

Order of Worship: First Sunday after the Fire
Bethlehem United Methodist Church
July 19, 2009

Welcome and Announcements

Greeting:

Pastor: Friends we have gathered here to praise God and to witness to our faith as we celebrate the time we spent in this building. We come together in grief, acknowledging our human loss. May God grant us grace, that in pain we may find comfort, in sorrow hope, and in death resurrection.

People: Dying, Christ destroyed our death. Rising, Christ restored our life. Christ will come again in glory. Here and now, we are God's children. We gather to mourn our loss together, and to look forward to that day when our tears will be dried, and suffering and death will be no more. We place our trust in you, O God. Amen.

Hymn: Great is Thy Faithfulness (UMH 140)

Hymn: Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing (UMH 400)

Psalm 30 (UMH 762)

Affirmation: Apostle's Creed, Traditional (UMH 881)

Old Testament Reading: 1 Kings 19:1-15

New Testament Reading: John 6:16-21

Sermon: "From the Ashes"

Time of Prayer

During this time music will be playing, you may write prayers down on the pieces of paper given to you and place them in the cracks of our "Wailing Wall".

The Great Thanksgiving

A Blessing and Farewell to the Church Building

The time has come for this congregation of Christ's holy Church, under God's leadership, to take leave of this space for a time. It has been consecrated for the ministry of God's Holy Word and Sacraments. It has provided refuge and comfort for God's people. It has served well our holy faith. It is fitting, therefore, that we should say goodbye to this consecrated house, lifting up our hearts in thanksgiving for this common store of memories.

Blessed be the name of God, whose Word has long been proclaimed within this hallowed place.

Refrain: **We give you thanks, O God.**

As generations have prayed their prayers and sung your praises here, your Spirit has blessed countless worshippers. **Refrain**

We have celebrated the Lord's Supper here and been nurtured by it through our journey in faith. **Refrain**

We have rejoiced here as believers have confessed faith in Christ. **Refrain**

Here we have baptized our children and mourned our dead. **Refrain**

As new families have been created through marriage, we, our parents, and our children have vowed at this altar to love, honor, and cherish always. **Refrain**

From within these walls many have gone out to serve you in the world. **Refrain**

As we go now from this house into a further journey of faith,
we give you thanks, O God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O God, as in your great goodness you have blessed the many ministries carried on by this congregation in this building, so, now and in the days and years to come, we pray that you may greatly bless your many ministries in your ongoing Church. Bless those persons who have worshipped in this building, and will again worship in a new building that will bear the name of Bethlehem. As disciples of the risen Christ, may we be channels at all times of your steadfast love; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn: Hymn of Promise (UMH 707)

Benediction and Sending Forth