

***Worship Resources: Opening Prayer,
Invitation to Faithful Stewardship and
Communion, and Benediction***

First Christian Church of Decatur, Georgia

Season of Eastertide, Sunday, May 11, 2014

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Note: Currently our congregation is moving faithfully through a 5 week worship series that highlights the theology and meaning of our various ministries, including Worship, Membership, Christian Education, Foundations of Faith, and Outreach. Consequently the preacher gets to listen, support and learn. What fun! We are so proud of our congregation and growing leadership team.

Below you will find the portions of our worship service (beautifully held in the Fellowship Hall) that Membership asked me to handle. Blessings and peace, James

Prayer of Invocation

Come, Holy Spirit!

Enter into this church and make your presence known!

Fill us with your love.

Empower us with your strength.

Grace us with your loving kindness.

Move us with your will for justice.

Receive our awe.

Bless this congregation and make us one in you.

In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Invitation to Faithful Stewardship and Holy Communion

Recognizing the ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit,

what role do you see yourself playing in the community?

Are you a teacher, advocate, encourager,

comforter, listener, servant leader?

Sometimes the best thing you can do

is to be a non-anxious presence;

that in and of itself is an accomplishment.

Play whatever role the Spirit leads you to become,

whatever part that's needed to build a healthy family,

neighborhood, classroom, workplace, or environment.

May the offerings of our lives and resources

be utilized to empower the whole people of God

to live into our holy calling.

Consider the wisdom of Disciples of Christ pastor Bill Nicholls

who reminds us that,

“Stewardship is not the church's way of raising money;

it is God's way of raising Christians.”

As a congregation of God's followers,

our purpose is not about raising money toward a budget.

We are inspiring disciples to build the kingdom.

We are enriching teachers to share the good news

with children and adults;

we're training troops to fight for justice and tolerance;

we're teaching people to sing praises to the Lord;

we're equipping servants to serve;

we're empowering evangelists to go and make disciples;

and we are forming persons into the image of Christ.

Give generously and gladly toward this all-powerful mission.

Gladly do we bring our offerings forward and place them here in a common basket,

a vivid reminder that our tithes are shared in common
for the common good.

Here we lay down our gifts;

here we receive the gift of God.

One day Jesus of Nazareth gathered his followers in the
Upper Room

for what would be their last supper together.

Jesus prepared his followers for what was to become of him

as well as what was to become of them.

Jesus shared with the disciples about being prepared to
follow the way of God.

Disciples of Christ must choose this path,

this journey, each of us in our own way.

Each follower of God is reminded that everyone is to choose
the Way of God,

a choice we make daily,

confident in the loving, ongoing presence of the
Holy Spirit.

This is Christ's Table, and all are invited to partake of the
Bread and Cup.

Benediction

Go forth, good people of God.

Extend hands that offer hope and help and hospitality.

Build bridges over the chasms of sin that separate.

Break down the barriers that divide.

Build up the domain of God on earth as it is in Heaven.

Go forth into the community grateful, foolish, brave,

extravagant, peaceful, weeping with joy through your
tears

because you are so thankful

for the new life that Christ provides.

Then, after serving at the feet of Jesus,

return again to worship the Living Christ. Amen!