

- Used by Virginia Reconciling United Methodist (VRUM) at The Virginia Annual Conference -

## **We Gather**

One: God has shown you, O mortal, what is good.

All: **And what does the Lord require of you**

One: But to do justice and love kindness!

All: **And walk humbly with your God!**

Opening Prayer: **Ever-living God, in humility we come before you to give thanks for your goodness. Your goodness and love embraces all your creatures. You have made each one of us in your image and called us to care for creation, and to love one another. Help us, as those made in your image, to dismantle all the barriers to love, fellowship, and inclusion among your children. We pray in the name of our risen Lord who empowers us for this work. Amen.**

Sing the Faith: They Will Know We are Christians by Our Love, verses 1,2 (TFWS 2223)

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord (2x)

And we pray that all unity may one day be restored:

**Refrain:** And they will know we are Christians by our love, by our love;

Yes, they will know we are Christians by our love.

We will walk with each other we will walk hand in hand (2x)

And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land. **Refrain-**

Call to Confession: We gather in humility acknowledging our sin and brokenness.

Confession: **Merciful God, we confess our docility in the face of injustice and oppression. We acknowledge our complicity in the church's discriminatory**

**policies that have tarnished the witness of the Church to the world. Forgive us, we pray, and make tender of conscience, firm in our convictions, and bold in action. We pray trusting in your grace made manifest in Jesus the Christ. Amen**

### **To Hear God's Word**

Old Testament: Selections from Genesis chapter 1 (NRSV)

Gospel: Luke 11:20 "But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you." (NRSV)

Message: "Forerunners of God's Reign"

### **For Table Fellowship**

Invitation to Communion: in the Words of Bob Blinn's cover letter to "An Altar for All"

"This is not the church's table," we often say as we prepare to lead Holy Communion. "This is not even a Methodist table. It is the Lord's table. 'The Lord invites to his table all who love him, who earnestly repent of their sin and seek to live in peace with one another.'"

For Holy Communion, we come to a table--the Lord's Table. For a wedding, we come to an altar. The altar is not the altar of the local church. It is not even a Methodist altar. It is the Lord's altar.

### **The Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

The celebrant offers thanks and ends with, “join their unending hymn”

**Holy, holy, holy Lord God of power and might,**

**Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

The celebrant calls to memory the Last Supper of our Lord and ends with “we proclaim the mystery of faith. **Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**”

**The Lord’s Prayer**

The sharing of the bread and cup

Sing the Faith: They Will Know We are Christians by Our Love, verses 3,4 (TFWS 2223)

**To Be Sent Forth to Love and Service**

Community Blessing: God of Presence and Promise, pour out your spirit upon this community as we recommit ourselves to work of compassion and justice-love in the world. Accompany us in our continuing struggle to follow in the way of Jesus’ life-risking love and bless us each day with enough hope to dream, enough courage to speak the truth, enough compassion to touch, enough passion to insist on justice, and enough strength to stand for integrity. Amen. (*Shaping Sanctuary*, p. 215)