

Opening Worship



GREETING

I greet you in the name of the triune God:
Father, Son and Holy Spirit
who gathers, protects and cares for the church,

(Belhar Confession, Article 1)

God be with you.
And also with you.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

God has entrusted the Church with the message of reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ; the Church is called blessed because its members are peacemakers, and the Church is a witness, by word and deed, to the new heaven and the new earth in which justice dwells.

(Belhar Confession, Article 3)

And so we reject all alienation, all hatred, all enmity in this land,
and acknowledge the [local First Peoples of the land],
We acknowledge their Elders past, present, and those to come.



CONFESSION

God who stretches out the heavens,
forms the earth, and breathes life and spirit into our flesh,
we do not always strive for the binding unity gifted by your Spirit;
but allow conviction, and language, and culture to divide us.

We do not always make visible your reconciled community;
but perpetuate the sin of separation, enmity and hatred.
(Belhar Confession Article 2)



We do not always witness to you:
freer of prisoners,
helper of orphans,
protector of strangers,
who tends to widows,
for we turn away from being your body in this work.
(Belhar Confession Article 4)



God who pours out unity as a libation,
flowing through the sacred places.
Bind us in reconciled unity with you,
forgive and receive us.
Turn us to your peace and to service among the destitute.
Amen.



WORD OF GRACE

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.”

(2 Cor. 5.17-18; Belhar Confession, Article 2)

Therefore we are confident to say:

Our sins are forgiven!

Our hopes are restored!

Thanks be to God!



THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.



AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects and cares for the church through Word and Spirit.

This, God has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end.



AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe that God has entrusted the church with the message of reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ; that the church is called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, that the church is called blessed because it is a peacemaker, that the church is witness both by word and by deed to the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells.



AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe that God's lifegiving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death, and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness and enmity, that God's lifegiving Word and Spirit will enable the church to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world.



SENDING OUT OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

As we go into this presbytery meeting and then into the world:

Love one another

Give yourselves willingly and joyfully to bless one another

Know and bear one another's burdens

Upbuild, admonish, and comfort one another

Pray together;

serve God in this world;

and pursue the unity of the whole human family to which Christ calls us.

(Belhar Confession)

