

Per Capita Sunday Liturgy 2023

On Per Capita Sunday, congregations are encouraged to embrace generosity and gratitude for the connectional church at work through per capita. These worship materials highlight the lectionary text (Matthew 4:12-23) and the importance of the Presbyterian Church (USA)'s joining together as one community in service.

Recognizing the diversity of worship styles within the PC(USA), these texts are merely a resource and, if used, should be adjusted to fit the needs of each congregation.

GATHERING

Opening Sentences

One: We gather as those who stood on the shore, ...

Many: Christ calls us by name.

One: engrossed in our responsibilities, our work, our obligations.

Many: Christ calls us by name.

One: We hear, "Follow me!"

Many: Christ calls us by name.

One: In all times and places, we are known and gathered as disciples, because...

Many: Christ calls us by name.

CONFESSION AND PARDON

Confession

Gathering God, we confess that it is easier to focus on the daily tasks in front of us, the mending and unknitting of nets, rather than answering the call to be your kin-dom. We too often cling to what we know and choose to stay on familiar shores. We ignore your voice as you continually call out, inviting us into something new. Help us overcome our fears of what may be lost or left behind. Help us to join

our gifts, our resources, and the whole of who we are in service to you as a community of your followers.

Declaration of Forgiveness

One: After calling the first disciples from the shore, Jesus went throughout Galilee proclaiming the good news of the kin-dom: that in him you are forgiven and freed to answer God’s call!

Many: Thanks be to God!

WORD

Scripture

Matthew 4:12-23 NRSVUE

¹² Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. ¹³ He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

¹⁵ “Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,
on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—
¹⁶ the people who sat in darkness
have seen a great light,
and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death
light has dawned.”

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

¹⁸ As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishers. ¹⁹ And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.” ²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

²³ Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

Affirmation of Faith

(Adapted from the Confession of 1967)

We believe in a God whose sovereign love is a mystery beyond the reach of our minds. We believe that this love manifests in the Holy Spirit, as it creates and renews communities of faith so that we may together seek peace. We affirm that through the reconciling work of Jesus Christ, we are moved to new life. This new life takes shape in a community in which all know that God loves and accepts them. We give thanks that each member of the church is endowed by the Spirit with gifts for ministry and both is strengthened by and strengthens the church. We believe that wherever the church exists, we are gathered for the sake of God's work in the world, work which is already present and stirring hope. From an urgency born of this hope, we are charged to be a church that applies itself to present tasks and strives for a better world. We believe in God, source of unfathomable love; Jesus, the realization of true humanity; and the Holy Spirit, who moves through the ages and calls us to live as one.

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 our call to be one church, one community. Through our gifts we support 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

God who Calls Us as Disciples, you have invited us into community. We give thanks for your vision of a world where all give generously to one another and serve the coming of your kin-dom. We offer these

gifts today in support of per capita, so that we can join with other churches in the Presbyterian Church (USA) to answer your call as fishers of people. Amen.

SENDING

Charge and Benediction

We have been called by name to leave behind our nets and follow Christ. As we leave this place, may we remember that answering this call means we must live generously; knowing that we may leave some of what has been familiar behind so that we can seek what God is creating for God's kin-dom.

May the Loving God call out to you wherever you are.

May the Reconciled Christ reveal a new community, a new life.

And may the Renewing Spirit gather us together in service of the kin-dom. Amen.

Hymn Suggestions from *Glory to God*

312 Take Us As We Are, O God

456 Listen, God is Calling

612 We Praise You, O God

644 Give Thanks, O Christian People

697 Take My Life

700 I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me

710 We Lift Our Voices

720 Jesus Calls Us

721 Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore

733 We All Are One in Mission

757 Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples