

# in the big love living liturgies

“Uprising Samaritans” • Luke 10:30-37  
**Worship Service for In-Home or Remote Group Use**  
*prepared by Rev. Kathryn M. Schreiber*

## Worship Note

*As we continue the selfless practice of restricted physical contact, as we adapt and welcome new ways of being communities of faith, our souls need special care. This service is one of a series designed to align us with the Living God during these pandemic-impacted times as social justice reforms arise.*

## Preparations

- You may wish to arrange to worship distantly with others at the same time.
- Read through this service beforehand to assemble items needed.
- A “Christ Candle” can be any sort of candle or object which represents Christ’s presence.
- Choose songs to sing (our suggestions or your favorites). Assemble what you’ll need to sing.
- Ensure an uninterrupted place to worship.
- Decorate your space to welcome God’s presence as we do at church.

## Time for Children

“Out of the Bag: Healing Care” on YouTube channel: Kathryn Schreiber

## Worship Service

*Please adapt to make this worship service your own. Your intention is what is important.*

## **We Gather**

### **Call to Worship**

When the critical suffering of another  
 kindles fires of compassion and action—  
 We love our neighbors.

When the cruelty of smug violence  
 calls forth a flowing of reform and healing—  
 We love our neighbors.

When we allow a terrible moment  
 to awaken our consciousness and stand together—  
 We love our neighbors.

### **Invocation**

Holy Spirit,  
 Guide us as we orient heart, mind, body, and soul  
 to the Love of God, revealed and revealing,  
 in the life and stories of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **Light the Christ Candle**

### **Song for Welcoming Christ**

*Suggestion: “Over My Head” - African American Traditional (#514 The New Century Hymnal)  
 Sung by The Montreal Jubilation Gospel Choir © 2002 Justin Time Records  
<https://youtu.be/baFpONIXg-I> (used without permission)*

## We Unburden and Gather Hope

### Naming Our New Reality

*Whether you are alone or with others, let this be a time of private reflection. Much has taken place in the past week - in our personal lives, in our shared lives. Tell God about your week - the good, the bad, and the ugly. Trust the safety of divine protection and confidentiality of sacred communion. You can say anything. God's listening even when we can't sense God's presence.*

### Silent Prayer

*We shift from speaking to God to sitting with God silently. A helpful way to enter sacred silence is to offer this simple prayer based on Psalm 46:10:*

*Be still and know that I am God. (pause)*

*Be still and know that I am. (pause)*

*Be still and know. (pause)*

*Be still. (pause)*

*Be. (pause)*

*Sit quietly in a state of calm devotion. Your mind and feelings will be active; this is natural. With compassion, acknowledge the thoughts and feelings but do not engage them. Practice choosing to refocus on God. Don't worry; we all get distracted. Take a breath and try again. Each time we choose to return to God, gently turning away from our fleeting thoughts, we give God a beautiful gift. Please be kind to yourself. Each act of inner compassion helps us be kinder to others. When you're ready to move on take a moment to thank God and say, "Amen."*

### Acts of Unburdening and Affirming

*Place pebbles or small items at the base of the Christ Candle thinking or speaking whatever you wish to offer to God for release or gratitude. These offerings need not be named. The soul knows what to give to God and God knows what to receive.*

### Blessing of Grace

In God's wondrous mercy,  
 God is always broadcasting grace.  
 By definition, holy grace is unmerited and unearned.  
 It is God's fullness of being flowing out to us  
 meeting us where we are, as we are,  
 embracing us with redemptive potential.  
 God's grace is a calling to wholeness  
 for the wholeness of all beings.  
 God's mercy wraps our nearly mortal wounds  
 healing individuals, healing nations.  
 May it be so. Amen.

## We Listen

**Scripture Reading: Luke 10:30-37 (New Revised Standard Version)**

*A teacher of Torah (Jewish moral law) asks Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?"*

*Jesus replies by telling this story:*

*A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho,  
 and fell into the hands of robbers,  
 who stripped him, beat him, and went away,  
 leaving him half dead.*

*Now by chance a priest was going down that road;*

and when the priest saw him,  
he passed by on the other side.

So likewise a Levite,  
When he came to the place and saw him,  
he passed by on the other side.

But a Samaritan while travelling came near him;  
and when he saw the wounded man,  
he was moved with pity.

He went to him and bandaged his wounds,  
having poured oil and wine on them.

Then he put the wounded man on his own animal,  
brought him to an inn,  
and took care of him.

The next day the Samaritan took out two denarii,  
gave them to the innkeeper, and said,  
    "Take care of him;  
    and when I come back,  
    I will repay you whatever more you spend."

✞

Then Jesus asked the teacher of Torah,  
    "Which of these three, do you think,  
    was a neighbor to the man  
    who fell into the hands of the robbers?"

Jesus said,  
    "The one who showed him mercy."

Jesus said to the one who had asked who was his neighbor,  
    "Go and do likewise."

*May God add a blessing to the reading and reflecting upon this Holy Word. Amen.*

### **Reflection Upon "Deep Healing"**

*(This content is created for private reflection. If your pastor has prepared a written or recorded message you may use it instead or with this material.)*

*The story of the Good Samaritan is so well known we tend to extricate it from the flow of narrative in Luke's Gospel. We might be missing something important.*

*Jesus tells the parable of the compassionate Samaritan during a critical shift in his ministry. After a few years of teaching, preaching and healing, Jesus begins training his followers to take over the ministry. The twelve male disciples and a few important female followers receive special instruction. Jesus calls the Holy Spirit to fill them with spiritual powers and he gives them authority to heal and preach. Equipped, Jesus sends them out before him to prepare communities.*

*Among the twelve male disciples are Peter, John, and James whom Jesus had recently invited to the mountain top where Moses and Elijah appeared and God said of Jesus, "This my Son, My Chosen." Jesus sends enlightened James and John out to a village to prepare for his arrival. It is a Samaritan village and the villagers refuse to welcome Jesus and his disciples. (Conflicts between*

*the Samaritans and the Jews are long and tangled - they share ancestors, but have separated socially, politically, and religiously.) James and John return to Jesus and tell him what happened. And they make a bold suggestion. They offer to use their new spiritual powers to call fire from heaven and earth to consume the village! Jesus rebukes them and points them toward another village (Luke 9:51-56).*

*This little side story might seem insignificant, but it takes place as Jesus is authorizing his followers to become spiritual leaders. He is empowering them to do ministry in his name for the glory of God. As this story reveals, sometimes they're a little power drunk. Sometimes they're still stuck on old cultural prejudices not God's Dream for humanity.*

*During another training session with disciple leaders a "lawyer" asks Jesus a question. This professional was a trained in the content and application of Jewish law/Torah. He would have been a Levite - the tribe entrusted with maintaining Jewish moral codes and sacred rituals. Asking Jesus questions such as "How do I inherit eternal life?" and "Who's my neighbor?" weren't sincere invitations to dialogue. Jesus knew that. The Torah lawyer was challenging Jesus' authority to question existing powerlines. It is in this moment that Jesus tells a story about a priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan and how they response to a badly beaten, dying man.*

*The descendants of the Tribe of Levi, the Levites, where the portion of the Jewish nation assigned duties related to the upkeep of Jewish moral and ritual practices. All priests were Levites, but not all Levites where priests - some were Torah lawyers, some had other civic religious duties.*

*"The Priest" would have been a Levite offering rituals at the Temple or serving on one of the governance bodies in Jerusalem. (There is no separation of "church" and state in the ancient world.) "The Levite" would have represented someone fulfilling one of the other religious roles assigned to members of their tribe, such as a Torah lawyer. "The Samaritan" however wasn't a Levite or any sort of Jew, but wasn't a Gentile either. He was an outsider culturally, and physically. Samaritans did not settle in that region.*

*For Jesus to tell this parable to Jewish men taking on new roles as religious leaders was to caution them not to recreate the abuses of existing religious authority and power. By casting "The Samaritan" as the moral hero, Jesus invites an opening of hearts and minds to comprehend God's Big Love - God's boundless care and mercy - is for all people, just as surely as is God's judgement and punishment (no one is above The Law). Jesus is deeply concerned that the disciples may abuse power and fail to love all of God's children.*

*Reading this parable in the fullness of this moment as people around the world are rising up in solidarity with Black people who have been killed by police resonates, doesn't it? If Jesus were to tell this parable today, who would be the wounded dying man left by the side of the road? Who would be the ritual religious leader who crosses the street and walks away? Who would be the enforcer of moral law who, also, crosses the street and walks away? Who would be the outsider who shows merciful care by saving the life of a stranger in crisis?*

*Each person who carries a Black Lives Matters sign, each person who listens to the suffering of a Black person, each person who does something to attend the real wounding of Black people due to a legacy of racial superiority - each one who replies with vulnerable care - is a Good Samaritan in the meaning Jesus originally intended. What a beautiful uprising of Samaritans among us!*

### **Song of Reflection**

*Suggestion: "O God, We Bear the Imprint of Your Face" CE Murray, RAUMATI BEACH (#681 Chalice) Sung by First Plymouth Church, Lincoln Nebraska, March 3, 2019.*

*Video: <https://youtu.be/zLSdGQXouXU> (used without permission)*

## We Pray

### Prayers of Petition

*Throughout this nation and in places around the world people are lifting up images of George Floyd and proclaiming “Black Lives Matter.” Governments, non-profits, and police agencies are sitting down together to draft practices which uplift communities; they are taking steps to address internal systems which protect those who abuse power racially. With whom does your soul feel called to attend and protect, shelter and heal? What is your prayer today? If your community shares prayer requests please include them as you continue your prayers of petition.*

### Song for Prayer

*Suggestion: “There is a Balm in Gilead” - African-American spiritual, BALM IN GILEAD (#501 Chalice)*

### The Lord’s Prayer (unison)

*Imagine the sanctuary where you usually worship. Let the memory of your Beloved Community fill your soul and let us pray together the prayer Jesus taught us to pray:*

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 debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

## We Give Thanks

### Offering

*Sometimes the best gifts God gives us are hard to accept - an unexpected word of affirmation, a clarifying word of truth, a needful word of correction. Jesus’s love for his disciples and those they would encounter led him to challenge their misuse of power and childish prejudices. Today, give thanks for someone who has spoken to you in such a way. If they are alive, thank them directly. If they are deceased, pay their gift forward. Let us praise God for the gift of such mentors. (see donation footnote)*

## We Continue in Hope

### Song of Hope

*Suggestion: “For the Healing of the Nations” - F Kaan, CWM RHONDDA (#668 Chalice)*

### Benediction

*Let us speak a word of love over those who are hurting...*

To our Black sisters and brothers we say:

We love you.

We hear you.

We care about you.

Black Lives Matter. Amen.

*✠ this concludes the service ✠*

Online Chalice Hymnal: <https://hymnary.org/hymnal/CH1995>

Online New Century Hymnal: <https://hymnary.org/hymnal/NCH1995>

HOL: [Hymns of Life](#), bilingual hymnal. ©1986, China Alliance Press.

YouTube Music Videos: search by title AND one of the authors for best results

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