

SEEKERS CHURCH
A Church of the Saviour Community

Summer 2020
Hearing Stories Again for the First Time

GATHERING

ENTRANCE

REFLECTION

The basic fact is that Christianity as it was born in the mind of this Jewish teacher and thinker appears as a technique of survival for the oppressed. That it became, through the intervening years, a religion of the powerful and the dominant, used sometimes as an instrument of oppression, must not tempt us into believing that it was thus in the mind and life of Jesus. ... Wherever his spirit appears, the oppressed gather fresh courage; for he announced the good news that fear, hypocrisy, and hatred, the three hounds of hell that track the trail of the disinherited, need have no dominion over them.

Howard Thurman, *Jesus and the Disinherited*, p 29

CANDLE LIGHTING

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Jesus says, the way of heaven is like a mustard seed,
like yeast, like a pearl of great price.

People: We come to spread the good news
that the ways of God are not the ways of humans.

Leader: Listen to Jesus,
who tells us to give food to all who hunger.

People: We come to learn how to make feasts for thousands
out of two fish and five loaves of bread.

Leader: Look at Jesus,
calming the waves and inviting us to walk on water.

All: We come to sit at the feet of Jesus,
ready to hear new meanings in ancient tales.

OPENING PRAYER

HYMN

SILENCE

PRAYERS

CONFESSION

Leader: Eternal Storyteller,
our hearts have become dulled to the power of your liberating good news
and numb to the ways it has been used to oppress.

People: When we hear the story of Joseph,
we are Joseph rather than the brothers who sold him into slavery.

Leader: When we hear the Passover story,
we see ourselves as Israelites, never Egyptians.

People: When we hear the story of feeding the five thousand,
we are the boy who gave Jesus his lunch,
rather than the disciples
who wanted the people to fend for themselves.

Leader: Eternal Hope of the oppressed,
open our hearts and minds that we may see ourselves
not just as the heroes of these stories
but also in those who acted out of fear, hypocrisy, and hatred.

All: Forgive us, Holy One,
for being blind to the ways we have subverted your good news.

INDIVIDUAL PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE

Leader: The Holy One forgives us
and gives us fresh courage to proclaim the good news
that the three hounds of hell -- fear, hypocrisy, and hatred –
no longer have dominion over us.

All: Amen.

THANKSGIVING AND PRAISE

INTERCESSION AND PETITION

COMMITMENT

All: O Holy One, we come today
to claim our relationship with you.
We pray for the commitment to grow together,
sharing the gifts you give us with others
here and in the wider world.

Forgive us for the hurt we have inflicted
and help us forgive those who have hurt us.

Give us strength and discipline
to nurture our relationship with you;
to care for every part of your creation;
to foster justice and be in solidarity with those in need;
to work to end all war, and violence, and discord;
and to respond joyfully when you call,
freely giving our selves as you have shown the way.

We open our hearts to you and your creation
in the name of Jesus, who is the Christ. Amen.

HYMN

THE WORD

SCRIPTURE

SERMON

SILENT REFLECTION

OFFERING

During this time of spatial distancing, Seekers continues to have expenses and to support many individuals and organizations in need. Seekers Church can now accept donations through PayPal by clicking on the Donate button on the Seekers website or at [PayPal.Me/SeekersChurch](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?url=https://www.seekerschurch.org). While you do not need a PayPal account, Seekers pays a small charge for this service, so checks sent to Seekers remain the best option for regular donations. Checks can be sent to

*Seekers Church
276 Carroll Street
NW Washington DC, 20012*

COMMUNION

PREPARATION

Leader 1: This is the table of the heavenly feast,
the joyful celebration of the people of God.

Leader 2: We gather now as one body, joined around the table.
Here we celebrate God's presence among us,
united in Christ's spirit, broken and whole all at once.

All: Nourished and hungry, loved and loving,
sinner and forgiven, we make one circle
of knowing, believing, rejoicing, being,
as God lights and rests among us.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Leader 1: Holy Creator, we give you thanks and praise,
for you continually make all things new.

People: We give you thanks for Jesus the Christ,
who embodied your love and justice,
announced good news to the oppressed,
and calls us today to follow him.

Leader 2: We give you thanks for your Holy Spirit,
who gives fresh courage to the oppressed.

All: We give you thanks for your Holy Church,
your people moved by your Spirit
to tell the ancient stories
and live your good news every day.

BLESSING THE ELEMENTS

Leader 1: Christ invites everyone to eat the bread of life,
to drink the cup of the new covenant.

Leader 2: Jesus said, I am the bread of life.
You who come to me shall never hunger;
you who believe in me shall never thirst.

Leader 1: On the night he gave himself up, Jesus took bread,
and after giving thanks to God, broke it and said,
This is my body,
broken for the healing of the world.
Whenever you eat it, do so remembering me.

Leader 2: After supper, Jesus took the cup and said,
This is the cup of the new covenant,

poured out for you and for all.
Whenever you drink it, do so remembering me.

All: O Holy One, send down your Spirit
that these gifts of grain and grape,
and work of human hands
may be for us the body and blood of Christ.
Unite us with Christ forever
and bring us with the whole creation
to your eternal realm.

SHARE THE ELEMENTS

As a sign of gathering in spirit while scattered, you may want to lift your bread toward your camera as we break bread together.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

All: God of abundance and mercy,
we give joyful thanks
for your eternal love and healing presence
in our celebration of bread and cup.
Bless this Body of Christ
that we may attend faithfully
to our call to be your servants,
with each other and throughout the world. Amen.

SHARED REFLECTIONS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN

BENEDICTION

Leader: Let us go forth remembering that our faith began
as survival for the oppressed.
We are called today
to give courage to those who live in fear,
to confront hypocrisy with truth,
and to respond to hatred with love.

In the name of the Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit,
let us greet one another with signs of peace.

All: Amen.