

THE  
UNIVERSAL  
CHRIST  
LITURGIES

CAC PUBLISHING

*The Universal Christ Liturgies*

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LITURGY ONE

THURSDAY NIGHT LITURGY

A CHRIST-SOAKED  
WORLD



*Bell is rung for a moment of silence.*

## Reading

### PROVERBS 8:22–31

**Y**ahweh created me when God's purpose first unfolded,  
before the oldest of God's works.  
From everlasting I was firmly set,  
from the beginning, before earth came into being.  
The deep was not, when I was born,  
there were no springs to gush with water.  
Before the mountains were settled,  
before the hills, I came to birth;  
before God made the earth, the countryside,  
or the first grains of the world's dust.  
When God fixed the heavens firm, I was there,  
when God drew a ring on the surface of the deep,  
when God thickened the clouds above,  
when God fixed fast the springs of the deep,  
when God assigned the sea its boundaries  
—and the waters would not invade the shore—  
when God laid down the foundations of the earth,  
I was by God's side, a master craftsman,  
delighting God day after day,  
ever at play in God's presence,  
at play everywhere in this world,  
delighting to be with the children of humanity.

## Reflection

## Reading

GENESIS 28:10–19a

**J**acob left Beersheba and set out for Haran. When he had reached a certain place, he passed the night there, since the sun had set. Taking one of the stones to be found at that place, he made it his pillow and lay down where he was. He had a dream: A ladder was there, standing on the ground with its top reaching to heaven; and there were angels of God going up it and coming down. And Yahweh was there, standing over him, saying, “I am Yahweh, the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac. I will give to you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants shall be like the specks of dust on the ground; you shall spread to the west and the east, to the north and the south, and all the tribes of the earth shall bless themselves by you and your descendants. Be sure that I am with you; I will keep you safe wherever you go, and bring you back to this land, for I will not desert you before I have done all that I have promised you.” Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Truly, God is in this place and I—I did not know.” He was afraid and said, “How awe-inspiring this place is! This is nothing less than a house of God, this is the gate of heaven!” Rising early in the morning, Jacob took the stone he had used for his pillow, and set it up as a monument, pouring oil over the top of it. He named the place Bethel.

## Reflection

## Anointing of the Rock

### Call and Response:

Truly God is in this place, and I did not know!

*Truly God is in this place, and I did not know!*

*Bell is rung for a moment of silence.*

### Readings

#### EXODUS 17:5–6

**Y**ahweh said to Moses, “Take with you some of the elders of Israel and move on to the forefront of the people; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the river and go. I shall be standing before you there on the rock, at Horeb. You must strike the rock, and water will flow from it for the people to drink.” This is what Moses did, in the sight of the elders of Israel.

#### I CORINTHIANS 10:1–4

**I**want to remind you, brothers and sisters, how our ancestors were all guided by a cloud above them and how they all passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses in this cloud and in this sea; all ate the same spiritual food and all drank the same spiritual drink, since they all drank from the spiritual rock that followed them as they went, and that rock was Christ.

### Reflection

## Call and Response:

And the Rock was Christ!

*And the Rock was Christ!*

*Bell is rung for a moment of silence.*

## Readings

### JOHN 12:1-3

**S**ix days before the Passover, Jesus went to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom he had raised from the dead. They gave a dinner for him there; Martha waited on them and Lazarus was among those at the table. Mary brought in a pound of very costly ointment, pure nard, and with it anointed the feet of Jesus, wiping them with her hair; the house was full of the scent of the ointment.

### 2 CORINTHIANS 1:21-22

**R**emember that it is God who assures us all, and you, of our sure place in Christ and has anointed us, marked us with his seal, giving us the pledge, the Spirit, that we carry in our hearts.

## Reflection

## Anointing

Anointer and Anointed:

You have been given a sure place in Christ.

*Sealed within my heart.*

*Bell is rung for a moment of silence.*

## Reading

### ROMANS 8:18–22

**I** think that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory, as yet unrevealed, which is waiting for us. The whole creation is waiting for God to reveal her children. It was not for any fault on the part of creation that it was made unable to attain its purpose. . . . Creation lives in hope of being freed, like us, from its slavery to decadence, to enjoy a shared freedom and glory with the children of God. From the beginning until now, the entire creation, as we know, has been groaning in one great act of giving birth.

*Bell is rung for a closing prayer sit.*

*All leave in silence.*



LITURGY TWO

FRIDAY NIGHT LITURGY

IT CAN'T BE CARRIED  
ALONE



*Bell is rung for a moment of silence.*

## **Introduction**

## **Reading**

LAMENTATIONS 3:1–20 (selected and adapted)

**I** am a person familiar with misery.  
I live under the rod of anger;  
driven and forced to walk  
without sight—in confusion—without light,  
again and again.

My flesh and skin waste away,  
my bones are broken within me.  
A heavy yoke has been made for me,  
which encircles my head with weariness.  
I dwell in the grave, with the dead.

I am walled in.  
I cannot escape.  
My chains are too heavy.  
When I call and shout,  
my prayer is shut out.

My heart is pierced with arrows . . .  
in my back the darts are planted.  
The laughingstock of all my people,  
they mock me again and again.

I have been given bitterness and gall to drink,  
my soul is shut out from peace;  
I have forgotten what happiness is.

And now I say, “My strength is gone,  
that hope which came from Yahweh.”

I remember my affliction and my wandering,  
I will remember them, and my soul is downcast within me.

## **Reflection**

### **Introduction to Grief Ritual**

*Bell is rung to commence grief ritual.*

*In groups of three at your table, each person shares in the circle and the group responds together:*

*I am sad that . . . .*

***We hear you.***

*Bell is rung after ten minutes to close the sharing of sadness  
and commence the sharing of fear.*

*Each person shares in the circle and the group responds together:*

*I fear that . . . .*

***We hear you.***

*Bell is rung after ten minutes to close the sharing of fear  
and commence the sharing of anger.*

*Each person shares in the circle and the group responds together:*

*I am angry that . . . .*

***We hear you.***

*Bell is rung after ten minutes to close the sharing of anger  
and conclude the ritual.*

**Call and Response** (from Psalm 31:9):

Take pity on me, God, I am in trouble.  
***My life is worn out with sorrow.***

**Reflection**

**Reading**

LUKE 23:27-33

**L**arge numbers of people followed him, and women among them, who mourned and lamented for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep rather for yourselves and for your children. For look, the days are surely coming when people will say, ‘Blessed are those who are barren, the wombs that have never borne, the breasts that have never suckled!’ Then they will say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’; to the hills, ‘Cover us!’ For if men use the green wood like this, what will happen when it is dry?”

Now with him they were also leading out two other criminals to be executed. When they reached the place called The Skull, they crucified him there and the two criminals also, one on the right, and the other on the left.

**Reflection**

*Bell is rung three times for a closing ten-minute prayer sit.*

**Closing Prayer for Healing and Forgiveness**

*All leave in silence.*





LITURGY THREE

SATURDAY MORNING LITURGY

CHRIST IN THE TOMB  
IS STILL CHRIST



Bell is rung for a moment of silence.

## Reading

MATTHEW 27:55-61

**M**any women were there, watching from a distance, the same women who had followed Jesus from Galilee and looked after him. Among them were Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

When it was evening, there came a rich man of Arimathea, called Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate thereupon ordered it to be handed over. So, Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean shroud, and put it in his own new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a large stone across the entrance of the tomb and went away. Now Mary of Magdala and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

## Reflection

**Call and Response** (words by Caryll Houselander):

Christ in the tomb is still Christ!

*Christ in the tomb is still Christ!*

All (LAMENTATIONS 3:25–32):

*God is good to those whose hope is in God,  
to the one who seeks God.*

*It is good to wait quietly  
for the salvation of the Lord.*

*It is good for a human to bear the yoke  
while they are young.*

*Let him sit alone in silence  
for the Lord has laid it on him.*

*Let her bury her face in the dust—  
there may yet be hope.*

*Let them offer their cheek to the one who would strike them,  
and let them be filled with disgrace.*

*For no one is cast off  
by the Lord forever.*

*Though there is grief, God will show compassion,  
so great is God's unfailing love.*

*Bell is rung for the morning sit.*





LITURGY FOUR

SATURDAY NIGHT LITURGY

THIS IS MY BODY



*Bell is rung for a moment of silence.*

## Readings

### PSALM 139:7–12

**W**here can I go from your spirit?  
Where could I flee from your presence?  
If I climb the heavens, you are there.  
If I go down to the depths, you are there.  
If I were to fly to the point of sunrise,  
or westward across the sea,  
your hand would still be guiding me,  
your right hand holding me.

If I asked darkness to cover me,  
and light to become night around me,  
that darkness would not be dark to you,  
for darkness is as light to you.

### EPHESIANS 5:13–14

**A**nything exposed by the light will be illuminated  
and anything illuminated turns into light.  
That is why it is said:  
Wake up, sleeper,  
rise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine on you.

## Reflection

## Lighting of the Pascal Candle

### Readings

JOHN 8:12

I am the light of the world;  
anyone who follows me will not be walking in the dark  
but will have the light of life.

MATTHEW 5:14-16

You are the light of the world. A city built on a hilltop cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lampstand, where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine before all humanity, so that, seeing your good works, they may give praise to your Father in heaven.

### Invitation to Light the Candles

#### Call and Response:

You are the light of the world!

*We are the light of the world!*

#### Reflection

## Reading

JOHN 6:55–56

**M**y flesh is real food,  
and my blood is real drink.  
Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood  
lives in me and I in them.

## Iona Eucharist

### An Invitation

The table of bread and wine is now to be made ready.

It is the table of company with Jesus,  
and all who love him.

It is the table of sharing with the poor of the world,  
with whom Jesus identified himself.

It is the table of communion with the earth,  
in which Christ became incarnate.

So come to this table,  
you who have much faith  
and you who would like to have more;  
you who have been here often  
and you who have not been for a while;  
you who have tried to follow Jesus,  
and you who have failed;

Come.

It is Christ who invites us to meet Jesus here.

## **Penitential Rite, Homily, and Eucharistic Prayer**

**The Lord's Prayer**

**Sign of Peace**

**Communion** (*to be served in the round at each table*)

**Server and Receiver:**

The flesh and blood.

*Given for us.*

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**Invitation to Vigil**

*Please hold silence while walking outside together.*

## **Vigil for the Body of Christ**

**Vigil Proclamation**

The speed of light is the one constant in the universe.

We are the light,

and this love that it symbolizes is the one thing that makes  
the world go 'round.

## Call and Response:

The quantum, the subatomic, the elemental, and the very minerals  
of the earth:

***God loves things by becoming them!***

The very waters that fall upon the earth, run through our rivers,  
our bodies, and fill our oceans:

***God loves things by becoming them!***

The plants, the trees, all living and growing networks that root  
into this earth:

***God loves things by becoming them!***

The animals in our skies, in our oceans, on the land,  
all creatures great and small:

***God loves things by becoming them!***

Human beings: every race, nationality, status, sexuality,  
or gender—ALL human bodies:

***God loves things by becoming them!***

The angels and the spirits, those that move in the unseen realms  
and in other dimensions:

***God loves things by becoming them!***

The great planetary bodies, the galaxies, and the whole cosmic mystery:

***God loves things by becoming them!***

## Prayer of Forgiveness

O God, Mother, Father, Giver of all life:

Where we have not honored you in the elements, have looked to weaponize the energy of life, and have desecrated the precious resources of this planet, we pray:

**Lord have mercy.**

Where we have not honored you in the waters, and have polluted, controlled, and poisoned this great flowing system of life, we pray:

**Lord have mercy.**

Where we have made extinct, destroyed, abused, and neglected the creatures with whom we coexist, we pray:

**Lord have mercy.**

For the ravages of war, power, violence, white supremacy, slavery, abuse, patriarchy, sexual violence, human trafficking, and all forms of systemic human oppression, we pray:

**Lord have mercy.**

For our murder of mystery; our obsession with what we can rationalize, quantify, and understand; and for all our ignorance of what lies beyond our small minds, we pray:

**Lord have mercy.**

For our failure to see ourselves as one small part of the great cosmic mystery, we pray:

**Lord have mercy.**

**Celebrant continues:**

O God, teach us to see you in *every* thing. Teach us to honor, respect, uphold, and protect your face in every facet of creation, as the body of Christ that includes *every* thing, in the body of Christ that includes *every* thing, and it is *through* this one great name of Christ we pray, Amen.

*Observe three minutes of silence.*

**Reflection and Song**

*Closing and Invitation to the Banquet*



LITURGY FIVE

SUNDAY MORNING LITURGY

WE SHALL ALL BE CHANGED



*Bell is rung for a moment of silence.*

## Reading

JOHN 1:1-14 (adapted)

**I**n the beginning was the Universal Blueprint:  
The Universal Blueprint was with God  
and the Universal Blueprint was God.

This Blueprint has been with God since the beginning.  
Through this inner plan all things came into being,  
not one thing came into being except through this Blueprint  
and plan.

What has come into being in the Blueprint is life,  
life that was the light of human beings  
and the light of this life and love shines in the darkness  
and darkness cannot overpower it. . . .

This Universal Blueprint is the light of the real,  
the love that enlightens all human beings who have come  
into the world.

And through love this Blueprint is made manifest,  
and comes into the world.

He was in the world  
that had its being through him.  
But the world did not know him. . . .

The Universal Blueprint became flesh  
and lives among us.

*The bell is rung for a moment of silence.*

## Reading

JOHN 20:11–18

**B**ut Mary was standing outside near the tomb, weeping. Then, still weeping, she stooped to look inside, and saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head, the other at the feet. They said, “Woman, why are you weeping?” “They have taken my Lord away,” she replied, “and I don’t know where they have put him.” As she said this she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, though she did not realize it was Jesus.

Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and remove him.” Jesus said, “Mary!” She turned around then and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbuni!”—which means Master. Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go and find my brothers and tell them: I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.” So, Mary Magdalene told the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and that he had said these things to her.

## Reflection

## Invitation to Final Easter Proclamation

### Call and Response:

Christ is the bread!

***Christ is the bread!***

Christ is the stranger!

***Christ is the stranger!***

Christ is the gardener!

***Christ is the gardener!***

Christ is the cook on the shore!

***Christ is the cook on the shore!***

Christ is the light!

***Christ is the light by which we see: Christ in every thing, and every one! Amen!***

Remain standing, holding hands.

### Reading

#### ROMANS 12:4–5

**J**ust as each of us has various parts in one body, and the parts do not all have the same function, in the same way, all of us, though there are so many of us, make up one body in Christ, and as different parts we are all joined to one another.

Turn outward.

## **Prayer to Live as the Body of Christ in the World**

*Bell is rung.*

*All may be seated for the morning prayer sit.*





Center for  
Action and  
Contemplation

A collision of opposites forms the cross of Christ.  
One leads downward preferring the truth of the humble.  
The other moves leftward against the grain.  
But all are wrapped safely inside a hidden harmony:  
One world, God's cosmos, a benevolent universe.



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