



*This service is designed for use by a small gathering of God's people outside of the assembly of the full community. It draws from the Eucharistic tradition, but it is not a sacramental meal. All Christians are called to bless, and this includes blessings of food and drink shared and the people gathered. The people assemble with greetings and conversation. Candles are lit by individuals as they arrive, accompanied by a moment of silent prayer. One person acts as the leader to keep the flow of the worship moving. Prayers and readings are divided among the rest of the group.*

*The leader opens with Call to Worship*

### **Call to Worship**

*One* "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior." – Luke 46:1a

### **Opening Prayer**

*An appropriate prayer is offered to set the tone for worship. Collects from The Book of Common Prayer, especially the collect appointed for the day, are always appropriate.*

### **Music Offering**

*Please feel free to hum along! Singing in a mask is discouraged by health officials due to concerns for higher CO2 rebreathing when singing.*

### **The First Reading:**

#### **Romans 16:25-27**

*One* Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith – to the

only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

## The Second Reading:

### Luke 1:26-38

*One* In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old

age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

## Teaching

*In small groups of approximately three, remaining at appropriate physical distance, choose **three** questions to discuss for approximately twenty minutes. Who do you know who seems especially saintly in the way we talk about here? How do you seek to emulate them in your own life?*

– Who in scripture inspires you with their faithfulness?

– Who in your life inspires you with their faithfulness?

– Paul writes that God strengthens us according to the proclamation of the Gospel, according to the revealed mystery of Christ, and according to obedience of faith which in God's wisdom are held together. Which of these dynamics has strengthened you in your faith journey? To which might you need to be more attentive?

– How important is Mary's response "let it be to me..?"

– How does Mary's assent to the angel's announcement participate in your understanding of the Incarnation?

– How significant is it that God does not bypass human participation in bringing about his divine will?

### Prayer of Blessing

*Before leaving your small groups, standing and remaining at appropriate physical distance, spend approximately five minutes praying for one another in turn. Begin by asking what each person would like prayers for and then have the other members of the group lift them to God.*

### Prayers of the People

*The whole group gathers for prayer. Prayers may be formal and prepared ahead of time, or come forth from the group at the time of worship.*

*Prayers are always offered for:*

- *The Universal Church, its members, and its mission*
- *The Nation and all in authority*
- *The welfare of the world*
- *The concerns of the local community*
- *Those who suffer and those in any trouble*
- *Those who have died*

*This prayer from Praying the Scriptures, by Jeremiah D. Williamson, can be used if desired.*

*One* Sisters and brothers, the Lord is with you! Let us pray to the Almighty, saying, "My soul proclaims your greatness, O Lord; *our spirits rejoice in you!*"

God our Savior, give to your Church the humble heart of Mary. In our lives and ministries, let it be with us according to your word. *Silence.*

My soul proclaims your greatness, O Lord;

*All* **Our spirits rejoice in you!**

*One* God our Savior, give grace to your bishops, priests, and deacons. Strengthen all your ministers according to the proclamation of Jesus Christ. *Silence.*

My soul proclaims your greatness, O Lord;

*All* **Our spirits rejoice in you!**

*One* God our Savior, you cast down the mighty from their thrones and lift up the lowly. May both the mighty and the lowly, and all those in-between, experience the amazing depth of your great mercy. *Silence.*

My soul proclaims your greatness,  
O Lord;

*All* **Our spirits rejoice in you!**

*One* God our Savior, you long for the hungry to be filled with good things. Bless us to work with you to bring forth good food and drink from your precious earth. *Silence.*

My soul proclaims your greatness,  
O Lord;

*All* **Our spirits rejoice in you!**

*One* God our Savior, we ask you to do great things in our city, in our neighborhoods, in our region.

*The people are invited to add their thanksgivings, followed by silence.*

My soul proclaims your greatness,  
O Lord;

*All* **Our spirits rejoice in you!**

*One* God our Savior, you ever remember your promise of mercy. Be merciful to the lonely, despised, sorrowful, and sick. Speak good news into sad hearts; come to the help of the needy. *The people are invited to add their petitions, followed by silence.*

My soul proclaims your greatness,  
O Lord;

*All* **Our spirits rejoice in you!**

*One* God our Savior, nothing is impossible with you. May all those who have died find a place in the eternal kingdom of your Christ. *Silence.*

My soul proclaims your greatness,  
O Lord;

*All* **Our spirits rejoice in you!**

### **Confession**

*One* Let us confess our sins against God and one another.

*All* **Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

*One* Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

*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 for ever. Amen.**

## Blessing of the Meal

*This portion of the service follows the shape of the Last Supper, and therefore may sound familiar and much like the Eucharist. However the elements are not consecrated, they are blessed, something all Christians are called to do. In times of pandemic, each person brings their own bread and wine. It is the time of prayer together that is shared, not the food. Begin by having the person who will lead the prayer over the bread to invite each person to make ready the food they brought. When all are ready, the prayers are offered.*

*One* On the last night that Jesus gathered with his friends he took bread and he blessed it and shared it with his friends, for God who loves us, feeds us. As God's people ate manna in the

wilderness and were satisfied, so we share this bread with Christ, and with one another. May it be for us bread from heaven, strength for our bodies, balm for our souls, and may it empower us to be Christ's body in this world. *Silence.*

*One* On the last night that Jesus gathered with his friends, he took wine and he blessed it and shared it with them. God who made us delights in us, and gives us good gifts to delight our tongues, and give joy to our souls. As Jesus offered the Samaritan woman water that would not fail, so Jesus offers us the same. May this wine be for us the holy drink of heaven, and may quench the thirst of our souls.

*All* **Holy and life-giving God, we thank you for the bounty of your Creation laid before us. We ask you to bless it, that it may be to us a holy meal. We give thanks for all those who labored so that it might sustain us. Through it may you give us the strength to be your good stewards; to care and tend your creation, and to care especially for our siblings – all the people of this world. We ask these things by the grace of Jesus Christ and in power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

*The gathered join in eating. As this requires removing mask, care must be taken to ensure proper physical distancing continues. Music may be appropriate.*

## **Music Offering During the Meal**

*Please feel free to hum along!*

## **Sending Blessing**

*One person offers a blessing on the group gathered as they are sent into the world to do the work God has given each to do.*

*All*    **Amen.**

*One*    Go in peace to love and serve the  
          Lord

*All*    **Amen.**

*This service includes the work of The Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, The Rev. Josephine Robertson, All Saints Episcopal Church, Bellevue, WA and Renew Community House Church.*