

Emancipation Sunday - July 26th, 2026
Sounds of Worship

Welcome

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that from the 17th century until the 19th century, adults and children were forcefully kidnapped and displaced from their homes in Western Africa and brought across the Atlantic Ocean to the Caribbean and the Americas, where they were forced into chattel slavery. We also acknowledge that even after the abolition of slavery in 1834, the descendants of the enslaved and other members of the African Diaspora and the Black community have and continue to face discrimination based on the colour of their skin. Today we take time to acknowledge, reflect, and honour the significant resilience and contributions of people of African descent to the church and society as a whole.

As we celebrate Emancipation Day, let us commit ourselves to creating a more inclusive and equitable church and society for all.

We commit to continuing to educate ourselves and others about the contributions and experiences of the Black community.

Let us work together, emboldened by the Holy Spirit, to create a world where everyone is embraced regardless of their race, as beloved children of God.

Opening Hymn

The Grace

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

And also with you.

Gathering Sentences

God is here.

God will never forsake us.

The Reign of God is joy.

Thanks be to God.

The Reign of God is peace.

Thanks be to God.

The Reign of God is justice.

Thanks be to God.

What does the Lord require of us?

That we do justice, love kindness, and to walk humbly with God.

We hunger and thirst for justice and righteous

Let us eat the Bread of Justice.

Let us drink of the Cup of Mercy.

Let us sing and make music unto God.

Joy and peace to you!

Justice and mercy for all. Thanks be to God.

Collect Prayer

Emancipating God, you call us beyond empty worship to lives shaped by righteousness: anoint us with your Spirit, that we may proclaim release to the captives, freedom to the oppressed, respect the dignity of every person, and let your justice roll down among us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Readings

Isaiah 58:6–12; Psalm 85:7–13; 2 Corinthians 5:16–20;

Gospel: John 8:31–36

Historical Reflection - Paul Arculus

Affirmation of Faith

Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is One and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. This is the first and greatest commandment. The second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Prayers of the People

Offertory Hymn

Prayer over the Gifts

Gracious God, we bring these gifts to your altar, symbols of our labour and love. Bless them to build your kingdom of justice, where the oppressed find dignity, where hearts and nations are reconciled; and where every soul is released to live in your freedom. Transform our offerings and we who give them that we may be instruments of your grace in this broken world. Through Christ, who is our peace, we pray. Amen.

A Blessing (in five parts)

May God bless you with a restless discomfort about easy answers, half-truths and superficial relationships, so that you may seek truth boldly and love deep within your heart.

Amen.

May God bless you with holy anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may tirelessly work for justice, freedom and peace among all people.

Amen.

May God bless you with the gift of tears to shed with those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, or the loss of all that they cherish, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and transform their pain into joy.

Amen

May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you really can make a difference in this world, so that you are able, with God's grace, to do what others claim cannot be done.

Amen.

And the blessing of God the Creator, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen. Alleluia!

Closing Hymn

The Sending

Let us go to our work and into our relationships
stimulated by hope,
strengthened by faith,
directed by love,
To play our part in the liberation of all people,
In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Thanks be to our liberating God! Amen.