

Sunshine Cathedral
Order of Service
Service of Remembrance & Healing
A Liturgical Response to the Mass Shooting in Orlando

Opening Hymn

“Called As Partners in Christ’s Service”

Litany of Restoration (Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley)

Deacon Ed Huckemeyer

If recognizing the interdependence of all life, we strive to build community, the strength we gather will be our salvation. If you are Black and I am white,

It will not matter.

If you are female and I am male,

It will not matter.

If you are older and I am younger,

It will not matter.

If you are progressive and I am conservative,

It will not matter.

If you are straight and I am gay,

It will not matter.

If you are Christian and I am Jewish,

It will not matter.

If we join spirits as brothers and sisters, the pain of our aloneness will be lessened, and that does matter.

In this spirit, we build community and move toward restoration. Amen.

The Reading (Seneca)

Rev. Anne Atwell

“In the presence of death, we must continue to sing the song of life. We must be able to accept death and go from its presence better able to bear our burdens and to lighten the load of others. Out of our sorrows should come understanding. Through our sorrows, we join with all of those before us who have had to suffer and all of those who will yet have to do so. Let us not be gripped by the fear of death. If another day be added to our lives, let us joyfully receive it, but let us not anxiously depend on our tomorrows.”

Solo: “You Have More Friends Than You Know”

Sara Burns

A Time of Prayer

Prayer For Us All (Sarah Lammert, adapted)

Rev. Kevin Tisdol

“Dear God of Sorrow and Love—

Are there no places of safety from hate?

...Are there no walls fortified with love that can withstand violence?

We pray this day for the 49 patrons of Pulse in Orlando who were senselessly shot down...

We pray for strength for those who have lost their loved ones...

We pray for those who have lost their lives.

So much sorrow, pain, and loss...

So much grief.

Please help us to hold hope as a flickering flame. Help us to build solidarity, to witness, to grasp hands, to build courage, to do the right thing in the name of Love.”

Amen.

Prayer for Comfort (Christian Schmidt)

Rev. Walt Weiss

“Spirit of Life and Love,

Be with us in this time, as people suffer, as parents grieve, as violence rages.

Be with us who feel the pain of loss, who feel anger at injustice.

Stand with the oppressed and change the heart of the oppressor, for we know that both are joined in their humanity, no matter how often we forget it.

Help us remember the hope we had, the hope we have, and the hope we will have;

help us remember joy in the midst of sadness, success in the midst of challenge, and good things in the midst of bad.

Help us to be better people, to work for better things, and to create a better world.”

Amen.

Prayers for the Departed (Alden Solovy & Vienna Cobb Anderson)

Rev. Anne Atwell & Deacon Margarita Rodriguez

“Source and Creator,

Grant a perfect rest under your tabernacle of peace to those who died at the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando; their lives were cut off by violence, an act of witless aggression.

...We pray for them to find peace in the world to come.

Put an end to anger, hatred and fear and lead us to a time when no one will suffer at the hand of another.

May their souls be bound up in the bond of life, a living blessing in our midst.”

Amen.

“O God, we pray for those who have been murdered...

We commit to your loving care those who have died, beseeching you to receive their souls into the mercy of your love.

Comfort their loved ones who mourn.

Enable them to meet the lonely and painful days ahead in the strength of your love.

Let the love that you have made known to us lead us to create safer streets for all to walk upon.”

Amen.

A Blessing for the Departed (Emmet Fox)

Rev. Walt Weiss

To each of the 49 people slain at Pulse, I offer this blessing:

“God is light, and in [God] is no darkness at all.

God is light, and love, and unspeakable beauty, and the beauty and glory of [God's] presence now fills your soul.

Your soul is a temple of the living God. It is filled with peace and harmony, and joy.

There are no shadows left, no dark corners.

Your soul is filled with the golden light of the presence of God...

All old fears, old regrets, old resentments melt away in the presence of God.

You have forgiven everyone; you have set everyone free today, so now you are free yourself.

So on this day of Resurrection, you have partaken of the Resurrection.”

And so it is.

A Prayer for the Killer, Who Was Also Slain (Durrell Watkins)

Rev. Dr. Durrell Watkins

“How do we pray for a murderer?

Scripture tells us to pray for our enemies, but how shall we pray this time?

Not for his healing, for he is dead.

Not for his change of heart, because his heart no longer beats.

Not for him to be brought to justice, because his days are over and he will never stand before a human jury.

And surely not for the anguish of his soul, as that would make us little better than he seemed to be.

So, how God, are we to pray for this one who hurt so many, who caused so much turmoil, who embraced what we often call “evil”?

We confess today that we may not know how to pray, and yet angelic voices prompt us to do so anyway. Therefore, we simply commend him to you.

We don't know his pain, his confusion, what warped his view of the world, what caused him hate so completely, what was broken within him or when he lost his way in life; but we don't need to know.

We simply feel the impulse to pray.

However mixed our emotions might be, nevertheless we are trying to be faithful to our highest ideals. And so it is, however inadequately, we now pray.

Somehow, from this ugly, tortured mess, healing can occur and blessings can manifest, and lessons can be learned, and we can help one another to move forward as a comforting presence in our hurting world.

Right now, we may not know how to pray, O God, and yet we pray anyway. Receive our prayers, and somehow, at sometime, in some way, let a miracle emerge because of them.”

Amen.

Prayer for Peace & Justice (Mishkan T'Filah)

Rev. Ren Bell

"May we gain wisdom in our lives, overflowing like a river with understanding;

Loved, each of us, for the peace we bring to others.

May our deeds exceed our speech, and may we never lift up our hand but to conquer fear and doubt and despair.

Rise up like the sun, O God, over all humanity.

Cause light to go forth over all the lands between the seas, and light up the universe with the joy of wholeness, of freedom, and of peace."

Amen.

A Reading of the Names of Those Killed at Pulse

Rev. Ren Bell & Deacon Margarita Rodriguez

After each name is read, a candle will be lighted and a bell will sound.

"Let light perpetual shine upon them."

"Que la luz eterna los ilumine."

A Moment of Silence**Solo: "No one is Alone"**

Tara Sperry

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Rev. Dr. Durrell Watkins & Rev. Dr. Robert Griffin

Benediction (Paul Robeson)

Rev. Dr. Durrell Watkins

"Sorrow will one day turn to joy. All that breaks the heart and opposes the soul will one day give place to peace and understanding and everyone will be free."

Closing Hymn

"O God, Our Help in Ages Past"

Commission

Our worship has ended; let our service begin.

Thanks be to God!

Service Leaders:

Barbara Ramcharitar, Artist in Residence/Organist

Isidora Jovanovic, Artist in Residence/Pianist

Kurt Litzenberger, Facilities Manager/Sound (and Bells)

Deacon Ed Huckemeyer, Minister of Pastoral Care

Rev. Anne Atwell, Minister of Connections

Sara Burns, Artist in Residence/Vocalist

Rev. Kevin Tisdol, Director of Lay & Volunteer Ministries

Rev. Walt Weiss, Minister of Administration

Deacon Margarita Rodriguez, Minister of Spiritual Companionship

Tara Sperry, Artist in Residence/Vocalist

Rev. Dr. Durrell Watkins, Senior Minister

Rev. Ren Bell, Hospice Chaplain & Sunshine Cathedral Ministry Associate (Pastoral Care & Music ministries)

Rev. Dr. Robert Griffin, Executive Minister