

## A Responsive Service

### Hymns

- Amazing Grace
- There's a Wideness in God's Mercy
- Precious Lord, Take My Hand
- His Eye Is on the Sparrow
- Come, Holy Spirit
- Make Me a Servant
- Let Your Heart Be Broken
- Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

### Children's Lesson

Read Gen. 1:26; Gen. 2:7 (The Message): "God spoke: 'Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature.' ...GOD formed Man out of dirt from the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life. The Man came alive—a living soul!"

- Hold a mirror. Move it so that each can see his or her reflection in the mirror.
- Say: Each of you was made in God's image to reflect God's nature. Each of you has God's breath of life in you. Look at each other. Every person in here was made in God's image. And when you go to school or the park or the store or anywhere else, every person you see was made in God's image, with God's breath of life in them. That's pretty cool, isn't it? How can knowing this change the way we see and treat other people?
- Sing "Jesus Loves Me."
- Pray over the children.

### Scripture Reading

Have someone read Isaiah 58:1-10 aloud.

Say: Today is the first Sunday of Lent. We often think about Lent as a time to fast—a time to give up something as a reminder of our dependence on God—and it is that. We think of Lent as a time to remember our sin and our mortality in the days leading to our remembrance of Jesus' crucifixion, and it is that. But it's also more than that. These 40 days leading to Easter are also a time to add into our life things that remind us that we are made in God's image, that we are made to reflect God's image. It's a time to remind us that every individual child, woman, and man in our world is made in God's image.

Today is a day when many churches are joining together to celebrate Freedom Sunday. On this first Sunday of Lent, we recognize God's desire to break the chains of injustice and to free the oppressed. Today, we are shining a light on modern slavery, also known human trafficking—an injustice that affects more than 20 million people in our world today, most of whom are women and children.

Today we remind ourselves that each of us—and every person in our world—is made in God's image. And we remind ourselves that each of us can live as a reflection of that image in us. In the same way that God is loving and kind, we can be loving and kind. In the same way that God is compassionate and merciful, we can be compassionate and merciful. In the same way that God is just, we can be just. And in the same way that God declared prophetic words, we can declare prophetic words.

Luke 4 tells us that when Jesus publicly announced His mission as the Messiah, He walked into a synagogue on the Sabbath and read from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor.

**ON FREEDOM SUNDAY, WE STAND UNITED AS THE CHURCH AGAINST MODERN SLAVERY.**

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

In these days leading to a remembrance of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, we reflect on this mission that He left in our hands. The words Jesus read are from Isaiah 61. They are the words God gave us through His prophet.

Have someone read Isaiah 61:1-4 aloud.

### **Communion Reading**

Leader: On the night He was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when He had given thanks to God, He broke it, and gave it to His disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." After supper He took the cup; and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you; this is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**People: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

As Jesus requested, we have prepared the table in remembrance of Him,

**and all are welcome to share this meal.**

Those, like Peter, who denied Jesus in the middle of the courtyard—those with short memories and limited courage,

**Come to the table.**

Those, like Mary, weeping outside Jesus' tomb—those full of grief and despair,

**Come to the table.**

Those, like Jesus' disciples, hiding in the upper room—those struggling to hold onto faith, those who are disillusioned and losing hope,

**Come to the table.**

Jesus offers the bread and the cup to any who come to Him,

**Let us gather around the table with joy.**

And as we gather, we remember those who do not have the chance to come tonight. We remember the children held in captivity, forced to do things that no child should have to do.

**We remember, and we pray for them.**

We remember the families who are pulled down by the chains of poverty, forced to make choices that no one should have to make.

**We remember, and we pray for them.**

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We also remember the oppressors, those who are slaves to the sins of greed and abuse of power, those who have become blind to God's image in themselves and in others.

**We remember, and we pray for them.**

Father, at this table, we celebrate the memorial of our redemption and our freedom in Christ..

*[Passing of the bread and the cup.]*

Let us pray together:

**Gracious and loving God, You created us male and female, and You created us for freedom in You. Yet through disobedience, this freedom was corrupted, bringing injustice and suffering and broken relationships with You and with others.**

**We pray for those who suffer in our world because of this.**

**This Sunday we pray for those who are bound by slavery because of greed and selfishness.**

**We pray for families who are split apart, or who are all in slavery.**

**We pray for children who are vulnerable and hurting.**

**God, we pray You will comfort them and show them You are with them.**

**We pray for ways to change the conditions and systems that cause slavery.**

**May we be given the eyes of Your heart, to see what can be done,**

**And may we have the courage to act on your command to love our neighbor as ourselves.**

**We pray today that You would use us to see Your Kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Amen.**

*The communion reading is adapted in part from <http://spaciousfaith.com/category/worship-pieces/communion-worship-pieces/> and [stophetraffic.com](http://stophetraffic.com)*

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