

## Liturgy for Race Relations Sunday

### Entering into Worship

#### Call to Worship

One: Lord, where shall we find the courage to envisage a new beginning?

**All: Out of the depths, Father, Mother, we come to you.**

One: In our confusion we cry to you...and suddenly comes the exciting news:

**All: You, who abide in heavenly realms, you have come to us!**

One: You have not considered the smallness of our planet or the ephemeral nature of our lives.

**All: It is grace--pure, unlimited grace!**

One: Our human predicament you have made yours,

**All: and now you announce a new morning, a new beginning.**

One: And I saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God

**All: See, I am making all things new.**

#### Hymn of Praise

*Here, O Lord, Your Servants Gather*

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#### Call to Confession

#### Prayer of Confession

**All: O God, we bear the imprint of Your face: the colors of our skin are Your design, and what we have of beauty in our race as human beings, You alone define, who stretched a living fabric on our frame and gave to each a language and a name.**

**Where we are torn and pulled apart by hate because of our race, or skin is not the same; while we are judged unequal by the state and victims made because we own our name, humanity reduced to little worth, dishonored is Your living face on earth.**

**O God, we shared the image of your Son whose flesh and blood are ours, whatever skin. In his humanity, we find our own and in his family our proper skin. Christ is the brother we still crucify; his love the language we must learn, or die.**

#### Time for Silent Confession

#### Assurance of Pardon

#### Peace of Christ

*Please share a sign of God's peace with your neighbor.*

Proclamation of the Word

Scripture Readings

James 2:14-26  
Ephesians 5:16-19

Reflection

Responding to the Word

**Credo**

*From the Confession of 1967*

One: Jesus Christ is God with humankind. Christ is the eternal only-begotten of God who became human and lived among us to fulfill the work of reconciliation. Christ is present in the church, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to continue and complete his mission. Therefore the church calls all people to be reconciled to God and to one another.

**All: God has created the peoples of the earth to be one universal family. In reconciling love, God overcomes the barriers between sisters and brothers and breaks down every form of discrimination based on racial or ethnic differences, real or imaginary. The church is called to bring all people to receive and uphold one another as persons in all relationships of life: in employment, housing, education, leisure, marriage, family, church, and the exercise of political rights. Therefore, the church labors for the abolition of all racial discrimination and ministers to those injured by it.**

**Prayers of the People**

*All assembled are invited to share their prayers for individual and corporate concerns. After each prayer, the community is invited to respond,  
“Lord, hear our prayer.”*

**Offertory**

*As our offertory, let us offer our determination to continue the process of change and growth toward the abolition of all racial discrimination, both in general terms and in specific commitments.*

**Offertory Hymn**

*I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me*

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Sealing the Word: Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

**Invitation to the Table**

*From the Confession of 1967*

One: Sisters and brothers, the Lord's Supper is a celebration of our reconciliation with God and with one another, in which we joyfully eat and drink together at the table of our Savior.

**All: Jesus Christ gave the church this remembrance of his dying for sinners so that by participation in it we have communion with him and with all who shall be gathered in him.**

One: Then as our Savior Christ has taught us, let us share bread and cup in remembrance of his death and resurrection,

**All: In remembrance of our new life in him.**

**Communion Hymn**

*Una Espiga/Sheaves of Summer*

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One: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you**

One: Lift up your hearts

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

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

**All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

One: Holy God, we praise you for your son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, through whose death and resurrection, we are reconciled to you,

**All: And have been given a ministry of reconciliation.**

One: This, your mercy, was proclaimed by the prophets and apostles

**All: and shown forth to us in Jesus Christ.**

One: Born of Mary,

**All: Christ shares our life.**

One: Eating with sinners and outcasts,

**All: Christ welcomes us.**

One: Guiding his children,

**All: Christ leads us.**

One: Visiting the sick,

**All: Christ heals us.**

One: Dying on the cross,

**All: Christ saves us.**

One: Risen from the dead,

**All: Christ gives new life**

One: Living with you, O God,

**All: Christ prays for us.**

One: With thanksgiving we take this bread and cup and proclaim the death and resurrection of our Lord.

**All: Receive our sacrifice of praise.**

One: Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us that this meal may be a communion in the body and blood of our Lord.

**All: Make us one with Christ and with all who share this feast.**

One: Unite us in faith, encourage us with hope, inspire us to love, that we may serve as your faithful disciples until we feast at your table in glory.

**All: We praise you, eternal God, through Christ your Word made flesh, in the holy and life-giving spirit, now and forever. Amen.**

**The Lord's Prayer**

**The Words of Institution and the Breaking of the Bread**

### **The Prayer of Thanksgiving**

One: Let us return thanks to God.

**All: God of grace, you renew us at your table with the bread of life. May this food strengthen us in love and help us to serve you in each other. We ask this in the name of Jesus our brother and our Savior. Amen.**

### **Closing Hymn**

*Many and Great, O God are Thy Things*

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### **The Charge**

*From the Confession of 1967*

**All: With an urgency born of our hope in Jesus Christ, let us apply ourselves to present tasks and strive for a better world. Let us not identify limited progress with the kingdom of God, nor let us despair in the face of disappointment and defeat. In steadfast hope, let us look beyond all partial achievement to the final triumph of God. Now unto God, who by the power within us is able to do far more abundantly than all we could ask or think, to God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.**

### **The Benediction**

*Liturgy by Margaret Aymr, member of the Committee on Theological Education, April 2005.*