

# WORSHIP RESOURCES

## Calls to Worship

Leader: What does God treasure?

**People: “God saw everything that God had made, and indeed, it was very good.”**

Leader: And God said,

**People: “You are my children, my people, my treasured possession.”**

Leader: Where is your treasure, O people?

**People: In the faces of brothers and sisters worldwide, we see the face of Christ.**

All: We come to worship God and to care for God’s treasured people.

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Leader: Come with joy to worship the God who deeply loves us,

**People: Who treasures each person near and far,**

Leader: Who treasures people known to us and people who are strangers to us.

**People: Praise God, to whom no one is a stranger!**

All: Praise God, who regards each of us as beloved.

## Opening Prayers

We come to worship you, O God, thankful that you call us your children. We come to follow Christ’s way, to grow in love and service, to mature to see the face of Christ in all the faces of the world, and to treat each person with the compassion Christ has shown us. Open our hearts to receive your Spirit and grace. Amen.

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O God, we come before you, amazed that you would treasure us and deeply thankful that you do. Open our hearts to your Spirit and message this day that we may grow in wisdom and maturity, so that we may love as you love. Amen.

## Prayers of Confession

Dear God, we so often take for granted the magnificent abundance you continually pour into our lives—sunshine, rain, shelter, food, family, friends, meaningful work, your presence. These blessings give our life meaning and joy, but we act as though we have earned them through our own merit. Forgive us. Lead us from self-absorption. Forgive our blindness to how our acts affect other lives. We react quickly when others hurt us and yet often refuse to accept responsibility for the far-reaching effects of our own decisions. Please move us from self-centeredness to being centered in you, that we may wisely balance our needs and the needs of others. Amen.

Dear God, we humble ourselves before you, shamefully aware that we have treated people and this earth as “things” to be used and exploited, rather than as your beloved creatures and creation to be treasured. Our attitude comes out in so many ugly ways—greed, thoughtless consumption, blindness to others’ pain, pollution, war. We pray for a deep change in heart. Help us to really know that you love us, and help us to really love others. We’re asking for miracles, God—long-lasting miracles of growth in our desire to love, our desire to help, and our ability to see beyond our own selves—because we want to follow Jesus. Amen.

## Words of Assurance

As far as east is from the west, so far God removes our transgressions from us. With God daily at the center of our lives, we will come to see the imprint of the Holy One on each person—from distant east to distant west, the face of Christ in all.

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Jesus said, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Rest assured, friends: God treasures you. God’s heart is with you and is wide open to your prayer. Claim the promise of God’s forgiveness! Live with boldness as increasingly you love as God loves and thus do God’s will.

## Prayer of Illumination

God of creation and of abundance, remind us, whose vision is obscured by the world’s abundance, that all we have is from you.

O Christ, the Human One of God, empower us with your word to be the hands that do the work of your love.

O Holy Spirit who moves across the deep, move also through us, awakening us to your word, to your presence, and to the richness of life in you. Amen.

## Litanies

Leader: God’s treasured possession is . . .

**People: God’s people.**

Leader: We are blessed,

**People: Given food, shelter, rain, and sun.**

Leader: Yet, who will seek and help God’s children in need?

**People: Who will help care for God’s treasures?**

Leader: Jesus asked Simon Peter, “Do you love me? Feed my lambs.”

**People: “Do you love me? Tend my sheep.”**

Leader: How will we tend God’s sheep?

**People: With the joy of God's love, we will reach out,**

Leader: For we are the Body of Christ.

**People: We will tend God's treasures,**

Leader: For where God's treasure is, there God's heart is, also.

**All: And there we will find our hearts.**

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(Adapted from Luke 6:20–21 and Psalm 146:5–10)

Leader: Blessed,

**People: Blessed are the poor.**

Leader: Blessed are you who are poor,

**People: For yours is the kingdom of God.**

Leader: Blessed,

**People: Blessed are the hungry.**

Leader: Blessed are you who are hungry now,

**People: For you will be filled.**

Leader: Blessed,

**People: Blessed are the weeping.**

Leader: Blessed are you who weep now,

**People: For you will laugh.**

Leader: Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,

**People: Whose hope is in the Lord their God,**

Leader: Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them,

**People: Who keeps faith forever,**

Leader: Who executes justice for the oppressed,

**People: Who gives food to the hungry.**

Leader: The Lord sets the prisoners free;

**People: The Lord opens the eyes of the blind.**

Leader: The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;

**People: The Lord watches over the strangers,**

Leader: And upholds the orphan and the widow.

**People: The Lord will reign for ever,**

Leader: Your God, O Zion, for all generations.

**All: Praise the Lord!**

### Invitations to the Offering

One of the joys of being alive in these days is being called to tend to God's treasured people, near and far. Our One Great Hour of Sharing offering will carry the love of Jesus as it brings help and hope to people in need wherever they are. Our gifts will help others experience the reality of the Realm of God and the caring, compassionate

community that is the church. Please join with Christians throughout the United States this day in bringing from our treasure houses our gifts of love and service.

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Christ has regarded each of us with love and deep compassion. The church's mission is to share that message, that love and compassion, with all. You are invited to share from your "treasures," to help care for God's treasured people, here locally and throughout the world, through the work of our congregation and One Great Hour of Sharing.

### Dedicatory Prayers

May we do great things, small things, all things, for your realm and for what you treasure. With hope and joy, we thank you that we can be part of your great work of caring for all your children. Bless these tithes and offerings to your work, with our love. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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We send forth our love, the fruit of our work, our treasure gathered here in this plate to tend your treasures in this far-flung world. Please bless the work our tithes and offerings will do, that your children may be strengthened, healed, housed, schooled, and fed. In Jesus' name. Amen.

### Invitation to Communion

On the night he was betrayed, Jesus gathered with twelve of his closest companions, his disciples. Even Judas was included, whom Jesus called "Friend" when Judas came to the garden a few hours later to betray him. No one is beyond the love of God. Dearly beloveds, treasured by the Most High, join in this remembrance of our Savior and Redeemer.

### Communion Prayer

May this meal, endowed with your words and your Spirit, so fill our hearts, God, that no one is beyond our love. May we love as you have loved us—completely, abundantly, constantly. May we share with all your treasured people the blessings of companionship, grace, and strength that we experience at this table. Amen.

### Charges and Benedictions

Go out into the world, strengthened by God's care and caring for God's treasured people.

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O treasured people of God, may your life and work this week so shine with the holy imprint of Christ, that all may feel God's love through you.