

Year A; Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time
Liturgical Elements
Developed for November 5, 2023
Prepared by Pastor Andy Smothers

Lectionary Texts

- Joshua 3:7-17
- Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37
- 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13
- Matthew 23:1-12

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (*from Psalm 107*)

One: O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever.

All: Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, those he redeemed from trouble and gathered in from the lands.

One: Some wandered in desert wastes, finding no way to an inhabited town; hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted with them.

All: Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress; he led them by a straight way, until they reached an inhabited town.

One: He turns rivers into a desert, springs of water into thirsty ground,

All: fruitful land into a salty waste, because of the wickedness of its inhabitants.

One: He turns a desert into pools of water, a parched land into springs of water.

All: And there he lets the hungry live, and they establish a town to live in;

One: they sow fields, and plant vineyards, and get a fruitful yield.

All: Let us worship the God of creation and abundance!

CALL TO CONFESSION (*from Matthew 23*)

Our culture encourages us to make our name and ourselves known to the world. We are told to advertise ourselves on social media, to make our skills and accomplishments known, and, even at times, to make our abilities or services essential. Scripture calls us to have the humility of Christ who desired that the Father be known through his service and work. Let us confess when we have let the world carry us along in its ways rather than following our Lord.

SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*30 seconds*)

CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*from Matthew 23*)

Merciful God, our Lord chastised the scribes and Pharisees for wearing clothes that would draw attention, for taking the best and honorable seats in worship and at meals, for expecting to be greeted in the marketplace, and for having people give them a special title. Our culture encourages us to make ourselves known through our clothing and other ways we adorn ourselves, our posts on social media, and advertisements of our qualifications, accomplishments, degrees, and talents. You call us to make your name known as modeled by our Lord Jesus the Messiah. Forgive our sin, and move us to do all things for your benefit, for your name to be known, and for your kingdom. In our Lord's name we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (*from Matthew 23*)

Jesus also teaches that all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all those who humble themselves will be exalted. Live into the humble life and trust in the Lord and the forgiveness he won on the cross for each of us that we might enjoy eternal and abundant life. Friends, hear and believe this good news.

All: Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God. Amen.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (*from Joshua 3*)

Almighty and loving God, under the leadership of Joshua, you led the Israelites into the Promised Land. As they entered, you parted the Jordan River — water piling up upstream and allowing them to cross on dry land. We trust that you continue to do amazing wonders today. We give these offerings from that with which you have blessed us that you might be made known and in expecting to hear of new wonders of your work across the world. 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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