

# An Order of Confession and Forgiveness

*For Congregational or Private Use*  
There has been no designation regarding call and response so that the baptized may make use of it freely.

A gathering hymn may be sung to begin the service, such as "My hope is built on nothing less" (LBW 294) or "What wondrous love is this, o my soul, o my soul" (LBW 385)

## Greeting:

*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*  
And also with you.

## A Litany of the Truth about Ourselves and God Litany (based on Psalm 32)

*While I kept silent about my sin, my bones wasted away*

**Through my groaning all day long.**

*For day and night your hand, O Lord, was heavy upon me;*

**My strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.**

*Then I acknowledged my sin to you*

**And I did not cover up my iniquity.**

*I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord"*

**And you forgave the guilt of my sin.**

*Therefore all the faithful may call on you in their time of trouble*

**And the great waters of chaos will not overwhelm them.**

## The Confession

*Come; call on the Lord so that he may hear your confession*

**Lord, my silence is broken, I cry to you: hear my confession.**

*Let us begin in the name of our God, to whom all hearts are open and from whom no secrets are hid.*

**In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit:**

**Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry for help come to you.**

**Do not hide your face from me when I am in distress.**

**Turn your ear to me; when I call, answer me quickly.**

--Psalm 102:1-2

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight.

(Psalm 51:1-4a)

*Let us make confession to the Lord:*

**I have lived as if God did not matter**

**I have lived as if I have mattered the most.**

**I have not honored my Lord's name as He demands;**

**I have neglected to worship and pray as I ought;**

**I have failed the work of my Lord's love for me,**

**So that my love for others has failed as well;**

**I have brought pain to those around me;**

**I have failed to help all those in need;**

**I have filled my very thoughts and wants with sin;**

**I have been sorely troubled—**

*(Here silence is kept as especially troubling sins are brought before the Lord. If a pastor is leading the order in private, there may be assurance of confidentiality so that troubling sins may be confessed aloud.)*

## The Words of Promise

*Hear these words of promise:*

*"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1).*

*"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners--of whom I am the worst" (1 Tim. 1:15).*

*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Gal. 2:20).*

*Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the*

*glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.*  
(Rom.6:3-4)

### **Our Prayer for Mercy**

*And now we pray:*

**Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your free Spirit.**

(Psalm 51:10-12)

*And so we come as beggars:*

**Merciful Father, I, a sinner caught and bound in my sin, confess to You and my brothers and sisters in Christ that I have sinned against you and all of them; that I do not deserve any of the blessings you've given me or the love they've shared with me; but I have heard your promises and have been brought to repentance so that now I call on your mercy for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior, and pray that—by an act of your grace—you will deliver me from bondage so that I may walk in newness of life.**

### **The Declaration of Forgiveness**

*The participants may come forward and kneel for the laying on of hands. A hymn may be sung by the congregation as participants go forward, such as "I lay my sins on Jesus" (LBW 305) or "Chief of sinners though I be" (LBW 306).*

*Our Lord Jesus promised his disciples: "The one who hears you, hears me." (Luke 10:16) Do you believe that the words of forgiveness I speak to you are the words of Jesus Christ himself?*

**Yes, I do for the Holy Spirit has gathered me in faith to Christ my Lord.**

*The leader lays hands on the participants head.*

*The benefits of Christ are poured out upon you—the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. By the authority of the Word of God and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I declare unto you the entire*

*forgiveness of all your sins; in the name of the Father and of the Son+ and of the Holy Spirit.*

*Here the sign of the cross is made upon the participants' forehead, oil may be used.*

**Amen, thanks be to God!**

### **The Sending Forth**

*After all have returned to their places:*

*And so we give thanks:*

**Sing to the Lord, you saints of His; praise His holy name. For His anger lasts only a moment, but His favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning. O Lord my God, I will give you thanks forever.**

--(Psalm 30:4-5, 12b)

*Go! You have received the strength of the Lord, you've been given his peace, and now you share in his joy. The Holy Spirit will call you soon to come and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Joined to him, you may live for the work and in the beauty which He gives you for himself and for others. Go, you are bound to Christ so that you may live in his freedom!*

**Amen, Thanks be to God!**

*A sending hymn of joy, freedom, and release may be sung, such as "Now thank we all our God" (LBW 534) or "Let the whole creation cry" (LBW 242)*

Here the sign of the cross is made upon the participants' forehead, oil may be used.

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