



Liturgy to Celebrate Justice, Partnership and Equality for Women in Church and Society

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### GATHERING SONG AND GREETING

**Presider:** In the name of God, our mother and father, and of Jesus our brother and healer, and of the Holy Spirit, our wisdom and guide. **ALL: Amen.**

**Presider:** May God, the Blessed Holy Three, be with us as we work together for partnership, justice and equality for women in church and society!

**ALL: And also with you.**

### PENITENTIAL RITE

**Presider:** O God, may we see your feminine face in our female ancestors and in all women. **ALL: May we open our hearts, like Mary, to God's mothering love.** **Presider:** Jesus the Christ, may we see the divine reality in the person of a woman especially in women who have been abused and exploited. **ALL: May we like Mary, champion the oppressed and stand with our sisters who are abused and exploited.** **Presider:** O Wisdom/Sophia, may we see you in men and women who have been caring partners and companions. **ALL: May we, like Mary, live a connectedness and friendship with others.**

**Presider:** May the God of love, forgive us our lack of trust in your Spirit Sophia moving with us, in us, and through us, leading us to guidance, courage, healing and empowerment. **ALL: Amen.**

**ALL: Glory to God in the highest, and peace, justice and equality to God's people on earth. O loving God, in the name of the Holy Three-in-One we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. O Jesus Christ, holy Child of our God, You who liberate and heal us: have mercy on us. You, who are all Goodness and Light, hold us in your heart forever. For you are the Holy One; you are our liberator our healer, our strength, O Blessed Holy Three: Jesus Christ; with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God. Amen.**

### WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 58:5-8

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 6:2

Second Reading: John 13:34-35

Gospel Acclamation: ALLELUIA! (sung)

Reader: A reading from the Gospel according to Luke 1:39-56 **ALL: Glory to you O God.**

Reader: The good news of Jesus, the Christ!

**ALL: Glory and praise to you, Jesus the Christ!**

### HOMILY

**Profession of Faith:** **ALL: We believe in God who is creator and nurturer of all. We believe in Jesus, the Christ, who is our love, our hope, and our light. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the breath of Wisdom Sophia, who energizes and guides us to build caring communities and to challenge oppression, exploitation and injustices. We believe that God loves us passionately and forgives us everything. We believe that we are radiant images of God who calls us to live fully, love tenderly, and serve generously. We believe in the communion of saints our heavenly friends, who support us on life's journey. We believe in the partnership and equality of women and men in our church and world. We believe that all are one in the Heart of God. We believe that women's liberation is human liberation. Here we dwell in loving relationships. Here we live our prophetic call of Gospel equality.**

### GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

**Presider:** Aware that God, like a fierce mother bear, who protects her young, is a defender of the oppressed and pursuer of justice, we now bring the women and men in our lives, in our church and world, before you. **Response: Loving God, hear our prayer.**

**Presider:** For those who have been abused, we pray for empowerment. **R. Presider:** For those who have confronted their abusers, we pray for courage. **R.**

**Presider:** For those who have been sexually exploited, we pray for healing. **R. Presider:** For the men and women who have been caring friends and partners, we pray for their continued growth and well being. **R.**

**Presider:** In your name we pray that we can do all things by the power of your Spirit working in us.

**ALL: Amen**

### PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

**Presider:** Blessed are you, O God, Creator of all. Through your divine providence we have this bread to offer, it will become for us the Bread of Life.

**ALL: Blessed be God forever.** **Presider:** Blessed are you, O God, Creator of all. Through your divine providence we have this wine to offer, it will become our spiritual drink. **ALL: Blessed be God forever.**

**Presider:** Nurturing God, we are united in this sacrament by the love of Jesus Christ in communion with Mary, who proclaimed God's power and mercy for the lowly and oppressed. Like Mary, may we discover the liberating power of Woman-Spirit in our midst. We ask this through Wisdom Sophia, Jesus, our brother, and the Holy Spirit. **ALL: Amen.**

**Presider:** God dwells in you. **ALL: And also with you.** **Presider:** Lift up your hearts and pursue justice.

**ALL: We lift them up to God, Pursuer of Justice.**

**Presider:** Let us give thanks to the Creator of all.

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

### EUCARISTIC PRAYER

**Part One:** O loving God, O blessed Holy Three, who brings to birth the world of our dreams for mutual respect and partnership, we do well always and everywhere to give you praise. Give us courage to act justly and work collaboratively to change systems that keep people poor and marginalized in our society. We thank you for the women and men who are working for justice and equality in our church and world. Each day you embrace us in a circle of love; your spirit dwelling in us immerses us in the depths of your cosmic presence and gives us the hope of everlasting joy with you. Your gift of the Spirit, who raised Jesus from the dead, gives us hope that one day all will be one at the eternal banquet of heaven. With thankful hearts in the company of the angels and saints, we praise you, God of Abundance and Welcome.

**ALL: Holy, Holy, Holy God, God of strength and light. Heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed are all who come in the name of our God. Hosanna in the highest.**

**Part Two:** You are holy indeed O nurturing God. You are the Heart of Love. You affirm women's bodies as holy and women's stories as sacred. Pour out your

Spirit upon all who work for justice and equality for women in church and society. Pour out your spirit upon this bread and wine so that with these gifts we may become the body and blood of Jesus, the Christ, in whom we have all become your daughters and sons.

(please all extend hands as we recite the consecration together)  
On the night before he died, Jesus came to table with the women and men he loved. Jesus took bread and praised you, God of compassion. He blessed and broke the bread, gave it to his friends and said:

**ALL: "Take, eat, this is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."**

After supper, Jesus poured the final cup of wine and blessed you, God the Creator. Jesus shared the cup with his friends, and said: **ALL: This is the cup of the covenant of my love poured out for you. As often as you drink of it, remember me.**

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**ALL: Christ, our love, has died in all those abused and exploited, Christ, our hope, is risen in all who work for justice and equality, Christ, our liberator, will come again in a renewed humanity.**

**Part Three:** In memory of Jesus, who showed us the path to liberation and empowerment, we offer you, Loving Creator, the bread of life, this saving cup. We give thanks for the loving relationships that helped us grow more aware of our goodness, strength, and passion. We give thanks that we live in your Enfolding Presence and serve you with grateful hearts. May we be advocates for survivors of violence, abuse, and rape. May we accompany them on their journey to empowerment, forgiveness, and wholeness. May all of us who share in this sacred banquet of Christ be brought together as one in the Holy Spirit and be filled with courage to live Gospel equality in inclusive communities working for justice and peace in our church and world.

**Part Four:** God, remember your holy people throughout the world, make us one in love, together with Francis our pope, \_\_\_\_\_, our bishop(s), and all God's people. Remember our brothers and sisters who are homeless, hungry, sick, lonely, in prison. Remember our sisters and brothers, who face

oppression, discrimination and joblessness, who have lost homes, partners, and hope. Remember all those who work for justice and who have given their lives for the needs of people who suffer injustice, and who have gone to their rest in the hope of rising again,

\_\_\_\_\_ (pause and invite community to name others) bring them and all the departed into your everlasting arms.

**Part Five:** Have mercy on us all; make us one with Mary, Mother of Jesus, our sister and champion of the oppressed, and the apostles through the ages, especially Mary of Magdala, Junia and Andronicus, Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, Bishop Oscar Romero, Ita Ford, and all the holy women and men who have done your will throughout the ages. May their courage inspire us to confront patriarchal systems that discriminate against women. God, let it be so as we praise you in union with the holy women and men of every generation who are free at last from all bondage and injustice, and give you glory through Jesus the Christ.

**ALL: Through Christ, With Christ and In Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, may our work for justice, peace and equality give You glory and honor, Holy God forever and ever. AMEN.**

#### THE PRAYER OF JESUS

**ALL: Our Father and Mother...**

**Presider:** Protect us, God, from all evil and dismiss all anxiety from our minds. May a thousand angels guide our steps to live justice, partnership and equality now as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of God in our time where all can say, "thank God, we are free at last!"

**ALL: For the kindom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

#### THE SIGN OF PEACE

**Presider:** Jesus, the Christ, You said to your disciples, "My peace I leave you. My peace I give you." May the love of God fill us with peace. May the healing power of Christ strengthen us. May the Holy Spirit empower us. **ALL: Amen.** Presider: May the peace of God be always with you. **ALL: And also with you.**  
Presider: Let us offer each other a sign of peace.

#### LITANY FOR THE BREAKING OF BREAD

**ALL:** Loving God, You call us to speak truth to power, have mercy on us. Loving God, You call us to live the Gospel of peace and justice, have mercy on us. Loving God, You call us to be Your presence in the world. Grant us peace.

**Presider:** This is Jesus, who called women and men to be partners and equals, and who liberates, heals and transforms us and our world. All are invited to partake of this sacred banquet of love. **ALL: Jesus you make us worthy to receive you and become you for others. We are the Body of Christ.**

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**Presider:** The encompassing of God be on us, the encompassing of the God of healing, the encompassing of Christ be on us, the encompassing of the Christ of love, the encompassing of the Spirit be on us, the encompassing of the Spirit of Grace, let us go forth from this Banquet of Love, aware always that human rights are equal rights and that we are all the beloved of God. (*Adapted from Alexander Carmichael's Carmina Gadelica*) **ALL: Amen.**

#### CONCLUDING RITE

**Presider:** Our God is with you.

**ALL: and also with you.**

#### BLESSING

(everyone please extend your hands in mutual blessing)

**ALL: May the fire of God's love warm our hearts. May God grant our prayers for justice and equality in our church and world. May the love of Christ fill us and radiate through us forever.**

#### DISMISSAL

**Presider:** Go in the peace of Christ. Let the service for justice and equality continue!

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

#### CONCLUDING HYMN

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