

Worship Service

BY SHARON KIRKPATRICK FELTON

Call to Worship

“Take Time to Be Holy”

Take time to be holy, speak oft with your Lord;
abide in him always, and feed on his Word.
Make friends of God’s children; help those who are weak;
forgetting in nothing his blessing to seek.

Take time to be holy, the world rushes on;
spend much time in secret with Jesus alone.
By looking to Jesus, like him you shall be;
your friends in your conduct his likeness will see.

Take time to be holy, let him be your guide;
and run not before him, whatever betide.
In joy or in sorrow, still follow your Lord,
and looking to Jesus still trust in his Word.

Take time to be holy, be calm in your soul,
each thought and each motive beneath his control.
Thus led by his Spirit to fountains of love,
you soon will be fitted for service above.

William Dunn Longstaff (1882), alt.

Tune: HOLINESS

Invocation

God, you created us to use our bodies
to run and jump, to throw and catch;
you created us to use our minds
to think and feel, to reflect and express;
you created us to relate our bodies and minds
to connect with ourselves, each other, and you.

In sports and athletic competition
we can engage our bodies and our minds,
we can connect with ourselves, our community, and you.
God, come near to us now
and enjoy your creation as we worship you, the Creator.
Amen.

Hymn

“All That I Am I Owe to Thee”

All that I am I owe to thee,
thy wisdom, Lord, has fashioned me;
I give my Maker thankful praise,
whose wondrous works my soul amaze.

Ere into being I was brought,
thy eye did see, and in thy thought
my life in all its perfect plan
was ordered ere my days began.

Thy thoughts, O God, how manifold,
more precious unto me than gold!
I muse on their infinity,
awaking I am still with thee.

Search me, O God, my heart discern,
try me, my inmost thought to learn;
and lead me, if in sin I stray,
to choose the everlasting way.

The Psalter (1912)

Tune: FEDERAL STREET

Prayer of Confession

God, we spend more energy, time, and money on our sports culture,
than we do in service to you. We even worship favorite sports stars
and teams.

**We fail to see you because of our blind allegiance to our team. Our
priorities and focus are out of sync with your calling.**

God, help us see sports and the gifts of athleticism as ways of creating
community, caring for our bodies as your temple, and serving you.

**Help us through sports and athletic competitions serve one another
and your kingdom rather than our own. May we glorify you and
not ourselves.**

Forgive us, God, for using athletics to divide rather than unify, to tear down rather than build up.

Giver of all good things, may we be faithful to answer your call to care for your world through love and kindness.

Hymn

“We Give Our All to Christ”

We give our all to Christ;
our all, ‘til all is his.
With heart and soul and mind we run.
The prize is all there is.

The prize is Christ, himself,
whom all who finish win;
the first and last are last and first
for both have Christ within.

Omega, Alpha, he,
this Christ who bids us run.
A growing crowd of runners cheer
the Christ, through whom they’ve won.

What sport is life in Christ—
its finish line, the start!
The savior dropped both wreath and crown
to hold the runner’s heart.

We race to move the wreath
from our heads to his feet;
the winner’s crown, both prize and gift,
returns to Christ, complete.

Terry W. York, ASCAP (2008)

Tune: TEAFF HART, C. David Bolin (2008)

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The Witness of the Old Testament: Isaiah 40:28-31

Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.
He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.

Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;
but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.

Sung Response

"Courage, Brother, Do Not Stumble"

Courage, brother, do not stumble,
though your path be dark as night;
there's a star to guide the humble:
"Trust in God and do the right."

Let the road be rough and dreary,
and its end far out of sight;
foot it bravely, strong or weary,
trust in God and do the right.

Perish policy and cunning,
perish all that fears the light;
whether losing, whether winning,
trust in God and do the right.

Trust no party, sect, or faction,
trust no leaders in the fight;
but in every word and action
trust in God and do the right.

Simple rule and safest guiding,
inward peace and inward might,
star upon our path abiding,
"Trust in God and do the right."

Some will hate you, some will love you,
some will flatter, some will slight;
cease from man, and look above you,
trust in God and do the right.

Norman McLeod (1857)

Suggested Tunes: RESTORATION or STUTTGART

Prayer of Community

God, we gather in your presence to celebrate sports, and the hard work,
training, and sacrifice displayed in true athletic competition. Though
we may face one another on athletic fields and courts as fans and

competitors, coaches and athletes, we always come back together as a community, a body of believers, a family of faith. We are better together – stronger, wiser, more generous, more truly human – than when we live for ourselves and on our own.

It is so easy to lose ourselves in the joys of competition and the fanfare of our games. Let us not forget our first and final identity is in Christ alone. Let us not forget that together we are the Body of Christ. Amen.

Sung Response

“Blest Be the Tie that Binds” (vv. 1, 2, 3, and 6)

Blest be the tie that binds
our hearts in Christian love;
the fellowship of kindred minds
is like that to that above.

Before our Father’s throne
we pour our ardent prayers;
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
our comforts and our cares.

We share each other’s woes,
our mutual burdens bear;
and often for each other flows
the sympathizing tear.

From sorrow, toil and pain,
and sin, we shall be free,
and perfect love and friendship reign
through all eternity.

John Fawcett (1782)

Tune: DENNIS

Response of the Community

God, we cannot race through this journey alone.

We need each other.

God, we cannot sustain ourselves throughout this race.

We need each other.

God, we cannot finish this race on our own.

We need each other.

Witness of the New Testament: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Do you not know that in a race the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. Athletes

exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one. So I do not run aimlessly, nor do I box as though beating the air; but I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified.

Sermon

Hymn of Commitment

“Take My Life, and Let It Be”

Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee;
take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise.
Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of thy love;
take my feet, and let them be swift and beautiful for thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing always, only, for my King;
take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from thee.
Take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold;
take my intellect and use every power as thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it thine, it shall be no longer mine;
take my heart, it is thine own, it shall be thy royal throne.
Take my love, my Lord, I pour at thy feet its treasure store;
take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for thee.

Frances R. Havergal (1873)

Tune: ST. GEORGE'S WINDSOR or MADRID (Carr)

Unison Benediction: Hebrews 12:1-3

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart.

Amen.



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