RCA Worship Resource Toolkit: Worship liturgies for churches with a traditional style of worship

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Order of Worship for Week One: Transformation
* = please stand if you are able

SILENT MEDITATION
Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.
(Psalm 51:10-12)

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP
Our help is in the name of the Lord, who created the heavens and the earth. The clouds parted and the sky was torn open. Here and now, push aside our anxieties and tear us away from our distractions. The Spirit came down upon Jesus, looking something like a dove. Here and now, soar among us in this time, Holy Spirit. Then a voice came out of a cloud saying, This is my beloved Child. Listen to him!

*HYMN
“Gather Us In”
or
“Come Thou Fount”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION
O God, living water, bright light, gentle dove, our true and lasting hope; In the water of baptism, you claimed us as your very own, and ever since, you have been preparing us for eternity with you. Your loving grip upon us is strong and sure. Yet we confess that we defy and disregard who you created us to be, and who we truly are through Christ Jesus. Sometimes ignorantly, sometimes willfully, even sometimes spitefully, we live in ways that do not suit your children. Nevertheless, your holy stamp upon us is indelible. Your claim upon us is eternal. Wash us in your abundant grace and soak us with your Holy Spirit, so that more and more we become who we already are, your beloved children, sisters and brothers of your son, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.
THE KYRIE ELEISON  
Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (adapted from Romans 6)  
When we are baptized,  
**we are buried in the waters and we share in Christ’s death.**  
If we have shared in Christ’s death,  
**then we will certainly also share in his resurrection.**  
Just as Christ was raised,  
**so in baptism we also are raised to new life.**  
**From now on, we are dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ Jesus.**  
This is the good news of the gospel. Believe it and live in peace.  
**Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

GOD’S LAW AS A GUIDE TO GRATEFUL LIVING (adapted from Romans 12)  
Let your love be genuine. Turn away from evil and hold tight to what is good.  
**Be cheerfully hopeful, patient in suffering, and persistent in prayer.**  
Contribute to the needs of God’s saints and welcome strangers with hospitality.  
**Rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep.**  
Live in harmony with one another and make friends with the lowly.  
**Do not repay anyone evil for evil or insist on getting even.**  
So far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all people.  
**If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Romans 12:1-2

*HYMN  
“When Jesus Came to Jordan”  
or  
“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Mark 1:9-15

SERMON

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH  
What is your only comfort in life and in death?  
**That I am not my own, but belong—body and soul, in life and in death—to my faithful savior Jesus Christ.**  
What is true faith?  
**It is not only a certain knowledge by which I accept as true all that God has revealed to us in the Word, but also a wholehearted trust which the Holy**
Spirit creates in me through the gospel, that, not only to others, but to me also, God has given forgiveness of sins, everlasting righteousness and salvation, out of sheer grace, solely for the sake of Christ’s saving work. Why do you say that you are right with God by faith alone? It is not because of any value my faith has that God is pleased with me. Only Christ’s satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness make me right with God. And I can receive this righteousness and make it mine in no other way than by faith alone. (Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 1, 21, and 61)

OR

Apostle’s Creed

OR

Nicene Creed

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and THE LORD’S PRAYER

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN

“Have Thine Own Way”
or

“Christ is God’s Never Changing ‘Yes!’”

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE
Order of Worship for Week Two: Discipleship

*S = please stand if you are able

SILENT MEDITATION

Day by day, O dear Lord, three things I pray.
To see thee more clearly,
Love thee more dearly,
Follow thee more nearly,
Day by day.
(Attributed to Richard of Chichester)

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP (adapted from Luke 9)

Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who created the heavens and the earth.
Jesus says, “If anyone wants to be my follower, let them deny themselves,
take up their cross daily, and follow me.
For those who seek to preserve their own life will destroy it,
but those who give up their life for my sake will find it.
Where is the profit in gaining the whole world,
but losing yourself?”

*HYMN

“I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art”
or
“When Morning Gilds the Skies”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, for just a few moments grant us the courage to see ourselves as we sometimes are: forgetful of your goodness, brittle in our insecurity. Give us courage to recognize our wounded souls, our treacherous tongues, our mean streaks, our petty jealousies and long-held grudges, our pride and resistance to change, our selfishness, and the deception and pain that we cause.
(moment of silence)
Mighty God, for just a few moments grant us the grace to see ourselves as we are to you: your beloved children, washed in living water, wrapped in the white robe of Christ, totally free and forgiven, raised to share in your fellowship and work, a sanctuary where your Holy Spirit dwells, whole and eternally alive in Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE KYRIE ELEISON

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.
ASSURANCE OF PARDON (adapted from 1 Timothy 1)

The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance: “Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.”

We are the most notorious of sinners, but we have received mercy, so that in us God may display his perfect patience, making us dead to sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus.

In Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven and we receive everlasting life. Believe this good news and be at peace.

Glory to God the Creator! Glory to God the Christ! Glory to God the Holy Spirit! One God in perfect community, now and forever. Amen.

GOD’S LAW AS A GUIDE TO GRATEFUL LIVING (adapted from Matthew 5)

Leader: You have heard it said from ancient times, “You shall not murder.”
All: But I say to you, do not even insult a brother or sister, for words can kill.
South: You have heard it said, “You shall not commit adultery.”
North: But I say to you that lust will corrupt your heart more quickly than your body.
Women: You have heard it said, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.”
Men: But I say to you, if someone hits you, stand there and take it. Do not retaliate.
North: You have heard it said, “Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.”
South: But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who trouble you.
Leader: You are citizens of the kingdom of God, so live like it.
All: Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Exodus 3:1-12

*HYMN

“Will You Come and Follow Me (The Summons)”
or
“Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore”

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Matthew 4:18-20

SERMON

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

What is your only comfort in life and in death?

That I am not my own, but belong—body and soul, in life and in death—to my faithful savior Jesus Christ...Because I belong to him, Christ by his
Holy Spirit assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.
Can anyone, even faithful believers in Christ, obey God’s commandments perfectly?
No. In this life, even the most faithful and mature make only a small beginning in obeying God. Nonetheless, with all seriousness of purpose, we do begin to strive to live according to all of God’s commands.
If no one can keep God’s commandments, why then does God give us such strict commands?
So that the longer we live we, more and more, come to realize our own weakness, flaws and sinfulness, as well as to appreciate and rely more deeply on Christ’s abundant forgiveness and righteousness. Praying to God for the gracious empowering of the Holy Spirit, we never stop seeking to be renewed into the image of Jesus Christ, until at last in eternity we reach our fulfillment and wholeness.
(Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 1, 114, and 115)

OR

Apostle’s Creed

OR

Nicene Creed

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and THE LORD’S PRAYER

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN
  “We are Singing for the Lord is our Light (Siyahamba)”
  or
  “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE
SILENT MEDITATION

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP (adapted from Psalm 71)

Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who created the heavens and the earth.
You, Lord, are my refuge. Rescue me.
Be the rock where I can always go. You are my shelter.
Since my youth, Lord, you have been my hope.
You brought me from my mother’s womb and I have relied on you ever since.
So I will hope in you more and more. The times you have rescued me are too many to count.
Even when I am old and gray, keep me strong, O Lord, so I may declare your greatness to generations still to come.
You have done great things. Who is like you? Who, O Lord, is your equal?
My lips shout for joy when I sing praises to you.
All day long, I am singing about your righteous ways.

*HYMN

“God is Here”
or
“Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven”
or
“Holy God, We Praise Your Name”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O mysterious Trinity: Eternity cannot hold you, nor can our little words catch the brilliance of your love. Yet in the space of our small hearts and in silence, come close now and repair us.
moment of silence
O lavish Creator, patient parent, generous gardener, source of steadfast love, covenant-keeper: Forgive us for rejecting your care, for going our own way, for making up gods more to our liking, for our wasteful ways, and for all we have left untended.
moment of silence
O Jesus Christ, nailed to a cross yet raised in the morning: Forgive us for our lack of mercy, our angry actions, our reckless thoughts, our thoughtless deeds, our empty speech, and our words that have wounded.
moment of silence
O Holy Spirit, rushing wind, dancing flame, gentle dove: Possess our hearts. Guide where we go. Redeem who we are.
moment of silence
All praise and honor to you, eternal Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one

OR

God of mighty mercy and vulnerable strength, we confess to you our
strange contradictions. At times we are pushy and self-important. We insist
on our way. We think we know best. Our tempers flare. We are selfish and
proud. The next moment we are timid and fading. We hide the treasure that
is in us. We deny our gifts and devalue our abilities. We despair. We isolate
ourselves. We remain silent when a good word is needed. For the sake of
Jesus Christ, forgive us for sins of action and inaction. By your Holy Spirit,
shape us to live in your loving ways. Amen.

THE KYRIE ELEISON
Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (adapted from 2 Corinthians 5)
If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation.
The old has passed away. Look! Everything is made new. All this is from
God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and entrusted to us
the ministry of reconciliation.
In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and we receive new life. Believe this good news
and live in peace.

GOD’S LAW AS A GUIDE TO GRATEFUL LIVING (adapted from Philippians 4)
Leader: Do not worry about anything, but pray about everything.
Women: Giving thanks and praise to God will shape your worries into
prayers.
Men: Then the peace of God, which is beyond all human comprehension,
will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.
All: Brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is
just, whatever is wholesome, whatever is good, whatever is gracious,
things of excellence and worthy of praise—fill your mind with these things.

OR

(Adapted from 2 Peter 1)
Leader: Make every effort to respond to God’s promises and build upon what you
have been given.
North: To your faith, add goodness. And to your goodness, add insight.
South: And to your insight, add discipline. And to your discipline, add
patience.
Balcony: And to your patience, add reverence. And to your reverence, add
warm affection.
Leader: And to your warm affection, add generous love for all.

All: With these qualities active and growing in our lives, each day will bring joy. We will bear much fruit as we mature in our relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Exodus 18:13-23

*HYMN
“Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart”
or
“Knowing You”

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Ephesians 4:1-14

SERMON

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH
What do you believe regarding “the holy catholic church”? I believe that the Son of God, through his Spirit and his Word, gathers, protects, and preserves for himself a community—from the entire human race, from the beginning of the world until its end—who are chosen for eternal life and made one by truth faith. Moreover, I am now, and forever will remain, a living member of this community, “the holy, catholic church.”

What do you understand by “the communion of the saints”? All believers, as members of this community, share fully in Christ and partake abundantly in all his treasures and gifts. Moreover, it is a joyful responsibility for each and every believer to use these gifts of Christ willingly and gladly for the service and enrichment of the church and world. (Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 54 and 55)

OR

Apostle’s Creed

OR

Nicene Creed

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and THE LORD’S PRAYER
OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN
   “God of Grace and God of Glory”

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE
Order of Worship for Week Four: Missional Engagement

* = please stand if you are able

SILENT MEDITATION

Lord, give bread to the hungry,
And hunger for you to those who have bread.
(Catherine Doherty)

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP (adapted from Isaiah 65)
Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who created the heavens and the earth.
Be glad and anticipate what I am creating, says the Lord.
My delight is in you, my people.
Soon the sound of weeping shall no more be heard.
No more shall there be a child whose days are cut short,
or an old person who does not live out a full lifetime.
You shall build houses and dwell in them for years to come. You shall plant
vineyards and still be there to enjoy the fruit.
Before you call,
I will answer.
Before you finish speaking,
I will hear.

*HYMN

“Jesus Shall Reign”
or
“All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Mighty God of love, in Jesus Christ you made a new creation. Now you invite us to participate in your work of turning the world upside down.
Forgive us for the times when complacency, cowardice, and contentment keep us from joining your holy upheaval. At the same time, forgive us for thinking you ask us only to serve in huge and heroic ways. By your Holy Spirit, form us to be faithful in unseen, day-to-day, and humble deeds of love. Allow us the grace to do great things and to do small things greatly, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE KYRIE ELEISON

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.
ASSURANCE OF PARDON (adapted from John 3)

God loved the world so much
he gave his one and only Son, so that anyone and everyone who trusts in
him will never die, but will have everlasting life.
God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world,
but so the world might have life through him.
This is the good news of the gospel. Believe it and be at peace.
Thanks be to God!

GOD’S LAW AS A GUIDE TO GRATEFUL LIVING (adapted from Micah 6:8)

God has shown you, O people, what is good and what does the Lord require of
you?
To do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Isaiah 6:1-8

*HYMN
“A Place at the Table”
or
“When the Poor Ones”

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Luke 4:14-21

SERMON

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe
that God has revealed himself as the one who wishes to bring about justice
and true peace among people;
that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity, is in a special way the God
of the destitute, the poor and the wronged;
that God calls the church to follow him in this, for God brings justice to the
oppressed and gives bread to the hungry;
that God frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind;
that God supports the downtrodden, protects the stranger, helps orphans
and widows and blocks the path of the ungodly;
that for God pure and undefiled religion is to visit the orphans and the
widows in their suffering;
that God wishes to teach the church to do what is good and to seek the
right,
that the church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and
need...that the church must witness against and strive against any form of
injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like
an ever-flowing stream;
that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others. Jesus is Lord! To the one and only God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be the honor and the glory for ever and ever.
(The Belhar Confession, Article 4)

OR

The Apostle’s Creed

OR

The Nicene Creed

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and THE LORD’S PRAYER

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN
   “Here I Am, Lord”
   or
   “Will You Let Me Be Your Servant?”

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE