

Per Capita Sunday Liturgy 2022

Congregations are encouraged to center their Sunday worship on the ways in which God calls us into being a connectional church through per capita support. This community is highlighted in the worship texts below. Recognizing the diversity of worship styles within the PC(USA), these texts are merely a resource and can be treated with flexibility to fit the needs of each congregation.

GATHERING

Opening Sentences

One: We meet one another here today, bringing the whole of who we are as members united in one body.

Many: If there were only one, where would the body be?

One: We bring each of our individual gifts, given to us by God to serve.

Many: If there were only one gift, how would we be the church?

One: Gather us in, Spirit of Wisdom, so that we may be the one body you have created.

Many: For we are many and still one.

CONFESSION AND PARDON

Confession

Creator God, we know that you have made us to work with one another as one body. But, too often, we find it easier to stay with what feels familiar or comfortable. We set priorities that serve our own interests, dividing the body as we say to other members, "I have no need of you." When we see pain and injustice, we try not to share in suffering. Yet, we are eager to share in celebrations we have neglected to earn. We cling to our individualism and abandon the call to be generous caretakers of the whole of your creation. Guide us back to the path you have set out for us all to follow. Embolden us to honor both the gifts in ourselves as well as the gifts in others. Strengthen us to live into our discomfort so that we may be the one body you have created us to be. Amen.

Declaration of Forgiveness

One: Though we fall short, God's forgiveness never ceases. Live into the good news that in Jesus Christ you are forgiven and freed to answer God's call to live as one body!

Many: Thanks be to God!

WORD

Scripture

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a NRSV

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴ Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many members, yet one body. ²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²² On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; ²⁴ whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, ²⁵ that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸ And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰ Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹ But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

Affirmation of Faith

(Adapted from the Belhar Confession)

We believe in the triune God who gathers, protects, and cares for the church, one universal body called from the entire human family. We believe that unity is both a gift and an obligation for the church of Jesus Christ and that this unity must be manifest and active in a variety of ways. These include that we love one another; that we pursue and practice community; that we are obligated to give ourselves willingly and joyfully to be of benefit and blessing to one another; and that we need one another as we share in one faith, one calling, one soul, and one mind. Therefore, we reject any doctrine which causes sinful separation of people, breaks the active unity of the church, or professes unity while alienating one another. We believe that God calls the church to do what is good and to seek the right, to stand by people in suffering and need, to strive against injustice, and to bring about true peace among people.

Invitation to Offering

Today we celebrate the ways in which our gathering together makes Christ's church possible. One of these ways is through our generous support of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in the form of per capita gifts. These gifts are part of the call to be one body and they enable us to support the functions and missions of the church reaching the work of our congregation, our presbytery, our synod, our national church, and beyond. Today you are invited to give generously, connecting our offerings with those across the PC(USA) who have committed themselves to the work of this church.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Bountiful God, you have given each of us unique ways to be part of this united body called the Church. We give thanks for your invitation to live generously, empowering us to see connections between ourselves and all members. We offer these gifts today in support of per capita, so that we can join in supporting the work of the Presbyterian Church (USA) as one body answering God's call to serve. Amen.

SENDING

Charge and Benediction

We have been created as many members of one body, called to follow Christ. As we leave this place, may we remember that answering this call means we must live generously; sharing in our suffering, celebrations, and gifts. May the Creator God empower you to honor the gifts you've been given, May the Embodied Christ reveal the many gifts present in those around you, And may the Connecting Spirit gather us together in one body of service. Amen.

Hymn Suggestions from *Glory to God*

733 We All Are One in Mission

306 Blest Be the Tie That Binds

322 We Are One in Christ Jesus (*Somos uno en Cristo*)

300 We Are One in the Spirit (They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love)

301 Let Us Build a House (All Are Welcome)

767 Together We Serve

716 God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

761 Called as Partners in Christ's Service