

# **THE BEATLES LITURGY**

**A Guitar Liturgy for Holy Communion**

**Music by Lennon & McCartney**

**Lyrics by Fritz Wiese**

*“Living God’s Love”*

**St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church**

400 North Broadway Street † Medina, Ohio 44256

330-725-8885 † [office@stmatthewmedina.org](mailto:office@stmatthewmedina.org)

[www.stmatthewmedina.org](http://www.stmatthewmedina.org)

*The people of God gather. Personal prayer and/or gathering songs may be used to prepare for worship.*

## **OPENING SONG: Good Morning, Lord**

*Tune: Eight Days a Week*

Hey, dear Lord, good morning.

Its good to be with you.

We're here to sing your praises,

Give thanks for what you do.

In the name of the Father, in the name of the Son,  
in the name of the Spirit, the Three in One.

Bless our time together, send your Spirit near.

Help us with our questions, our wrestlings and our fears.

Creating Father, redeeming Son,  
guiding Spirit, Almighty One.

Blessed be your name, forever.

Open now our heart, that you may touch and lead our lives.

Oh, We love you Jesus, that's why we're in this place:

To grow within your presence, until it's face to face.

In the name of the Father, in the name of the Son,  
In the name of the Spirit, the Three in One,  
the Three in One, the Three in One.

## **CONFESSIONAL LITANY: Help!**

*Tune: Help*

P: Help!

**C: We need somebody.**

P: Help!

**C: Not just anybody.**

P: Help!

**C: You know we need you, Lord. Help!**

P: When we were younger, so much younger than today, (either in age or maturity or both,) we never thought we needed anybody's help. We neglected or even turned a cold shoulder, O Lord, upon your promises and plans for us.

**C: We're not trying to beat ourselves up, Lord, and we know that's not your desire, But we realize—actually we're only able to admit this to a limited extent—that we're plagued by a force some call "sin". We find ourselves acting in ways of which we're ashamed. In some cases, we're so insensitive we don't even realize it. And we know if we say otherwise, we're kidding ourselves.**

P: Help!                   **C: Renew us, Lord.**  
P: Help!                   **C: We need our lives restored**  
P: Help!                   **C: We sing with one accord. Help!**

P: You want help? Here's some great news! God so loved the world that God gave the very best, His only Son, Jesus, who not only lived among us to help show us the way, but died on the cross for us, and for our salvation, (or 'back-stage pass" to God's kingdom, party, and banquet.)

**C: Yes, through Jesus comes true help. Through his cross and resurrection, our sins are forgiven and the slate is wiped clean. We are made new creations, holy people, stewards of God's mysteries, freed to love and live with new futures. Thanks be to God who give us the victory!**

### **SHARING OF THE PEACE**

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: and also with you. Amen.**

P: Let us greet on another with the peace of the Lord.

*(Just as we received God's reconciliation and peace through confession, we enact that peace with those around us.)*

### **KYRIE SONG: Shower Your Grace**

*Tune: You've got to Hide Your Love Away*

*(We pray, through song, for the Lord's mercy upon the worshippers, the Church, and for all of God's people, everywhere.)*

Here we stand with hearts in hand  
Beseeching you in prayer:  
For the lonely and meek, for the troubled who seek,  
Father, show them your care.

For peace in our time,  
for meaning and rhyme in our daily lives.  
That kindness be shown in our homes  
by children, husbands and wives. *(Refrain)*

*Refrain:* Lord, shower your grace upon our way.  
Lord, we need your strength to live today.  
From hostilities that we may be freed,  
Let forgiveness start to stir.  
Melt cold hearts, provide fresh starts,  
That your gospel will be heard.

For those lost in a maze, for those who give praise,  
may your mercy be their gift.  
That justice may reign, transforming the pain;  
our hearts to you we lift. (*Refrain*)

*Refrain:* Lord, shower your grace upon our way.  
Lord, we need your strength to live today.  
From hostilities that we may be freed,  
Let forgiveness start to stir.  
Melt cold hearts, provide fresh starts,  
That your gospel will be heard.

## THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray...

**O God, form the minds of your faithful people into your one will.  
Make us love what you command and desire what you promise, that,  
amid all the changes of this world, our hearts may be fixed where  
true joy is found, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and  
reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
Amen.**

## THE LESSONS

### THE GOSPEL SONG: Words of Life

*Tune: Oh-La-Di Oh-La-Da*

Jesus was with his disciples  
when they asked, "Lord, where shall we go?  
You have the words of eternal life." For happiness and joy these words we  
need to know. (*Chorus*)

*Chorus:* Allelu, Allelu, Alleluia!

Blessed are those who hear God's Word. (Repeat)

*Final time:*

If you want true life, then act upon God's Word.

When it seems you have all the answers,  
or when you feel you haven't got a clue,  
turn to what will prove a steady dancer.  
The Bible shows God's love and grace  
always comes through. (*Chorus*)

## THE GOSPEL READING

Jesus prayed:]<sup>20</sup>“I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, <sup>21</sup>that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup>The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, <sup>23</sup>in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. <sup>24</sup>Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

<sup>25</sup>“Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. <sup>26</sup>I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

## THE HOMILY

(Reflections on life’s intersections with today’s Word.)

**SONG OF THE DAY: Walking in God’s Love** (or another selection)

*Tune: Can’t Buy Me Love*

Some folks trust in riches, fame, or fancy cars.  
Others let society determine who they are.  
But I have heard one better answer  
that gives more joy by far.

Walking in God’s love, Jesus died for me.  
Walking in God’s love, in baptism I’m free.

The Lord has blessed me richly  
with my family and my friends.  
He walks beside me daily and when the story ends.  
So when it comes to living boldly,  
just one thing depends:  
Walking in God’s love, they call it justified,  
walking in God’s love, it gives me hope and pride.

Lord, your word is golden. It gives my heart delight.  
Your grace supports my mission,  
gives meaning to my plight.  
Now grant me the strength to follow Jesus;  
how pleasing in your sight!  
Walking in God’s love, love...  
Walking in God’s love.

## PROCLAMATION OF FAITH

*(May be said through use of the Apostles' Creed, below, or other confession.)*

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.\*  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Set free from captivity to sin and death, we pray to the God of resurrection for the church, people in need, and all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

Holy God, make your people one as you and your Son are one. Extend the gifts we have been given by your Spirit to all people, especially those experiencing division or questioning your love. God, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Make worthy the work of scientists who look to the stars and planets, as well as scientists who look to atoms and molecules. Bring innovation and well-being to humanity through their discoveries. God, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Keep in our minds those who have died in war, both military and civilians. May we honor them by seeking peaceful solutions to the conflicts that arise among nations and peoples. God, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Grant freedom to all who are overwhelmed by chronic illness, depression, or constant worry Ken Strebelow, Jim Minor, Justin, Steve Combs, Jim

Frame, and John Siebert. Open them to receive health and salvation in Christ Jesus through the Spirit's gift of faith. God, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Stir imagination and understanding throughout the church in the work of poets, theologians, and hymnwriters. Lead us into new visions and fresh expressions of your presence. God, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Unite us with the saints who have died and been raised in Jesus. Train us to wait with eager longing for Christ to come again, even as we sense his presence with us now. God, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

In your mercy, O God, respond to these prayers, and renew us by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.  
**Amen.**

## **OFFERING**

### **OFFERING SONG: All My Living**

*Tune: All My Loving*

How can I measure the bounteous treasure,  
The gifts God's entrusted to me,  
to use and enjoy, but to also employ  
That God's will around me is done?  
All my living, let it be for you.  
That's why I'm giving these gifts now to you.

For the stars, woods, and streams,  
possibilities and dreams,  
I thank you for my daily bread.  
Now through all of my friendships  
and words that come from my lips,  
I'll act so that others are fed.  
All my living, let it be for you.  
That's why I'm giving these gifts now to you,  
these gifts now to you, these gifts now to you.

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

P: Let us pray.

**C: Gracious God, thank you. As people coming into and leaving this world with nothing, we acknowledge that it's you who provides us with our every need. In joyful response, we now intentionally offer some of those gifts to the work of your kingdom: ourselves, our time, and our possessions, We give them —and help us on this one—in the same unselfish spirit in which you first gave them to us, our many wonderful gifts especially Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.**

## **PREPARATION FOR THE MEAL**

**P: The Lord be with you.**

**C: And also with you.**

**P: Lift up your hearts.**

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

**P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.**

**C: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

## **JESUS' COMMAND AND PROMISES**

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying; Take and eat, this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me. (1 Corinthians 11:23-25)

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

## THE COMMUNION SONG: Remember Me

*Tune: Let It Be*

On the night our Savior was betrayed  
he took the break and then he prayed.

“This is now my body, take and eat.”

After supper he took the cup, giving thanks he held it up,

“This wine is now my blood, take and drink.”

Chorus: “Remember me,” Jesus said.

“In the wine, through the bread.

This meal of love I give you. Remember me.”

This meal is our new covenant, Christ’s summary of what  
he meant. United in his body, you and me.

Black or white, young or old. If your heart is open or still  
cold, forgiveness now is given, for you and me. (*Chorus*)

So as we celebrate Christ’s meal

We proclaim the cross that heals.

Our sins upon his shoulders at Calvary.

For the bonds of death God devastates, Christ’s resurrection  
liberates. To the banquet now he calls us, you and me. (*Chorus*)

## SHARING OF THE MEAL & DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

### POST COMMUNION BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep  
you in his grace.

C: **Amen.**

### POST COMMUNION PRAYER

P: Let us pray.

C: **Lord, it’s amazing. Just as grains scattered across different fields  
are united into one loaf of bread, you united us through the  
gracious meal just received. Through one heavenly food, you’ve fed  
and nourished our hungers, varied though they may be. Continue  
to pour out your spirit, giving us strength, as individuals and as  
one body in you, to share with others the grace, mercy, forgiveness  
and hope you have first given us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

## **SENDING SONG: I Am With You Always**

*Tune: Hard Day's Night*

Go now in peace, serve the Lord, spread his word,  
share the good news  
of what you've tasted and what you've heard.  
"And remember my friends, wherever the journey bends,  
that I am with you always... that I am with you always...  
that I am with you always."

OR

## **SENDING SONG: Go Now In Peace**

*Tune: Yellow Submarine*

Now go in peace into the world.  
Share with others what we've heard:  
that Jesus died, but now he lives.  
Life in his kingdom to you he gives. (*Chorus*)

Chorus: Go now in peace to serve the Lord as friends  
wherever your road bends, until the story ends.

Thank you Lord for this time.  
Your light of grace we'll try to shine;  
Give away as we've received,  
Serving others in their need. (*Chorus*)

## **SENDING**

**P: Go in peace! Serve the Lord!**

**C: Thanks be to God!**

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# **THE WORSHIP IS OVER, THE SERVICE BEGINS!**

## **Background on the Beatles Liturgy**

Why have a liturgy or worship format set to all Beatles' music? Why not? In recent years, Christians have been exploring how the church best reaches our changing world with the fantastic news of God's radical love for us through Jesus. In the process, we try to discern between style and substance. What is the basic, never-changing substance of the gospel, that needs to shine in worship? God's Word & Meal. These elements focus the faith in worship.

Specifically, this author would suggest the forms of a specifically Christian gathering (what we're doing in worship is distinctive from work, potlucks, euchre, or studying): God's word through lessons and exposition of some sort, offering ourselves through praise, prayers, possessions, and presence, and celebrating the Eucharist (proclaiming the death and resurrection of Jesus through his meal not only is a tremendous faith activity, but the primary way early Christians distinguished themselves from their Jewish brothers and sisters.)

Therefore, grounded in substance, we enjoy freedom in worship style. Music and language, it makes sense, should be indigenous to the gathered people, so the gospel can be heard clearly. English or French, Bach or Beatles. We need it all to celebrate and proclaim God's mighty deeds. After all, Martin Luther himself paved the way for this kind of thinking when he translated the Bible into German and put Christian lyrics to tavern drinking songs.

Why specifically the Beatles? I thought it would be challenging to use the music of just one band. The Beatles seem to offer music that spans the interests of several generations of Christians. Plus it's fun music that's fairly easy to remember or learn. Will this liturgy-experiment be helpful to all Christians? By no means. But I'm glad if you are somebody who felt it helped you participate in that great old story in a fresh, yet authentically Christian way.

Peace, Fritz W.

