

**Year A; Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**Liturgical Elements**  
**Developed for October 1, 2023**  
Prepared by Pastor Andy Smothers

**Lectionary Texts**

- Exodus 17:1-7
- Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16
- Philippians 2:1-13
- Matthew 21:23-32

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP** (*from Psalm 78*)

One: Give ear, O people, to our teaching; incline your ears to the words of our mouths.

**All: We will open our mouths in a parable; we will utter dark sayings from old,**

One: things that we have heard and known, that our ancestors have told us.

**All: We will not hide them from their children; we will tell to the coming generations**

One: the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might,

**All: and the wonders that he has done.**

One: In the sight of our ancestors, the Lord worked marvels

**All: in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan, and even to this day.**

One: He divided the sea and let them pass through it,

**All: and made the water stand like a heap.**

One: In the daytime he led them with a cloud,

**All: and all night long with a fiery light.**

One: He made streams come out of the rock,

**All: and caused waters to flow down like rivers. Let us worship God!**

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP** (alternate, *from Psalm 78*)

One: In the sight of our ancestors, the Lord worked marvels

**All: in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan, and even to this day.**

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**\*CALL TO CONFESSION** (*from Philippians 2*)

The Apostle Paul commands us to do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit but in humility to regard others as better than ourselves. The world presses upon us to consume to make our lives better, to promote ourselves and our unique skills, to have pride in the works of our hands, and to fend for ourselves even at cost to others. Let us confess where we allow the world to lead us rather than the ways of our Lord.

**\*SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**\*CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (*from Philippians 2*)

**God, our righteousness, you command us to consider others even better than ourselves, but we, at times, follow the world's ways in trying to assert ourselves above others. You sent your Son to model humility. Even though he was in the form of God, he was born of human likeness and found in human form. He was obedient for our sake even to the point of death on a cross. He regarded us as worthy of such tremendous sacrifice. We thank you for his willingness to suffer that we might live. Mold us to live a life that reflects his — a life of humility, sacrifice, obedience to you, and dedication to others. Forgive us our sins, and make us new. In the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.**

**\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON** (*from Matthew 21*)

As Jesus tells the Parable of the Two Sons, he states, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you,” the chief priests. Entry into God's kingdom is not earned by status or from a life that is ever free from sin but is a free gift from God. Let us be transformed and readied for that kingdom and know that we are forgiven. Amen.

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (*from Exodus 17*)

**Almighty God, despite the Israelites' anxiety as they journeyed to the Promised Land from Egypt, you were faithful to them. You led them by a cloud in the day and by a pillar of light in the night. You fed them manna and guided them to water. You remain faithful to us even in this day providing for our needs throughout our days. In thankfulness for your many blessings, we offer these gifts from what you have given us. Bless them, and use them for your work through the church. Amen.**

Elements in this document are based on the *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV). Some portions are direct quotes; though, quotation marks and designations are usually left out for ease of use in bulletins and other worship resources. Usually, the Call to Worship is based upon the Psalm of the day and follows that Psalm very closely but modifying it for a leader vs. congregation responsive setting if necessary. Other elements usually deviate more significantly from the text. While they may quote very short sections, they are generally written in the theme of the text. Elements usually designate the book and chapter from which they are derived.

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