

United With Christ in



One Body - Many Members

**Central States Synod Assembly Opening Worship
Friday, June 4, 2021**

+ WELCOME +

+ GATHERING SONGS +

God Welcomes All *(All Creation Sings #978)*

God welcomes all, strangers and friends;
God's love is strong and it never ends.

All Who Are Thirsty *(All Creation Sings #981)*

[A leader sings the words in parentheses]

(All who are thirsty,) come to the waters.
(All who are hungry,) come here and eat.
(All who are thirsty,) come to the waters.
There's enough for all.

Christ, Our Peace *(All Creation Sings #1037)*

Christ, our peace,
you break down the walls that divide us;
Christ, our peace,
come, make us one body in you.

+ JOURNEY THROUGH THE WATERS +

Journey through the Waters: Indigenous Peoples

Journey through the Waters: European Peoples

Journey through the Waters: People of African Descent

Journey through the Waters: People of Latino/a Descent

+ THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM +

Presiding Minister: We have journeyed through the waters.
United with Christ in Baptism, we are gathered as One Body, Many Members.
Clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness, in your homes, we invite you to join
us in pouring and blessing water as we give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Assisting Minister: Holy God, fountain of living water,
source of mercy, tender and mighty,
you are clothed with majesty and splendor.
Your steadfast love fills the earth.
Your steadfast love fills the earth.

Assisting Minister: Your love flows through water,
a sign of your saving power:
Noah and the animals survive the flood,
Hagar discovers your well.
The Israelites escape through the sea,
and they drink from your gushing rock.
Naaman washes his leprosy away,
and the Samaritan woman will never be thirsty again.
Your steadfast love fills the earth.
Your steadfast love fills the earth.

Assisting Minister: Your love flows through the water of baptism
joined to your life-giving Word:
your well of mercy and cleansing flood,
your sea of deliverance from death into life,
your healing river washing sin away,
your living water springing up to eternal life.
Your steadfast love fills the earth.
Your steadfast love fills the earth.

Presiding Minister: Shower us with your Holy Spirit.
Fill us with your love.
Clothe us and all your people with grace.
Embolden us to do justice.
Bless us to love mercy.
Guide us to walk humbly with you,
whom we thank and praise, through Jesus Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.
Amen.

+ GREETING AND OPENING PRAYER +

Presiding Minister: The love of God poured into our hearts, the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O God, rich in mercy, full of kindness, out of your great love, you raise us up from sin and death and make us alive together with Christ. Write your word upon our hearts and restore in us the image of your love that, by your Spirit, our way of life may become the way of Christ, through whom we pray.

Amen.

+ FIRST READING : Revelation 7:9-12 +

A reading from Revelation:

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

"Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

¹¹And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹²singing,

"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom

and thanksgiving and honor

and power and might

be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

THANKS BE TO GOD.

+ GOSPEL VERSE +

Listen Now for the Gospel *(All Creation Sings #972)*

[A leader sings the words in parentheses]

Refrain

(Listen now for the gospel!) Alleluia!

(It is God's word that changes us!) Alleluia!

- 1 Come, Holy Spirit, melt and break our hearts of stone,
until we give our lives to God, and God alone. *Refrain*
- 2 Come, Holy Spirit, root in us God's living word,
that we may show the faithfulness of Christ our Lord. *Refrain*

+ GOSPEL READING: Matthew 15: 21-28 +

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 15th chapter.

GLORY TO YOU, O LORD.

²¹Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²²Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." ²³But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." ²⁴He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." ²⁵But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." ²⁶He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." ²⁷She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." ²⁸Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST.

+ SERMON +

+ HYMN OF THE DAY +

Build a Longer Table *(All Creation Sings, #1062)*

- 1 Build a longer table, not a higher wall,
feeding those who hunger, making room for all.
Feasting together, stranger turns to friend,
Christ breaks walls to pieces; false divisions end.

- 2 Build a safer refuge, not a larger jail;
where the weak find shelter, mercy will not fail.
For any place where justice is denied,
Christ will breach the jail wall, freeing all inside.
- 3 Build a broader doorway, not a longer fence.
Love protects all people, sparing no expense.
When we embrace compassion more than fear,
Christ tears down our fences: all are welcome here.
- 4 When we lived as exiles, refugees abroad,
Christ became our doorway to the reign of God.
So must our tables welcome those who roam.
None can be excluded; all must find a home.

+ AFFIRMATION OF FAITH +
"A New Creed" from the United Church of Canada

Together, let us affirm our faith.

**We are not alone,
we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.**

We trust in God.

**We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.**

Thanks be to God.

+ OFFERING +

+ PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE +

+ THE PEACE OF THE LORD BE WITH YOU ALWAYS! +

+ SONG +

The Peace of the Lord(ELW #646) *La paz del Señor*

SPANISH

- 1 La paz del Señor, la paz del Señor,
la paz del Resucitado:
la paz del Señor a ti y a mí,
a todos alcanzará;
la paz del Señor a ti y a mí,
a todos alcanzará.

ENGLISH

- 1 The peace of the Lord, the peace of the Lord
the peace of the risen Lord Jesus:
the peace of the Lord is for you and for me,
and also for all of God's children.
The peace of the Lord is for you and for me,
and also for all of God's children.
- 2 The peace of the Lord, the peace of the Lord,
the peace of the risen Lord Jesus:
the peace of the Lord is among us right now,
so open yourselves to receive it.
The peace of the Lord is among us right now,
so open yourselves to receive it.

+ Order for Opening of Assembly +

As in one body we have many members,

so we, who are many, are one body in Christ.

Where two or three are gathered in my name, says the Lord,

I am there among them.

Live a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called,

with all humility and gentleness,

making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit

in the bond of peace.

**Let us pursue what makes for justice and peace,
and for mutual upbuilding.**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O God, on this day you open the hearts of your faithful people
by sending into us your Holy Spirit.

Direct us by the light of that Spirit,
that we may have a right judgment in all things
and rejoice at all times in your peace,
through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

Amen.

I declare this assembly to be in session
in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Acknowledgements:

“God Welcomes All”

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giamusic.com.

“All Who Are Thirsty”

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“Christ, Our Peace”

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“Listen Now for the Gospel”

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“Build a Longer Table”

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