

LITURGY FOR PRESBYTERIAN GIVING CATALOG – LINKS OF LOVE

Rev. Dr. Kimberly Bracken Long (with the Rev. Emily Odom and the Rev. Jonathan H. Reinink)

Opening Sentences

Psalm 107:1, 3, 9

O give thanks to the Lord, for God is good;

God's steadfast love endures forever.

Let all whom God has redeemed —

Those gathered from east and west, north and south —

Testify to God's love in a joyful chorus.

For God satisfies the thirsty

and fills the hungry with good things.

Praise the Lord!

or

Give praise to God

who fills the hungry with good things.

Give thanks to God

who brings down the powerful

and lifts up the lowly.

Let us join our hearts and faithfully serve our God who is

faithful

and offer our gifts, our lives and our worship, to the one who

is full of grace.

Call to Confession

As people in this world, we are witnesses to its brokenness.

As participants in this world, we are actors in its brokenness.

As God's children, we are called to engage in this brokenness
and seek reconciliation.

Let us come, aware that we have sinned, to the God of mercy.

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God,

We confess that we have not been the people you call us to
be.

Instead of caring for the world and stewarding what we have
been given,

We are driven by greed, pushed by fear, sustained by
ignorance, and inspired by selfishness.

We pillage our planet's resources,

Oppress our siblings and neighbors,

And, in the end, find ourselves reveling in the earthly treasures
we've hoarded and stolen.

O God, forgive us.

Help us to see our role in systems that oppress your people,

That destroy your Creation, that are driven by anything but
your love.

Give us eyes to see what your love could do to our
community and our world,

And fill us with your Spirit so we might pursue that
transformative vision

Of a world — all Creation — linked and held together by your
love.

or

Gracious God,

You call us to follow Jesus,

but we tend to lose our way.

You call us to feed the hungry,

but we are consumed with our own desires.

You call us to clothe the naked,

but we are more concerned with our own needs.

You call us to visit those in prison,

but we are busy with our own concerns.

Forgive us, O God, and turn us back to you.

Give us the will to heed your call;

give us the courage to trust your promises;

give us the strength to follow where you lead,

that all your children may be safe, and fed,



and free from fear.
In Jesus' name we pray.

or

Let us confess our sin to God, saying:
God of mercy, forgive us.
We do not feed those who beg for food.
God of mercy, forgive us.
We turn away from those who have no clean water.
God of mercy, forgive us.
We destroy the earth and pollute the skies.
God of mercy, forgive us.
Forgive us, O God.
Redeem us.
Renew us.
Rouse us and propel us to feed the hungry,
give water to the thirsty,
and care for the planet you have given us,
so that all your children may live in peace.
We pray in the name of Jesus Christ,
who will bring a new heaven and a new earth.

Declaration of Forgiveness

Hear the good news!
(Water is poured into the baptismal font.)
In the waters of baptism we are made clean,
forgiven for the wrongs we have done,
pardoned for the mercies we did not give.

(Water is lifted from the font.)
In the waters of baptism we are made new,
reborn to live in obedience and faith.

(Water is lifted from the font.)
In the waters of baptism, we are made strong,
empowered by the Holy Spirit
to walk in the ways of Christ.

Children of God, give thanks!
In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

or

Jesus Christ was tempted, as we are,
and knows our struggles to be faithful.
He took on our death that he might give us life.
And so, by God's boundless love, in Christ we are forgiven!
We have been given new life and deep peace.

Thanks be to God!

Prayer for Illumination

Break open before us the bread of life, O Lord,
and feed us with your word,
that we might hear what you say to us today
and follow wherever you lead.
In the name of Jesus, we ask it. **Amen.**

or

Together we listen for God's Word today,
Each one hearing what you have to say.
Open our hearts to follow your way.
Spirit, inspire your people this day.

Invitation to the Offering

(Matthew 10:40–42, paraphrased, *The Message*)
Jesus says that we are intimately linked in this harvest
work —
a large work, into which our Savior has called us.
But don't be overwhelmed by it, Jesus says.
It's best to start small.
The smallest act of giving or receiving makes you a true
apprentice.
With gladness, let us present
the offerings of our life and labor to the Lord.

or

Jesus Christ calls us to share the good news of the gospel:
bread for the hungry,
water for the thirsty,
seeds for the farmer,
books for the schoolchildren,
shelter for those who have none.
With cheerful hearts bring your offerings to the Lord.
Blessed are the feet of those who bring good news!

Prayer of Dedication

(Draws from Eph. 4:15–16 various translations)
Holy God,
in Christ, all the different parts of the body
are joined and knit together.
When each separate part works as it should,
The whole body grows and builds itself up through love.
Bless these gifts, O God,
For the upbuilding of Christ's body,
the church. **Amen.**

or

(Paraphrases John 15:4–8)
Holy God,
In the same way that a branch can't bear grapes
by itself but only by being joined to the vine,
none of us can bear fruit unless we are joined with Christ.
May these offerings, the fruits of our labor,
be similarly joined together in an abundant harvest
for the sake of your kin-dom. **Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

(*A time of silent prayer follows each ellipsis.*)
Merciful God,
you know the deep needs of the world.
Trusting in your lovingkindness,
we bring before you our laments, our hopes,
and our supplications.

For your church around the world ...
May Christians be witnesses to your generous grace
in every place on earth.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those who govern and those who hold power ...
Cloak our leaders with wisdom
and instill the powerful with concern for the weak.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those who live with violence in their streets or their homes ...
Protect the vulnerable, uphold the fearful,

and heal the wounded.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those who go to bed hungry each night ...
give them bread to eat, seeds to plant,
and hope to sustain them.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those who walk miles for water each day ...
dig them wells that they may drink deeply,
water their crops, and be refreshed.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those who weep and those who mourn ...
uphold them, surround them, comfort them;
restore their hope and grant them joy.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those whose needs are known only to you ...
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those we love, and for ourselves ...
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gather up the prayers of your people, O God.
Heal our earth, grant justice to your people
and peace to our lands,
as we wait and watch and work in hope
for your new Creation.
All this we pray in the name
of our Savior and Sovereign,
Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

or

Holy God, who made the world and called it good,
we offer our prayers for your Creation and all who live in it.

Heal our planet and make us good stewards;
God of grace, renew us.

Reconcile enemies and strengthen the bonds of friends;
God of grace, renew us.

Hinder the greedy; thwart the traffickers; free those unjustly bound;
God of grace, renew us.

Give bread to the hungry and water to the thirsty;
God of grace, renew us.

Grant growth to the farmers and knowledge to the learners;
God of grace, renew us.

Make the stingy generous and the haughty humble;
God of grace, renew us.

Empower the weak and comfort the sorrowful;
God of grace, renew us.

Restore our vision of the world you intend,
revive our hope in the new Creation you will bring,
and keep us faithful as we watch for your coming
and work for your reign of justice, and peace, and love;
for the sake of Jesus Christ, we pray. **Amen.**

Blessing

(Eph. 3:18)

May you have the power to comprehend,
with all the saints,
what is the breadth and length
and height and depth,
and to know the love of Christ
that surpasses knowledge,
so that you may be filled with
all the fullness of God.

or

(Book of Common Worship)

The grace of Christ be with you,
the love of God surround you,
the Holy Spirit keep you,
that you may live in faith,
abound in hope,
and grow in love,
both now and forevermore. **Amen.**

Charge

(Col. 3:12-14 NRSV)

As God's own,
clothe yourselves with compassion,
kindness, and patience,
forgiving one another
as the Lord has forgiven you,
and crown all these things with love,
which binds everything together
in perfect harmony.

or

Walk with each other;
walk hand in hand.
Work with each other;
work side by side.
Let us go forth into the world
letting all people know we are
Christians linked together in love.

Hymn Suggestions

We Are One in the Spirit	GTG 300
Blest Be the Tie That Binds	GTG 306
Great God of Every Blessing	GTG 694
Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me	GTG 703
In Christ There Is No East or West	G2G 317 and 318
Let All Things Now Living	GTG 37
Will You Come and Follow Me	GTG 726
Sound a Mystic Bamboo Song	G2G 323