

**A SOLEMN ASSEMBLY**  
**Anywhere Church of the C&MA**  
**Date**

**Introductory Comments-Pastor Tom**

**Scripture Reading: Joel 2:12-19**

*"Yet even now," declares the Lord, "Return to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, weeping, and mourning; And rend your heart and not your garments." Now return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness, and relenting of evil. Who knows whether He will not turn and relent, And leave a blessing behind Him, even a grain offering and a libation for the Lord your God? Blow a trumpet in Zion, consecrate a fast, proclaim a solemn assembly, gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and the nursing infants. Let the bridegroom come out of his room and the bride out of her bridal chamber. Let the priests, the Lord's ministers, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, "Spare Thy people, O Lord, and do not make Thine inheritance a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they among the peoples say, 'Where is their God?' " Then the Lord will be zealous for His land, and will have pity on His people. And the Lord will answer and say to His people, "Behold, I am going to send you grain, new wine, and oil, and you will be satisfied in full with them; and I will never again make you a reproach among the nations. (Joel 2:12-19, NASB)*

**Call to Worship in Song**  
*"Holy, Holy, Holy"*

**Scripture Reading: I John 1:8-10**

*If we say we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and refusing to accept the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong. If we claim we have not sinned, we are calling God a liar and showing that his word has no place in our hearts. (I John 1:8-10, NLT)*

**Declaration of Intent (read in unison):**

*We the people of Anywhere Church of the C&MA have sinned in word and action against Almighty God, against each other, and against some who are no longer a part of this church. We present ourselves to the Lord in Solemn Assembly to confess and renounce our sins.*

## **Season of Preparation Before The Lord**

Meditate on the following Scriptures during this time of preparation before The Lord:

### **The Lord as Shepherd**

*The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need. He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name. (Psalm 23:1-3, NLT)*

### **The Lord as Counselor**

*For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. And the government will rest on his shoulders. These will be his royal titles: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. . . And the Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. He will delight in obeying the Lord. He will never judge by appearance, false evidence, or hearsay. (Isaiah 9:6 and Isaiah 11:2-3, NLT)*

### **The Lord as High Priest**

*This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same temptations we do, yet he did not sin. . . He is the kind of high priest we need because he is holy and blameless, unstained by sin. He has now been set apart from sinners, and he has been given the highest place of honor in heaven. (Hebrews 4:15 and Hebrews 7:26, NLT)*

### **The Lord as Warrior**

*The Lord is a warrior; yes, the Lord is his name! Pharaoh's chariots and armies, he has thrown into the sea. The very best of Pharaoh's officers have been drowned in the Red Sea. . . The Lord will march forth like a mighty man; he will come out like a warrior, full of fury. He will shout his thundering battle cry, and he will crush all his enemies. (Exodus 15:3-4 and Isaiah 42:13, NLT)*

### **The Lord as King**

Who is the King of glory? The Lord Almighty—he is the King of glory. . . On his robe and thigh was written this title: King of kings and Lord of lords. (Psalm 24:10 and Rev. 19:16, NLT)

**Hymn of Invitation**  
*“Spirit of the Living God”*

**Corporate Scripture Reading (read in unison):**

*Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life. (Psalm 139:23-24, NLT)*

*Seek the Lord while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near. Let the people turn from their wicked deeds. Let them banish from their minds the very thought of doing wrong! Let them turn to the Lord that he may have mercy on them. Yes, turn to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55:6-7, NLT)*

**Season of Healing: Dealing With Past Hurts**

**Silence Before The Lord**

Meditate on the following Scripture during this time of silence before The Lord:

*You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. And the most important piece of clothing you must wear is love. Love is what binds us all together in perfect harmony. (Col. 3:13-14, NLT)*

**Corporate Prayer of Confession (read in unison)**

*Our Father, we thank You for Your kindness, gentleness, mercy, patience and peace. We acknowledge that your kindness has led us to repentance. We confess that we have not always extended that same kindness, patience and mercy toward those who have offended us. We have not acted with grace, peace, or wisdom in all of our past dealings. Sometimes pain has come to others even when we were using our best judgment in following You. Sometimes the actions and attitudes of others have deeply wounded us. Show us where we have allowed a root of bitterness to spring up, causing hurt and wounding many. As we wait silently before You, bring to our minds the painful memories of our church's past. In Jesus' compassionate Name we pray. Amen.*

**Silence Before The Lord**

As memories come to you:

- ! Acknowledge the hurt before the Lord
- ! Ask the Lord to heal you
- ! Confess any bitterness you may be harboring, ask the Lord to forgive you and receive His pardon
- ! Extend forgiveness in your heart to those who have hurt you and ask God to bless them

### **Corporate Prayer of Forgiveness (read in unison)**

*Our Father, we forgive one another and every person who has hurt us or hurt our church. We choose to forgive as You, Lord, have forgiven us. We release our resentments and regrets into Your care. You alone can heal the hurt we feel in our hearts. We ask you to mend the wounds that come to the corporate memory of our church. We ask You for forgiveness for allowing roots of bitterness to spring up and alienate many. We also ask You to forgive us for the times we did not seek to resolve these issues out of obedience to Your will and in accordance with Your Word.*

*We ask You, Lord, to break any stronghold the evil one has upon our church either because of our unresolved hurts or because of our lack of forgiveness. In Your name, Lord, we resist the devil and reclaim any territory he has occupied because of these wounds inflicted in our past that are still creating painful memories in our present.*

*We ask You, Lord, to bring healing to those who have hurt us. Also bring healing to those who may have been hurt by us. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we bless those who have left us. May we be a blessing to all those you bring across our path. Amen.*

### **Season of Dealing With Corporate Sin**

#### **Silence Before The Lord**

Meditate on the following Scriptures during this time of silence before The Lord: *Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and heal their land. (2 Chron. 7:14, NLT)*

*If I had not confessed the sin in my heart, my Lord would not have listened. (Psalm 66:18, NLT)*

*And all of you, serve each other in humility, for "God sets himself against the proud, but he shows favor to the humble." So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and in his good time he will honor you. Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about what happens to you. (1 Peter 5:5-7, NLT)*

#### **Corporate Confession of Conflict (read in unison):**

*Our Father, we confess the sin of failing to resolve our conflict in a Biblical manner. We confess that we have preferred anger and division over healed relationships. We confess that we have failed to follow your patterns put forth in Your Word and we acknowledge the destruction our failures have caused to our fellowship and to the spread of the Gospel.*

### **Individual Response**

Individuals are invited to lead us in prayer, confessing this failure to resolve conflict Biblically.

#### **Congregational Renunciation (read in unison):**

*In Jesus' name, we renounce all ungodly patterns of conflict resolution: back-stabbing, deceit, letter-writing, blaming, and the use of the telephone and e-mail to pass on ungodly and hurtful information. We declare that your ways of resolving conflict are true. We ask You to lead us into paths of healthy conflict resolution in the future. Amen.*

#### **Corporate Confession of Pride and Idolatry (read in unison):**

*Our Father, we confess the sin of pride and idolatry that has plagued our church over the years. We confess that at times we have valued our building, our programs, our philosophy of ministry, our worship style, and great preaching above You. We have believed the lie that activity is more important than community. We have looked to these things as our sense of purpose and source of joy. We have turned our backs on the sincerity of pure devotion to You, the Giver of true purpose and joy.*

### **Individual Response**

Individuals are invited to lead us in prayer, confessing aspects of pride and idolatry.

#### **Congregational Renunciation (read in unison):**

*In Jesus' name, we renounce all pride and idolatry related to our building, our programs, our philosophy of ministry, our worship style, and great preaching. We declare that You alone are worthy of our praise and worship. And we humbly acknowledge that all meaningful ministry flows from what You choose to do in and through us.*

#### **Corporate Confession of Sins Against Authority (read in unison):**

*Our Father, we confess to You patterns of sin around issues of authority. Sometimes our leaders and pastors have misused Your authority. As a congregation, we have too often been rebellious in our thoughts, words, and deeds toward those leaders and pastors you have placed over us. Forgive us for an unholy passion for power. We have allowed bitterness to fester against those in authority. Forgive us, Lord, leaders and people, for sins against one another and against You. Amen.*

### **Individual Response**

Individuals are invited to lead us in prayer, confessing sins against authority.

#### **Congregational Renunciation (read in unison):**

*In Jesus' name, we renounce all sins against authority. We renounce power plays and manipulation—misusing and abusing authority. We repent of rebellion. We declare the way of salvation to be the way of the cross. We choose to die to selfish ambition and to our own agendas rather than bring injury to the Lord's Body. We choose to submit to one another in brokenness out of reverence for Christ. Help us, O Lord, to truly be Your servants by serving one another in humility. Amen.*

#### **Corporate Confession of Sins of the Tongue (read in unison):**

*Our Father, we confess our sins of the tongue as a pattern of corrupt communication. We have engaged in slander and gossip and criticism against one another. We have spoken against Your people, Your leaders, and Your Church. We have chosen to criticize rather than to bless and build up. In so doing, we have grieved Your gentle, gracious Holy Spirit. Forgive us, Lord, for using the divine gift of speech to tear down Your work and Your leaders, rather than edifying them.*

### **Individual Response**

Individuals are invited to lead us in prayer, confessing sins of the tongue.

#### **Congregational Renunciation (read in unison):**

*In Jesus' name, we renounce sins of the tongue. We submit our speech and our heart attitudes to You, Lord. We renounce our critical spirit. We renounce the spirit of division. We renounce any strongholds of pride or bitterness in our lives that motivate such speech. We renounce the powers of Hell that have set our tongues on fire to destroy the work of God.*

*We declare that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control. We affirm that those who belong to You have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. We pray, Lord, that You would apply the work of the cross more deeply to our hearts and that You would harness our tongues. May we choose to edify others instead of putting them down. Amen.*

**Corporate Confession of Sins of Judging by Externals (read in unison):**

*Our Father, we confess our sins of judging others by externals based on race, culture, education, socioeconomic status, religious background, dress, speech, and other false standards. We have rejected those who are different. Forgive us, Father, for being so quick to judge others by how they look or act or how they "seem to be." We grieve the loss of fruit that You would have borne in the lives of others if we had been more accepting.*

**Individual Response**

Individuals are invited to lead us in prayer, confessing sins of judging by externals.

**Congregational Renunciation (read in unison):**

*In Jesus' name, we renounce the stronghold of judging and condemning others. In Jesus' name we stand against the spirit of rejection that has bound and hindered the work of the Kingdom here. We say with Christ, "Whosoever will may come!" We affirm our need for grace and we commit ourselves to extend grace to those who are equally needy. We ask You, Lord, to flood us with Your love so that we might be the source of great blessing to all You bring to this church.*

**Season of Dealing With Individual Sin**

**Silence Before The Lord**

Meditate on the following Scriptures during this time of silence before The Lord:

*Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and wonderful results. (James 5:16, NLT)*

*If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the fault. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back. But if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. If that person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. If the church decides you are right, but the other person won't accept it, treat that person as a pagan or a corrupt tax collector. (Matthew 18:15-17, NLT)*

*So if you are standing before the altar in the Temple, offering a sacrifice to God, and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there beside the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God. (Matthew 5:23-24, NLT)*

### **Confession of Individual Sin**

During the next few minutes, you will have the opportunity to confess three types of sin: **private, personal, and public.**

Private sin- sins of the thought life that have not been put into action—confess these to God alone.

Personal sin- sins committed against another person where both parties know about it— if the person is here tonight, go to them and make it right; if they are not here, promise the Lord that you will contact them as soon as possible.

Public sin- sins that affect the body of Christ as a group—any leaders who feel they have failed in some area should lead the way in this category.

### **Season of Proclamation of Forgiveness and Victory**

#### **Scripture Reading (read in unison):**

*But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong. (1 John 1:9, NLT)*

*I—yes, I alone—am the one who blots out your sins for my own sake and will never think of them again. (Isaiah 43:25, NLT)*

*Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sins are put out of sight. (Romans 4:7, NLT)*

#### **Proclamation (read in unison):**

*Our Father, Your Word tells us to “submit to God, resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.” We submit ourselves to You, our God. We affirm that we are standing in the name and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ and His victory over all the powers of darkness through His cross and resurrection. We proclaim that “our lives are hidden with Christ in God.” We proclaim that our sins have been forgiven and forgotten by You, dear Lord. We proclaim that You have given us the ability to forgive each other.*

*As we have confessed our sins and submitted to You, in the name of Jesus Christ and by His power and authority we reject the strongholds that the devil has held against our corporate life and ministry. We resist all satanic attacks that have come against our church, our leaders, and our members and adherents. We proclaim that we belong to Jesus, and greater is He Who is in us than he who is in the world. . .*

-page 9-

*. . .Now, dear Lord, we look to You for a new vision, passion, and mission for this church. We long to get back to “The Main Thing”–Your Great Commandment and Commission. Enable us to do this, whatever the cost, for Your glory and the building of Your Kingdom. All of this we pray in the matchless name of Jesus Christ. Amen!*

**Closing Song of Celebration**

**Closing Comments and Benediction- Pastor Tom**