Liturgical Service

A Short Service of Reading and Reflection
November 14, 2026

Fall 2026

Preparing

When I let a stranger into my heart, I let a new possibility approach me. When I reach past my own ideas, I begin to stretch myself open to the world, and this opening of my heart could change everything. That's pretty frightening stuff. I can't ever be the same if I start doing that kind of thing.[1]

Prelude: Andante sostenuto, from Symphonie gothique – Charles-Marie Widor

The pastor says:

We welcome You, Sprit of God,
You who seek our company
and choose to make Yourself know to us.

We join in reading the bold type.

We are grateful for Your many blessings,
including bringing us together
at this time,
in this place.[2]
The pastor briefly shares announcements.

Inviting

The liturgist continues:

O God of ever-present love,
help us
to embrace true security,
fleeing from idols
and exposing illusions.

All things are passing,
God never changes.

Amen. Let it be so.[3]

The cantor sings (to the tune of Hymn #221):

Rejoice, give thanks and sing; your Sovereign God adore!
For Christ has robbed death's sting and triumphed ever more.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!
Rejoice again I say, rejoice.

We join the cantor:

Our Savior Jesus reigns, the God of truth and love;
The Lamb who purged our stains is crowned with power above.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!
Rejoice again I say, rejoice.[4]

Praying

The liturgist continues:

From considering your loving creation to be our own,
and forgetting that the earth is yours and all that is in it,

O God, deliver us.

From avoiding our responsibility for the world's care and protection,
and from our destructive greed,

O God, deliver us.

From being content with things as they are
in ourselves, in the church, and in the world,
from confusing faith with good feelings
and love with wanting to be loved—

O God, deliver us.

From everything in us
that hinders or distorts the truths of your love—

O God, deliver us. Amen.

We contemplate our sin and God's grace.

God does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us by the measure of our failings.
As vast as the distance from one end of creation to another,
God's love for us is even greater.
As far as east is from west,
from greater than this distance does God remove our sin from us.[5]

Amen.

The liturgist may remind us of special blessings, needs and concerns, and then says:

I invite you to kneel as we pray.

Our holy Guardian God, 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 debts as we forgive our debtors.
Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and glory are yours now and forever.

Amen.

Grant, almighty God, that all who confess your name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray silently.

Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray silently.

Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray silently.

Give us grace to understand how our lives depend on the courage, the industry, the honesty, and the integrity of all who labor. May we be mindful of their needs, grateful for their faithfulness, and faithful in our responsibilities to them.[6]

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray silently.

Give courage and determination for those who are oppressed and let us remember that "we are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality tied in a single garment of destiny."[7]

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray silently.

Be merciful to those who suffer, in body or in mind, to those who are in danger or distress, and who have suffered loss, (including _____).

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray silently.

We pray this in the name of Jesus, who suffered and died,
and then rose from the dead to lead us into new life,
now and for ever.

Amen.[8]

The congregation sits.

Listening

The lector says:

Listen to the word of God from Judges, chapter 4, verses 1-7.

Lesson from the Hebrew Scriptures

The word of God.

Thanks be to God.

After a period of silent reflection on the reading, the pastor says:

Please join in reading from Psalm 123.

1 To you I lift up my eyes,
to you enthroned in the heavens.
2 As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters,

and the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,
So our eyes look to the Lord,
until God's mercy is revealed.
3 Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy,
for we have had more than enough of contempt,
4 Too much of the scorn of the indolent rich,
and of the derision of the proud.

After a period of silent reflection on the Psalm, the lector says:

Listen to the word of God from First Thessalonians, chapter 5, verses 1-11.

Lesson from the New Testament

The word of God.

Thanks be to God.

After a period of silent reflection on the reading, the cantor says:

Please stand and join me in singing ___ stanzas of hymn 209, "That Glorious Day is Coming."

The people continue standing as the liturgist continues:

Listen to the gospel according to Matthew, chapter 25, verses 14-30.

Lesson from the Gospel

The word of God.

Thanks be to God.

Offering

After a period of silent reflection, the liturgist continues:

Please be seated.

With gratitude and gladness we reflect on God's goodness and gifts of grace.

Amen.

If you wish to donate financially, you can give at the doors to the sanctuary after the service, or you can visit lasierra.church and click on "Give."

Offertory: The King of Love My Shepherd Is – arr. Robert Hebbl

Considering

After a moment of grateful reflection, the homilist prays:

Give your people grace to witness to your word
and bring forth the fruit of your Spirit.

Amen.

Homily

Affirming

The liturgist and people say:

Lord, You have always given bread for the coming day; and though I am poor,

today I believe.

Lord, You have always given strength for the coming day; and though I am weak,

today I believe.

Lord, You have always given peace for the coming day; and though of anxious heart,

today I believe.

Lord, You have always kept me safe from trials; and now, tried as I am,

today I believe.

Lord, You have always marked the road for the coming day; and though it may be hidden,

today I believe.

Lord, You have always lightened this darkness of mine; and though the night is here,

today I believe.

Lord, you have always spoken when time was ripe; and though You be silent now,

today I believe.

Amen.

We join the cantor in singing (to the tune of Hymn #221]:[9]

Christ Jesus cannot fail to rule both earth and heaven;
The keys of death and grave are to the Savior given.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!

Rejoice again I say, rejoice.

Rejoice in glorious hope, for Christ the judge shall come,
And take the faithful up to their eternal home.
We soon shall hear a heavenly voice
Above the trumpet's sound, "Rejoice!"

Responding

The pastor says:[10]

Serve your God with patience and passion.
Be deliberate in enacting your faith.
Be steadfast in celebrating the Spirit's power.
And may peace be your way in the world.[11]

Amen.

Organ chimes

Blessing

Postlude: Carillon – Louis Vierne

The pastor says:

Blessed be God of the rivers and of our lives.
Blessed be God of the tides and our thought.
Blessed be God of the wind and our motives.
Bless these steps we have taken.
You have walked in our shoes.[12]

Alleluia! Amen!

Upcoming Texts

Visit https://lasierra.church/liturgical-service/ to view upcoming texts and participants, download this liturgy, watch online, or sign up for our email newsletter.

November 21: Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; Psalm 100; Ephesians 1:15-23; and Matthew 25:31-46.
November 28: Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; and Mark 13:24-37.

[1] Theresa of Calcutta, from *Celtic Daily Prayer Book II* (2015).
[2] *Celtic Daily Prayer Book II* (2015).
[3] *Celtic Daily Prayer Book II* (2015).
[4] *The New Century Hymnal* (1995).
[5] *Daily Prayer for All Seasons* (2014).
[6] Reinhold Niebuhr.
[7] Martin Luther King, Jr., *Why We Can't Wait* (1963).
[8] Adapted from *the United Methodist Book of Worship* (1992).
[9] Adapted from *The New Century Hymnal* (1995).
[10] *Daily Prayer for All Seasons* (2014).
[11] From *The United Methodist Book of Worship* (1992).
[12] Adapted from *Celtic Daily Prayer Book II* (2015).