



## Midweek Service of Word, Song and Prayer

### Introduction

Mercy. Joseph lives it in Egypt. Jesus preaches it in the gospel. The Spirit guides us into merciful lives with the power of forgiveness to reconcile what is broken and divided. Such merciful living is the baptismal blessing of having put on Christ. It is the gift of the life-giving Spirit. It reflects God's glory revealed in Christ.

### Opening Prayer

O Lord Jesus, make us instruments of your peace, that where there is hatred, we may sow love, where there is injury, pardon, and where there is despair, hope. Grant, O divine master, that we may seek to console, to understand, and to love in your name, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### Readings

Genesis 45

<sup>4</sup>Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt..."<sup>15</sup>And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

When have you experienced the welcome of someone you rejected? What was it like for you? What did you learn?

Luke 6

<sup>35</sup>But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, ...

What reward is there in loving your enemies?

### Reflection for the Day

Jesus Christ lived in the midst of his enemies. At the end, all his disciples deserted him. On the cross he was utterly alone, surrounded by evildoers and mockers, for he had come, to bring peace to the enemies of God. So, the Christian, too, belongs not in the seclusion of a cloistered life but in the thick of foes. To bring peace to the enemies of God.

"The Kingdom is to be in the midst of your enemies. And he who will not suffer this does not want to be of the Kingdom of Christ; he wants to be among friends, to sit among roses and lilies, not with the bad people but with the devout people. O you blasphemers and betrayers of Christ! If Christ had done what you are doing who would ever have been spared?" (Luther).— Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (Harper Collins, 1954), 17-18.

## **Hymn of the Day** Build a Longer Table

### **Apostle's Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended to the living,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### **Lord's Prayer**

**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 forever. Amen.**

### **Closing Prayer**

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Blessing**

Let us bless the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### **Dismissal**

Almighty God bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**