**Liturgy for Worship with Prophet Zechariah**

**Call to Worship**

From the very beginning, God calls us.

**God sets us apart with a meaning and a purpose.**

We come up with excuses to avoid our calls.

**We block our ears, close our eyes, and stop our mouths.**

But God's Spirit will not stop working in us, among us, and through us.

**Where we fall, God rises.**

Where we shut up, close off, and even destroy,

God opens, builds hope, fashions promise.

**From the beginning, God calls us.**

See, hear, and know-

﻿now is the time to answer the call.

Hymn 410 (GTG) God Is Calling Through the Whisper

**Prayer of Confession**

**Merciful God, your call to discipleship is demanding. You call us to reorder our lives by the kingdom you are bringing in Jesus Christ. Yet we still pass by the ones you especially notice: people who are hungry and poor; people who weep. We have not stood with those who are hated, bullied, and excluded. Comfortable with the way things are, we are too complacent, even complicit with injustice and prejudice.**

**Forgive us, O God, and turn us back to your gospel. We pray this now, for our sake, and for the sake of the world; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Assurance of Forgiveness adapted from Malachi 3:16-17

Hear these words from the prophet:

"Then those revering the Lord,

   each and every one, spoke among themselves.

        The Lord paid attention and listened to them.

Then a scroll of remembrance was written before the Lord...

On the day that I am preparing,

says the Lord of heavenly forces,

they will be my special possession."

Take heart, beloved of God, in Christ we have been claimed as God's own and through Him we receive grace and forgiveness.

**Gathering in God’s Word**

**Prayer for Illumination**

We have gathered before your Word, O God. We want to hear with understanding, so give us attentive ears, minds, and hearts. And may your Word and your Holy Spirit so work in our lives that we honor you in all we do and say. Amen.

**Scripture**

Zechariah 7:8-14

**Sermon**

**Prayers of the People**

God of all goodness, we live in times of stress and controversy, injustice and cruelty. At times we cry to you for rescue and remember that we have leaned on you since our birth, as we pray,

O God of all creation, be our hope and trust.

We pray for leaders and nations around the world, that they may seek justice and peace.

O God of all creation, be our hope and trust.

We pray for the church in all its forms, that we may be the love you want.

O God of all creation, be our hope and trust.

We pray for victims of violence, war, and systemic brokenness; grant your healing and bring your peace.

O God of all creation, be our hope and trust.

We pray for those suffering from natural disasters and those caused by human acts that harm the balance of your creation, that the health of the earth be restored.

O God of all creation, be our hope and trust.

We pray for those who are born today and those who will die today; may their quality of life be governed by loving choices.

O God of all creation, be our hope and trust.

God our Wisdom, enable us to be kind and just in all things. Remind us of those whom you have called us to love and serve. Call us to paths of righteousness that mirror Christ's own. Send us in efforts and actions that lead to good for each other and all creation. Compel us to put our greed and self-serving interests aside, that we may walk each day closer to you. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who taught us to pray.

**﻿The Lord's Prayer**

**Hymn 765 (GTG) May the God of Hope Go with Us**

**Sending Out**

*The prophet Zechariah, like several other prophets, had visions in which he encountered the realm and word of God. The song Nella Fantasia, from the film, The Mission, shares a vision for our world where freedom and equality meet in honoring the full humanity of others.*

In my fantasy I see a just world,

Where everyone lives in peace and honesty.

I dream of souls that are always free

Like the clouds that float

Full of humanity in the depths of the soul.

In my fantasy I see a bright world

Where each night there is less darkness.

I dream of spirits that are always free,

Like the clouds that float

In my fantasy exists a warm wind,

That blows into the city, like a friend.

I dream of souls that are always free,

Like the clouds that float

Full of humanity in the depths of the soul.

Go forth as visionaries, as those look for what is possible in building God’s kin-dom.

Go forth as disciples, as those who listen for the voice of God and seek to live in the way of Christ.

Go forth unhindered, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

And may all the love, grace, and power of the Triune God go with you. Amen.