

ORDER OF RELEASE

Our time of worship is not an idle one. In this place we step away from our daily routines to reflect on our personal lives, and our collective life together. We gather so that we might be real with one another.

As a community in our society, we recognize that we are part of a system that does not always seek the welfare of all people or creation. As we gather, we name those places where we find ourselves bound to systems that oppress, discriminate, and damage.



We confess that we are a part of systems that promote good for ourselves over the collected community. Out of convenience, we buy what we don't need and we spend beyond our means. We accept the idea that we need to be constantly productive with no sabbath rest. We neglect the poor when we have allowed public services and programs to be cut. We oppress groups of people when we have not sought the interests of the least among us in society. We hurt our global neighbour when we turn a blind eye to war in other regions; when we allow the destruction of water-sheds and forests. In these and other ways we distance ourselves from God and one another. We confess our sin. We are sorry, and we ask for forgiveness.

We have become enslaved to systems that seek personal interest; we neglect our responsibility toward others. But God has set us free – free to give out of our abundance, free to welcome and invite all, free for sabbath rest and reflection.

God knows that ministry is not simply the work of the ones ordained. Ministry is done in community. I confess my own need for liberation from bondage to a system that oppresses, and has put itself above others. As I am a member of the dominant culture, I, too, contribute to a system of producing and consuming. For this I am sorry, and I ask for a word that will remind me that I am free to choose otherwise.

God's grace frees us. God has called you to a life that challenges cultural assumptions. We proclaim your freedom to be a pastor called to be a prophetic voice among us in this place, to challenge us with the words we need to hear. May God's freeing word also unbind you in the work you do here and outside this place.

Let us go forth, having heard a word of release and liberation from bondage, and may we go with a new vision of responsibility towards others.