



## **GATHERING PRAYER:**

*Begin this Sunday's worship with a time of silence. Our lives are far noisier than wind, fire, or earthquake. In a great paradox, God speaks to us in sheer silence. Use this chance to listen as you pray.*

Wellspring of eternal life, we come to you this day having drunk deeply the waters of anxiety and despair. Bring to us your living water. Quench our thirsting souls, for we offer this prayer in Your Name. AMEN.

## **PASTORAL WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY:**

- ❖ Give to us clear vision that we may know where to stand and what to stand for - because unless we stand for something, we shall fall for anything. - *Peter Marshall*
- ❖ Everyone takes the limits of his own vision for the limits of the world.  
- *Arthur Schopenhauer*
- ❖ It is only with the heart that one can see rightly, what is essential is invisible to the eye. - *Antoine Saint-Exupéry*
- ❖ It is a terrible thing to see and have no vision. - *Helen Keller*

**PRAISE SONG:** *The Gathering Hymn (music at end of bulletin)*

### **CALL TO WORSHIP:**

One: The work of our hands,

**All: Our labor of care.**

One: Our open hand,

**All: Our tender embrace,**

One: Loving God, we serve you...

**All: By loving the world,**

One: Caring for all people,

**All: Especially the poor, the young, the forgotten.**

One: We serve God not by being "right",

**All: But by being loving.**

One: By this they will know we are your disciples.

**All: May our love glorify our Savior.**

## **OUR CONFESSION:**

**All: Holy God, when Jesus knew he was about to be crucified, he left his disciples with one command: Love one another as I have loved you. How simple it seems, and yet how hard it is to do what he asked. Instead of love, our hearts harbor self-righteousness, resentment, self-sufficiency and envy. We wish to be better than others rather than one with them. You know our hearts, and you know the many ways we violate your command to love. Forgive us for how often and how far we fall short. Teach us what love truly is so that by your grace, we may show ourselves to be the disciples we want to be. Amen**

## **WORDS OF ASSURANCE:**

The waters of mercy and healing are poured over you. God is loving and faithful to those who come to God. Come, seek the loving presence and be healed. AMEN.

**THE CONFESSION RESPONSE:   *And They All Came to Jesus*  
(music at end of bulletin)**

## **THE LESSONS:**

### **Acts 4:32-35**

<sup>23</sup>After they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. <sup>24</sup>When they heard it, they raised their voices together to God and said, “Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and everything in them, <sup>25</sup>it is you who said by the Holy Spirit through our ancestor David, your servant: ‘Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples imagine vain things? <sup>26</sup>The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers have gathered together against the Lord and against his Messiah.’ <sup>27</sup>For in this city, in fact, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, <sup>28</sup>to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. <sup>29</sup>And now, Lord, look at their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness, <sup>30</sup>while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” <sup>31</sup>When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness.

### **John 20:19-31**

<sup>19</sup>When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” <sup>20</sup>After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup>Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” <sup>22</sup>When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup>If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” <sup>24</sup>But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with

them when Jesus came.<sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

<sup>26</sup>A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” <sup>27</sup>Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” <sup>28</sup>Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” <sup>29</sup>Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. <sup>31</sup>But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

**MESSAGE:** *“Loving is Believing”*

**MESSAGE RESPONSE:** *Ask the Complicated Questions*  
*(music at end of bulletin)*

## **THE PRAYERS**

### **THE LORD’S PRAYER:**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

### **THE SENDING OUT:**

Leader: Christ is risen...

**All: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Leader: Now, as you leave this place, may the Lord help us: Follow Jesus' way, see and celebrate God's presence everywhere, and love our neighbors as we love ourselves. ...In the name of Christ.

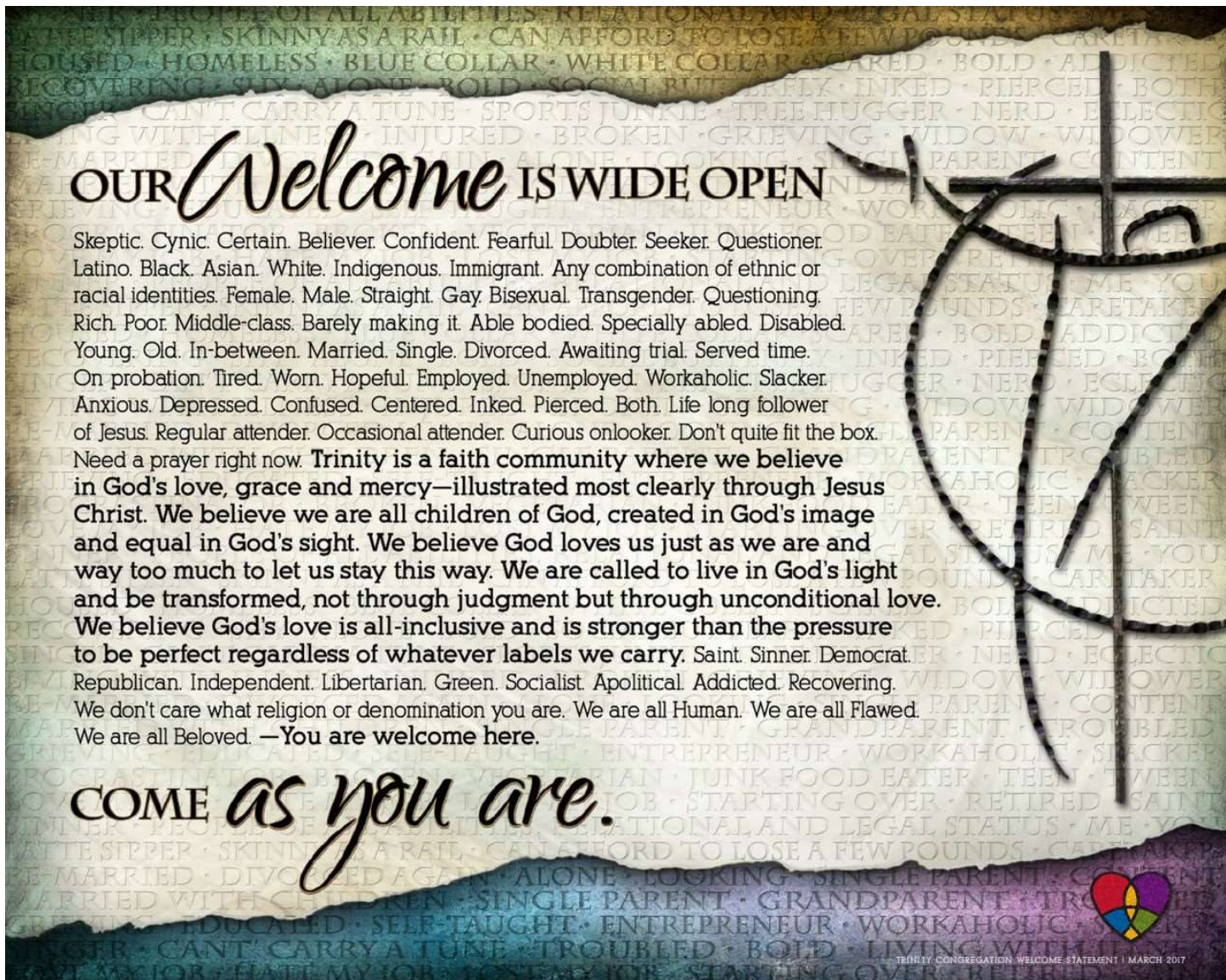
**All: Amen!**

**THE SENDING SONG:** *Cross of Christ (music at end of bulletin)*

### **THE DISMISSAL:**

Leader: Go in peace. Serve the Risen Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**



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The Gathering Hymn

Out of need and out of cus - tom, we have  
 Come we have now, heard the masks dis - play - ing, fear - ing the  
 We have heard the glow - ing stor - ies of the  
 gath - ered here a - gain. To the gath - 'ring we are  
 that things which God has done. Fool - ish games for - ev - er  
 Of God's grace and of God's  
 bring - ing love and laugh - ter, grief and pain. Some be -  
 play - ing, feel - ing of mean - while so a - lone. Let pre -  
 glo - ry and of Christ, the Ho - ly One. God of  
 liev - ing, some re - joic - ing, some of  
 ten - sion's pow'r be - bro - ken, to be  
 hu - man man trans - for - ma - tion, for Your  
 faith and some in doubt. Come we now, our ques - tions  
 hu - man let us dare. Let the us truth, in love - be  
 pres - ence now we pray. Lead us ev - er on the  
 voic - ing. We will search these mat - ters out.  
 spo - ken as we now the quest - ing share.  
 jour - ney as we gath - er here to - day.

And They All Came to Jesus

1. Some peo - ple came to Je - sus shout - ing,  
2. Some peo - ple came to Je - sus beg - ging,  
3. Some of us come to Je - sus glad - ly,

"Lord, I be - lieve I shall be healed."  
beg - ging for to - lieve com - fort and be re - lief.  
eag - er to find a bet - ter way;

Some peo - ple came to Je - sus doubt - ing,  
Some peo - ple came to Je - sus rag - ing,  
Some of us come to him re - sist - ing.

he is a fraud, he can't be real.  
hearts filled with hate time and for dis - be - lief.  
We have no time for this to - day.

Some peo - ple came to Je - sus fright - ened  
Some peo - ple came to him like chil - dren  
Some of us come to him like de - spair - ing,

of all the e - vil they had done.  
to be em - braced with - in his arms.  
born down by hope - less - ness and shame.

No mat - ter how they came to Je - sus,  
Some peo - ple came to Je - sus plot - ting  
Some of us come to him ig - nor - ing,

the com - ing changed them and ev - ery - one.  
to break his cause and do him - one.  
we feel no need to hear his his - harm.  
claims.

Some folks came clos - er. Some folks ran a - way.  
Some joined his cir - cle. Some just would not stay.  
Some thought him just a fraud and some thought him di -  
vine, but they all came to Je - sus in their time. Oh  
yes, but they all came to Je - sus in their time.

### Ask the Complicated Questions

Ask the com - pli - cat - ed ques - tions.  
 Seek the disc - con - cert - ing an - swers,  
 Knock on doors of new i - de - as,  
 For in strug - gle we dis - cov - er

Do not fear to be found out; for our God makes  
 fol - low where the Spir - it blows; test com - pet - ing  
 test as - sump - tions long grown stale, for Christ call from  
 truth both sim - ple and pro - found; in the knock - ing,

strong our weak - ness, forg - ing faith in fires of doubt.  
 truths for wis - dom, for in ten - sion new life grows.  
 shores of won - der, dar - ing us to try and fail.  
 ask - ing, seek - ing, we are o - pened, an - swered, found.

### Cross of Christ

Hearts on fire with hope and grief;  
 Some - one has a heav - y load,  
 Riv - ers filled with mys - ter - y

There is doubt and there's be - lief. Some will trust, a  
 stran - ger hurt a - long the road. Some will walk right  
 flow - ing for e - ter - ni - ty Ev - 'ry child of

bles - ed faith; oth - ers need to touch the wounds of grace.  
 by this place. Who will stop to be the hands of grace?  
 ev - 'ry race, wel - come to - God's a - bound - ing grace.

Look - ing through the cross of Christ, we die and rise a - gain.

New cre - a - tion, gift of life, love that has no end.