

## WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER:

Today's Gospel reminds us that we should not always look for the easy way. Jesus challenges us to take up our cross daily and to follow him.

Not by power and popularity, O God,  
but in suffering and self-sacrifice  
did Jesus show us the cost of discipleship.

As disciples of Jesus  
may we learn how to deny ourselves,  
take up our cross  
and follow in his footsteps.

We make our prayer through the same Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever. AMEN.

## CONFESSON AND FORGIVENESS:

Leader: Lord God we want to Seek after you and yet we fail to call upon you in our need. Lord have mercy.

Leader: We want to abandon our sinful ways and return to you, and yet we struggle to change our hearts. Christ have mercy.

Leader: We return to you in your great mercy. Yet we forget your longing to forgive and restore us. Lord have mercy.

Forgive us, renew us and lead us, that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your holy name.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for His sake, God forgives us all our sin. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sin, in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

As we lift up our hands in prayer,  
we turn with confidence to God and ask for what we need.

1. For prophets and **proclaimers of the word** of God: (*pause*) that the fire of this word may always burn in their hearts. Lord in your mercy...
2. For those who **suffer** imprisonment and torture for their belief in Christ: (*pause*) that they receive the grace to remain strong and faithful. Lord in your mercy...
3. For those who find it difficult to take up their cross because they think not as God does, but as human beings do. Lord in your mercy...
4. For the infirmed, the lonely and the sick of our community. (*pause*) May they find peace in the midst of

their suffering, through Jesus healing presence. Lord in your mercy...

P     Lord, teach us to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to labor and not to ask for any reward except that of knowing that we do your will. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. AMEN.

### LORD'S PRAYER:

Jesus came to do the will of his Father:  
let us pray that we may do likewise as we say...

### BENEDICTION

Like earth that is parched may you thirst for the Lord. May your lips glorify and praise his holy name. May the Word of the Lord be like a fire burning within your bones. And may you take up your cross, and follow Jesus.... In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN!