holy, holy, holy is the lord God of hosts! Heaven and earth are full of your glory. As the heavens bring rain to water the earth, may your love water our hearts. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of God's love and mercy. Hosanna in the highest!

Invitation to Generosity

“Nobody hungry, nobody thirsty” is the hope of God in Isaiah. It is also the hope of this One Great Hour of our Sharing and caring. With the gifts of our hearts, we let love flow, like new well-water to a thirsty village; for crops, for cooking, for life! Let our giving be an upwelling of generosity and may the stream of love bring about God's kin-dom. Our gift is prayer in action. Praise be to God.

Dedication Prayer

Holy giver of all good gifts,
Bless now this offering that great hours of labor have made possible. Bless the drops that become mighty rivers of grace and transformation. Bless the vision of a world transformed. Let a shining river of love flow through us to your waiting world, in Christ's name. Amen.

Benediction

May the Maker of rain and sea, Creator of all,
and Giver of life awaken you that you may flourish
with sister, brother, and human family.
May Jesus, our brother, redeemer of the lost and hope of the poor,
call your name to follow in his footsteps;
And may the Holy Spirit flood you with such love,
that you fill with joy all who drink from your well.
God's peace is for all and is now with you!
Our worship is over: Let our service begin! Amen.

Written by Kent Gilbert for One Great Hour of Sharing of the Church of the Brethren, 2021.