

**21**

Jun

## Hearing the Voice

Forming a Family/Preparing a People

**FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, YEAR A**

Listening for God amid a painful, confusing story—and learning how God meets the cast-out and suffering.

### REFERENCES

Genesis 21:8-21

Psalms 86:1-10, 16-17

Romans 6:1b-11

Matthew 10:24-39

### COLORS

Green

## Liturgical Resources

**Focus Text:** [Genesis 21:8-21](#)

### CALL TO WORSHIP

When we feel abandoned and alone, unable to find a way out of the wilderness that surrounds, we cry out to God...

**And God listens to us.**

When we feel discouraged and defeated, unsure we will ever really be able to make ends meet and worried that no matter how hard we work, it will never be enough, we cry out to God...

**And God listens to us.**

When we feel lost and forgotten, unable to find the words for the grief, isolation, and despair that we feel, our hearts cry out to God...

**And God pays attention to us.**

As we gather in this place and time, remember: You are not alone. God knows where you are, and God listens to the cries of our hearts.

**May we also listen to one another as God guides us toward the cool, refreshing waters we need to continue on our journey as the family of God.**

*Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, December 2025*

## **INTERCESSORY PRAYER**

You, O God, love us from the moment of our conception,  
You know us and you love us in the womb,  
You love us and you call us from before the moment of our first breath,  
and you love us when we first see the light of day.

As a parent loves their child before they ever see it,  
and then embraces it gently from the moment of its birth,  
so you love us—and we thank you.

Help us, dear God, to love one another in this way....

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

You love us, O God, from the time of our naming  
You love us in our growing and hold us as we take our first steps.  
You love us and walk beside us  
as we explore the world with eager hands and eyes.

As a parent loves their child as they see it grow and develop,  
so you love us—and we thank you.

Help us, dear God, to love one another in this way....

**Lord, hear our prayer...**

You love us, O God, as we mature and seek our way,  
You love as we become aware of the world around us,  
You love us as we smile and play,  
you even love us when we say no and when we begin to stray.  
As a parent loves their child as they see it become proud and tall,  
so you love us even when we sin and fall.

Help us, dear God, to love one another in this way...

**Lord, hear our prayer...**

We thank you, God, for loving us when we are unloving,  
for caring for us when we are uncaring,  
and for calling to us when we go far away.

Help us, dear God, to love one another in this way...

**Lord, hear our prayer...**

Lord, hear our prayers of love this day for those around us,  
for those we have held before you in our time of sharing,  
and for those we have thought of in our moments of caring:

*(add your own prayers)*

**Lord, hear our prayer....**

We ask all these things  
in the name of Christ Jesus.

Amen.

Adapted from Rev. Richard J. Fairchild and posted on **Kir-shalom**.

Reposted on the re:Worship blog at <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2013/01/prayer-of-intercession-love-of-god.html>.

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

(Unison)

Holy God, Creator of all that is, Donor of Grace, and Giver of Life:

Hear our prayer.

There are chasms in our lives, deep valleys that separate us  
From one another and from You.

We confess that we have allowed those rifts to grow,  
For fear of admitting our part in the separation,  
For fear of being rejected when we reach out.

You call us to a reconciled life, to healed relationships,  
To a wholeness with each other and with You.

Mend us, we pray, and make us new creations

Through the power and love of Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Written by Beth Merrill Neel on her blog, “Hold Fast to What Is Good.” Used with permission.

<https://holdfasttowhatiscgood.com/liturgy/prayer-of-confession/>.

## BENEDICTION

May God, our Guide and Guardian, bless you and keep you, and may you rest in the assurance that God hears our cries, draws us together as a family, and points us down the path toward well-being and flourishing for all creation. Amen.

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