

BECOMING CHRIST FOR THE WORLD: OUR WORSHIPFUL WORK

ENTRANCE

CONGREGATIONAL INTROIT

*“Wade in the Water” and “I Want Jesus to Walk with Me”
entrance of Christ candle, Bible and several people from all aisles carrying water
pitchers - they pour some into font and several bowls at stations and place pitchers in
arrangement in front of font*

CALL TO WORSHIP

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
The love of God
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit is with us!
Praise the Living God!

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

(extemporaneous prayer asking the Holy Spirit to be with us)

HYMN OF PRAISE

“See How Great a Flame Aspires”
UMH 541

WORD

Reader *(on mic, not seen)*: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness.

Thunder and rainstorm sound effect

Projected words:

*the record of God's saving deeds.
with a word, creation*

“This is the Water”

dramatic reading by two voices, male and female, at the center font

This is the water on which God breathed and the Spirit brooded when God began creating us... All creeping things, all races, male and female.

This is the water that drove up the trunk of the tree whose branches bore the fruit we weren't to taste.

This water covered the earth deeper than the Himalayas when God wanted to start over. This is the foot of the rainbow that's meant to tell us God won't destroy the creation again.

This is the water of the River Jabbok where Jacob still wrestles with God.

This is the well where Joseph was left for dead by his jealous brothers.

This is the water that opened at Moses' command when God led God's people out of slavery. This is the water by which Miriam and the women danced the rhythms of liberation.

This water sprung from rocks in the desert when the people started whining to go back to the way things used to be.

These are the salty tears King David shed when Nathan accused him of the worst sin. These are the tears he shed when he pleaded God for forgiveness, and got it.

These are the waters of Babylon by which our ancestors sat down and wept, their harps and tongues silent for homesickness.

And this is the water that broke in a barn in Bethlehem.

Out of this water John pulled a stunned Jesus in the River Jordan, the day they saw the dove and heard from deep within the Voice that said, “YOU ARE MY BELOVED. IN YOU MY HEART SINGS FOR JOY!”

This is where those men heaved and hauled nets, until love came to town and called them to even harder work for even less pay.

This is the water that became wine at a wedding in Cana.

Peter sauntered on this water, and then sank, and then was rescued, setting the pattern of a disciple's life.

This is the well in Samaria where Jesus chatted, unchaperoned, with a so-called disreputable woman. This is the living water that quenched her thirst forever, and restored her dignity.

This is the spittle that came from his mouth when he restored hearing to those who could not hear, when he restored sight to those who could not see.

This is the water he used to cut the wine at his last meal.

These are the tears that fell that last night in the garden.

This is the sink that Pilate used to wash his hands when he passed the death sentence.

These are the wet faces of the women whose grief at the cross could not be quenched.

This is what Jesus thirsted for at the hour of his death.

This is the tomb from which Christ blasted... This is the opening, this is the way.

This is the water that binds us to him when shame and sin and death are destroyed... This is the water that reminds us who we are, and whose we are.

Silent Prayer

Song of Affirmation and Witness

“O, I Know the Lord's Laid His Hands on Me”

FWS 2139

Share with each other... “I knew the Lord laid his hands on me when...”

“Didache (Teaching)”

Afternoon session:

*The music is already begun in the room.
People enter and find a seat as they sing.*

RESPONSE TO THE WORD: REAFFIRMATION

“Water of Life” URW 422

**Water of life, Jesus our light,
Journey from death to new life.
Fountain of hope,
Source of all gifts,
make us your people of peace.**

Elder and Deacon leaders into place during song

Silence

Projected words:

*incorporated into the Body
grace offered, lives affirmed.*

Reaffirmation of Baptism
“Come to the Waters”

INTRODUCTION

Elder speaks, Deacon pours/dips water:

Sisters and brothers in Christ:
Through the Sacrament of Baptism
we are initiated into Christ’s holy church.
We are incorporated into God’s mighty acts of salvation
and given new birth through water and the Spirit.
All this is God’s gift, offered to us without price.

“Come to the Waters”

Deacon speaks:

Today we come to the waters,
to renew our commitments in each other’s presence
to Christ who has raised us,
the Spirit who has birthed us,
and the Creator who is making all things new.

Congregation sings “Gloria!” [from Taize... in Upper Room Worshipbook]

(the congregation is invited to stand)

Bible, water and Christ candle process to center of room

RENUNCIATION OF SIN AND PROFESSION OF FAITH

Marica invites all to turn to the west

Elder: And so I ask you, will you turn away from the powers of sin and death?

**We renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness,
reject the evil powers of this world,
and repent of our sin!**

Marcia invites all to turn to the east

Elder: Will you let the Spirit use you as prophets to the powers that be?

**We accept the freedom and power God gives us
to resist evil, injustice, and oppression
in whatever forms they present themselves!**

Marcia invites all to turn back to the center

Christ candle is raised.

Elder: Will you proclaim the good news and live as disciples of Jesus Christ, his body?

**We confess Jesus Christ as our Savior,
put our whole trust in his grace,
and promise to serve him as our Lord,
in union with the church which Christ has opened
to people of all ages, nations, and races!**

Water is raised.

Will you be living witnesses to the gospel, individually and together, wherever you are, and in all that you do?

**We will remain faithful members of Christ's holy church
and serve as Christ's representatives in the world.**

Bible is raised: Let us join together in professing the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

Do you believe in God the Father?
**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?
**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
[who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.]**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?
**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
[the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.]**

*Congregation sings "Gloria!"
All elements and Deacon/Elder process back.*

THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

Marcia invites: Please follow me as you sign your responses.

Elder: The Spirit of the Lord is with us.

Deacon: Even so, come Lord Jesus!

Almighty God, the life you birthed in us
by baptism into Jesus Christ
will never die.

Your justice never fails.

Your mercy is everlasting.

Your healing river flows.

Your Spirit blows where you will.

We cannot stop you, God!

Come upon us, Holy Spirit!
Come upon us, Holy Spirit!

Come upon these waters.
Come upon these waters.

Let these waters be to us drops of your mercy.
Let these waters remind us of your righteousness and justice.
Let these waters renew in us the resurrection power of Jesus.
Let these waters make us long for your coming reign.

Most Holy God, Abba, Father!
Glory to you!

Jesus Christ, Savior, Lord!
Glory to you!

Spirit of fire, Spirit over the waters, Spirit of holiness!
Glory to you!

Eternal God, One in Three and Three in One!
All glory is yours, now and forever. Amen!

Congregational singing: “Gloria!”

REAFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM AND CALL TO MINISTRY

You are invited to come to the stations,
to touch the water, and to “remember your baptism and be thankful!”

Music for the journey:

“Holy Spirit, Come to Us,” FWS 2118

“Come and Fill Our Hearts,” FWS 2157

“Jesus Remember Me,” UMH 488

“Water, River, Spirit, Grace,” FWS 2253

“Didache (Teaching)”

FORMED AND SENT: TABLE

SONG OF PREPARATION AND INTERCESSION

"The Servant Song" FWS 2222

(with intercessions woven between the verses)

Projected words:

peace of God
passion of the Christ
life in the Spirit...
go and do likewise

INVITATION

Christ our Sovereign invites to his table all who love him,
who seek to live into the fullness of God's love,
and seek to live in peace with one another.

Therefore, as a watermarked people,
inspired by the witness of the liberating love of Christ
and the saving grace of God,
let us share signs of peace and reconciliation.

THE PEACE

GREAT THANKSGIVING

[Marcia: the congregation is invited to remain standing]

[sung Preface ("Sursum Corda") FWS #2257-a]

[musical underscoring on piano continues]

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Almighty God, Creator of all that is:

sun, moon and stars that shine on each of us around this planet,
flora and fauna that bud and bloom with the diversity of climates,
human and animal species in colorful array.

You formed each in your image,
a convergence of miracle and mystery.
and called it all good.

Unable to comprehend such grace, we turn from you.
But your love overcomes our fear
and we are met time and again with your abiding presence.

And so,
with all creatures of this earth
and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

["Sanctus," FWS 2257-b]

[piano continues to underscore]

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.
Your Spirit anointed him, as we will be anointed now to service as his
Body,

to preach good news to the poor,
to proclaim release to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
and to announce that the time had come
when you would save your people.

He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners.
By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection
you gave birth to your church,
delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
and made with us a new covenant
by water and the Spirit.

When the Lord Jesus ascended,
he promised to be with us always,
in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit. *[pause for music to stop]*

[underscoring fades out]

[lift bread but do not break]

On the night in which he gave himself up for us,
he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread,
gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

[lift cup]

When the supper was over, he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Drink from this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.”

[musical underscoring begins again]

And so,
in remembrance of your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ’s offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

[insert “Memorial Acclamation” FWS 2257-c]

[Marcia invites congregation to ancient prayer position (orans) - hands lifted]
[continue musical underscoring]

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ,
redeemed by his blood.

[Marcia invites congregation to make a point of connection]

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ
with the Holy Spirit in your holy church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God,
now and forever. **Amen!**

[insert “Great Amen” FWS 2257-d]

THE PRAYER OF JESUS

Let us pray that prayer Jesus taught us, saying...

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND TAKING OF THE CUP

May this table of Jesus, our Host,
become many tables that we host so that all may be fed.

[break bread]

May this bread that we break
become lives opened and shared freely.

[pour cup]

May this fruit of the vine that we pour
become love that flows extravagantly across divides.

*[those who are serving come forward... three people for each station:
bread, cup, oil]*

THE GIVING OF THE BREAD AND CUP, ANOINTING TO SERVICE

(music during communion, familiar hymns)

THE PRAYER AFTER RECEIVING

**Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery
in which you have given yourself to us.
Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your spirit,
to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

HYMN OF DEDICATION TO SERVICE

“You are Called to Tell the Story”

[tune is REGENT SQUARE, UMH 220, words by Ruth Duck]

**You are called to tell the story,
passing words of life along,
then to blend your voice with others
as you sing the sacred song.
Christ be known in all our singing,
filling all with songs of love.**

**You are called to teach the rhythm
of the dance that never ends,
then to move within the circle,
hand in hand with strangers, friends.**

**Christ be known in all our dancing,
touching all with hands of love.**

**May the One whose love is broader
than the measure of all space
give us words to sing the story,
move among us in this place.
Christ be known in all our living,
filling all with gifts of love.**

THE DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

*(the people are invited to turn to the back as the Christ Candle
moves from the chancel to the door during the Dismissal)*

Deacon: Go forth in peace to serve God and your neighbor in all that you do.
Amen.

Elder: The grace of the Lord, Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you now and always. **Amen.**

Worship Notes:

- “Wade in the Water/I Want Jesus to Walk with Me” African-American spirituals.
- “See How Great a Flame Aspires” Words by Charles Wesley; Music Welsh hymn melody.
- “This is the Water” by A. Robert Hirschfeld. Adapted with permission by Marcia McFee.
- “Oh, I Know the Lord’s Laid His Hands on Me” Words and music African American spiritual.
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