

Worship Service

BY ROBERT B. KRUSCHWITZ

GOD'S PEOPLE GATHER

Chiming of the Hour

Call to Worship: Psalm 130

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.

Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive

to the voice of my supplications!

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,

Lord, who could stand?

But there is forgiveness with you,
so that you may be revered.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,

and in his word I hope;

my soul waits for the Lord

more than those who watch for the morning,

more than those who watch for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord!

For with the Lord there is steadfast love,

and with him is great power to redeem.

It is he who will redeem Israel

from all its iniquities.

Hymn of Gathering

“Praise to the Lord, the Almighty”

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!

O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation!

Come, all who hear; now to his temple draw near,

join me in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, above all things so wondrously reigning;
sheltering you under his wings, and so gently sustaining!
Have you not seen all that is needful has been
sent by his gracious ordaining?

Praise to the Lord, who will prosper your work and defend you;
surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend you.
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do,
if with his love he befriends you.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him.
Let the Amen sound from his people again;
gladly forever adore him.

Joachim Neander (1680); translated by Catherine Winkworth (1863), alt.
Tune: LOBE DEN HERREN

Prayer of Gathering

Almighty God, King of creation,
we gather to praise your name.
You have made us,
daily sustain us with good gifts,
and constantly draw us to yourself in love.

Thank you for the good gifts
of this place and moment for worship
and all those who gather here before you.

Draw us together and ever more deeply into your wonderful life.

Teach us through our worship
to know and adore you more completely,
and through that knowledge and praise
to see and embrace one another
as you see and embrace us in steadfast love.

Teach us, through your daily goodness and merciful love,
to deal rightly with our anger when we are offended,
and with our guilt when we have offended others.

In your holy name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
we pray and worship. Amen.

TO RECEIVE GOD'S GRACE AND MERCY

Silent Meditation

The fourth-century Christians who retreated to the deserts of Egypt and Palestine in order to live in faithful community became very familiar with the daily annoyances of living shoulder-to-shoulder with others. They told this story about their lingering, lurking propensity to anger.[†]

A brother was restless in his community and he was often irritated. So he said, "I will go and live somewhere by myself. I will not be able to talk or listen to anyone and so I shall be at peace, and my passionate anger will cease." He went out and lived alone in a cave. But one day he filled his jug with water and put it on the ground. Suddenly it happened to fall over. He filled it again, and again it fell. This happened a third time. In a rage he snatched up the jug and smashed it. Coming to his senses, he knew that the demon of anger had mocked him, and he said, "Here I am by myself, and he has beaten me. I will return to the community. Wherever you live, you need effort and patience and above all God's help." So he got up and went back.

Silent Prayers for Healing

Pray first for those you know
 who endure abuses of poverty, discrimination, or war,
 who are mistreated in their families, schools, and communities,
 who need an advocate stirred by righteous anger.

(Members offer silent petitions.)

For these we pray:
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy.

Pray also for those you know
 who inflict injury on others by neglect,
 who abuse their power,
 who need correction, repentance, and forgiveness.

(Members offer silent petitions.)

For these we pray:
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy.

Pray now for your own need
 for discernment about when to be angry,
 for a patient and forgiving spirit,
 for openness to correction,
 for forgiveness for injustices done and injuries permitted.

(Members offer silent confessions.)

For ourselves we pray:

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy.

Words of Assurance and Pardon: Psalm 145:8-9, 18-19

The LORD is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
The LORD is good to all,
and his compassion is over all that he has made.

The LORD is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.
He fulfills the desire of all who fear him;
he also hears their cry, and saves them.

TO LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

Old Testament Reading: Exodus 34:6-9

The LORD passed before [Moses], and proclaimed,
"The LORD, the LORD,
a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger,
and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,
keeping steadfast love for the thousandth generation,
forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin,
yet by no means clearing the guilty,
but visiting the iniquity of the parents upon the children
and the children's children,
to the third and the fourth generation."

And Moses quickly bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped. He said, "If now I have found favor in your sight, O Lord, I pray, let the Lord go with us. Although this is a stiff-necked people, pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for your inheritance."

New Testament Reading: Ephesians 4:21-5:2

For surely you have heard about [Christ] and were taught in him, as truth is in Jesus. You were taught to put away your former way of life, your old self, corrupt and deluded by its lusts, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to clothe yourselves with the new self, created according to the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. Be angry but do not sin;

do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil. Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy. Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn of Response

“Answer When We Call, Lord Jesus”

Answer when we call, Lord Jesus, source of all our righteousness;
bend your holy ear, relieve us from all terror, all distress.
Lord, receive our prayers for rescue; with your grace, come save and bless.

Wicked men reproach and scorn us, loving what is vile and vain;
God, in mercy, shields, adorns us through the Savior’s blood and pain.
Jesus Christ, who bought and bore us, hear our cries for help again.

Should our anger flare, we’ll sin not; meditate, be still, and rest;
turn our hearts to God, begin not trusting in our righteousness.
By our Savior from sin ransomed, trusting him to save and bless.

Wicked men may scorn and try us, casting doubt upon God’s grace;
send your Spirit, Lord, to shield us till we see your glorious face.
You who through your Son redeemed us, fill our hearts with joy and grace.

Safe in your peace, let us lie, Lord; keep us in your love and care;
rooted in your strong and wise Word, may we find your comfort there.
Guard and keep us till we die, Lord; go before us everywhere.

Anonymous, based on Psalm 4

Tune: LAUDA ANIMA

Gospel Reading: John 14:8-10, 15-17, 25-27

Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.”
Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How

can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works.

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

"I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Sermon

AND RESPOND IN FAITH

Communion

The Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11:23b-26

Communion Prayer

Bread of Life, you command us
to avoid all unrighteous anger and insults
toward those who offend us,
and to love our enemies.
By the model of your life and death,
and through the power of your resurrection,
enable us to do what you command. Amen.

Offering of Gifts

THAT THE WORLD MAY KNOW

Hymn of Departing

“Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing”

Lord, dismiss us with your blessing;
fill our hearts with joy and peace;
let us each, your love possessing,
triumph in redeeming grace;
O direct us and protect us
traveling through this wilderness.

Thanks we give and adoration
for your gospel’s joyous sound;
may the fruits of your salvation
In our hearts and lives abound;
ever faithful, ever faithful,
to your truth may we be found.

John Fawcett (1773), alt.

Tune: SICILIAN MARINERS

Benediction: 2 Thessalonians 3:16, 18

Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace
at all times in all ways.

The Lord be with all of you.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you.

NOTES

† *The Desert Fathers: Sayings of the Early Christian Monks*, 7.33, translated by Benedicta Ward (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 71.

**ROBERT B. KRUSCHWITZ**

is Professor of Philosophy and Senior Scholar in the Institute for Faith and Learning at Baylor University in Waco, Texas.