

## **Churches Uniting in Christ Communion Liturgy**

(This liturgy for the ten churches engaged in Churches Uniting in Christ\* has been revised for local and regional worship services.)

### **Processional Hymn of Praise**

#### **Declaration of Purpose**

Leader: We gather to praise God who in Christ Jesus chose us before the world was founded. We gather because God has dedicated us to be without blemish and full of love.

People: We come to ask God's Holy Spirit to be with us as we seek forgiveness for the sin of division. We come to pray for the full, visible unity of the one Body of Christ.

Leader: Led by the Holy Spirit, we have become Churches Uniting in Christ. In this relationship with one another, we can speak the Christian faith more clearly. With fresh courage, we can oppose the powers that divide our churches and oppress the people of our land.

People: We ask for wisdom and perseverance as we work to reconcile our separated ministries so that they will be united as one ministry of Jesus Christ.

#### **Prayer of Confession**

Leader: Let us confess our sins before God and one another: Holy God, we have promised to love you with heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to love our neighbors as we love ourselves.

People: We confess to you and to each other that we break the promises and violate this covenant of love. We confess that we are diminished by pride and separation. We acknowledge the sinful divisions of our churches. We admit our failures in our mission of justice and love. We confess that we support systems of racism and other oppression that despoil your incarnate image and violate creation. Merciful God, forgive us. In Jesus Christ, transform our hearts to obey your commandments, restore our love for one another, and proclaim your glory. Ever living God, our Judge and Healer, have mercy on us. Lord, Have Mercy.

#### **Declaration of Forgiveness**

Leader: Everyone who is in Christ has become a new creation. The old is gone, the new has come. God through Christ, has reconciled the world and gives us the ministry of reconciliation. Friends, believe the Good News that comes from God: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

People: Thanks be to God. Amen

#### **Liturgy of the Word Prayer for the Day**

Leader: Eternal God: Proclaim your word in the reading of scripture. Speak to us in the meditations of our hearts. Reveal yourself in the faithfulness of our lives. Through Jesus Christ we pray.

All: Amen.

### **First reading from the Bible**

Reader's Introduction: The Word of God from . .

Reader's Conclusion: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People's Response: Thanks be to God.

### **Psalm Second Reading from the Bible**

Reader's Introduction: The Word of God from . . .

Reader's Conclusion: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People's Response: Thanks be to God.

### **Hymn**

#### **A Reading from the Gospel**

All stand if able.

Reader's Introduction: The Word of God from . . .

Reader's Conclusion: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People's Response: Thanks be to God.

### **Sermon**

#### **Affirmation of Faith: The Nicene Creed**

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit, he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### **Prayers of the People**

(Prayer is offered with intercession for: the Universal Church, its members, and its mission; the Nation and all in authority; the welfare of the local community; those who suffer and those in any trouble; the departed, with commemoration of a saint when appropriate).

Leader: Holy God, the earth you created in beauty now languishes in pain, waiting for its redemption. The peoples of the earth whom you created, to live together in peace and joy, now experience violence and despair. Transform us and our Churches Uniting in Christ that we may become your ministers to this world and its people.

People: Make us bold in our struggle against cruelty. Give us courage and endurance to accept no peace where there is oppression, and to work for justice, God's Shalom, and the common good. Help us speak to the conscience of our country and its institutions. Use us to heal the brokenness in life. Renew our joy so that all creation can sing again the glad songs with which the world began.

Leader: All this we pray through Jesus Christ through whom you make all things new.

People: Amen.

### **Hymn**

**Peace** (The people exchange signs of Christ's peace.)

### **Liturgy of the Table**

Offering and Preparation of the Table

Leader: My sisters and brothers, we have confessed the gospel of Christ and the new life that God has lavished upon us. Let us now glorify God with gifts that we share with one another and with the whole world.

(Gifts are brought forward to the table to be prepared for the Eucharistic Meal.)

**Anthem** (if appropriate)

### **Great Thanksgiving Prayer**

Leader: God be with you,

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to God,

Leader: Let us give thanks to God most high.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise,

Leader: All praise to you, God our Creator, for by your Word and Spirit you made the heavens and the earth, filled them with life and declared everything good. All praise to you, God our Redeemer, for sending prophets, apostles, teachers, and martyrs, inspired by your Spirit to speak the word of life, and when the time was right, for becoming fully human in Jesus Christ. All praise to you, God our Helper; as wisdom, you inspire us to speak the truth; as power, you strengthen us to do justice. With your sons and daughters of faith, in all times and places, and with all the heavenly host, we praise you with joy.

All: Holy, holy, holy God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God. Hosanna in the highest!

Leader: Loving God, in gratitude we remember that on the night before the crucifixion, Jesus took bread and after giving thanks to you broke it and gave it to the disciples, saying: "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way after supper Jesus took the cup and after giving thanks, gave it to them and said: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." In gratitude for what Christ has done for us, we proclaim our hope.

All: Dying you destroyed our death; rising you restored our life; Jesus, come in glory.

Leader: Holy God, send your Holy Spirit upon us and these gifts, that all who eat and drink at this table may be one body and one people, a living sacrifice in Jesus Christ. Through this meal unite us with the risen Christ so that we may give ourselves for the life of the world. Through us bring good news to the poor, release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and freedom to the oppressed. Give us the power to work for justice that all the world may be filled with peace and joy. This sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving we offer you, eternal God, through Jesus Christ, in unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Leader: With the confidence of the children of God, let us pray:

All: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

### **Breaking the Bread**

Leader: The bread we break is the communion of the Body of Christ.

All: We who are many are one Body for we all share in the one bread.

Leader: The cup of blessing for which we give thanks is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

All: We who are many are one Body for we all share in the one cup.

**Communion of the People** (As the people receive Communion, hymns may be sung.)

**Prayer after Communion**

All: God of glory, you nourish us with bread from heaven. Fill us with your Holy Spirit, that through us your light may shine into all the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**The Commission and the Blessing**

Leader: Let us go from this place in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace.

All: Amen.

Leader: May God bless us with strength to seek justice.

All: Amen

Leader: May God bless us with wisdom to care for the earth.

All: Amen.

Leader: May God bless us with courage to live together in unity.

All: Amen.

Leader: May the grace of Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

All: Amen.

**Recessional Hymn**

(Worship Planners are encouraged to follow local customs and those of the worship leaders in the selections for music and in giving guidance to times appropriate for standing, kneeling or sitting.)

**\*Churches Uniting in Christ (CUIC)** is an ecumenical organization that brings together mainline American denominations and was inaugurated on January 20, 2002, in Memphis, Tennessee on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel. (See list of members on next page.)

**Participating full member denominations of Churches Uniting in Christ include:**

- [African Methodist Episcopal Church](#)
- [African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church](#)
- [Christian Church \(Disciples of Christ\)](#)
- [Christian Methodist Episcopal Church](#)
- [Episcopal Church \(United States\)](#)
- [International Council of Community Churches](#)
- [Moravian Church in North America](#)
- [Presbyterian Church \(USA\)](#)
- [United Church of Christ](#)
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