

## **Worship Service: WORK Labor Day (Sunday before)**

**Welcome:** Welcome! It's so good to be together to celebrate faith and community today. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'll be leading our worship time today. Tomorrow is Labor Day, so we're looking at the theme of **work**.

According to the U.S. Dept. of Labor, "Labor Day, the first Monday in September, is a creation of the labor movement and is a yearly national tribute to the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country."

Oregon was the first state to make it a holiday in 1887, and Colorado was among the first five to pass the law that year. In 1894, Congress made it a national holiday.

Today I thought it would be interesting to think about work as it relates to our faith and life. Please pray with me as we open our time together.

**Opening Prayer:** Great and loving God, we ask that your Holy Spirit bless our time together and to refresh us with your presence. In the midst of a world full of trouble and strife, we thank you for watching over us, guiding us, and especially forgiving us. Enable us to enter your presence joyfully and reverently, and let us depart today with the assurance that our sins are forgiven. Fill us, O God, with the peace which passes understanding. Amen.

### **Opening Hymn: Doxology, p. 1**

**Statement of Faith:** Let us affirm our statement of faith by reciting Psalm 23 together:

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup> He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

<sup>3</sup> He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup> Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

**Hymns:**

**For the Beauty of the Earth, p. 2**

**Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us, p. 3**

**Amazing Grace, p. 4**

**First reading: Deuteronomy 5:12-15**

<sup>12</sup> “Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you. <sup>13</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>14</sup> but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant, or your ox or your donkey or any of your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. <sup>15</sup> You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.”

This is the word of the Lord; thanks be to God.

**Hymns:**

**Holy, Holy, Holy, p. 5**

**Jesus Loves Me, p. 6**

**Second reading: Matthew 12:1-14**

**12** At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. <sup>2</sup> But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, “Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.” <sup>3</sup> [But Jesus] said to them, ... the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.” <sup>9</sup> He went on from there and entered their synagogue. <sup>10</sup> And a man was there with a withered hand. And the Pharisees asked him, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”—so that they might accuse him. <sup>11</sup> He said to them, “Which one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? <sup>12</sup> Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.” <sup>13</sup> Then he said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And the man stretched it out, and it was restored, healthy like the other. <sup>14</sup> But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him.

This is the word of the Lord; thanks be to God.

**Hymns:**

**Softy and Tenderly, p. 7**

**Leaning on the Everlasting Arms, p. 8**

**Interactive Homily:** Let's talk more about work and labor.

- What kinds of work have you done in your life?
- What made that work good?
  - provided for family, gave meaning to the day, accomplished things, felt productive, helped others
- What was hard about it?
  - sacrifice of time, sometimes safety, exhaustion, boredom, stress
- Do you think work is a gift from God? Why or why not?
  - With God's help, we can do good!
- When Jesus heals the man on the Sabbath, why are the Pharisees upset?
  - They care more about the letter of the law than the spirit of the law
  - Jesus values people more than what people can do for God; rest matters to God!

... Let's take a moment to silently pray and reflect on blessing of work and rest.

**(Silent Prayer)** ... Now let us say the Lord's prayer together:

**Lord's Prayer:** Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever, Amen.

**Hymns:**

**This is My Father's World, p. 9**

**It is Well with My Soul, p. 10**

**Standing on the Promises, p. 11**

**Third Reading:** A lighthearted story about work 😊 Called “Who's the Boss?”<sup>1</sup>

A man went into a pet shop to buy a parrot.

The shop owner pointed to three parrots on a perch that looked exactly alike – in fact they were nearly identical. The shop owner said to the man, “The parrot on the left costs \$500.”

“Wow! Why does this parrot cost so much?” the man asked.

The shop owner said, “Well, it's because the parrot knows how to use a computer.”

The man then asked about the parrot on the right, and the shop owner told him that he cost \$1,000.

“What?” said the man. “Why so much?”

The shop owner answered, “That’s because it can do everything the parrot on the left can do, plus it knows how to create documents, spreadsheets, and can process database management.”

Naturally, the increasingly startled man asked about the parrot in the middle. The shop owner said, “Well, that parrot costs \$5,000.”

“You’ve got to be kidding!” the man exclaimed. “What can *that* parrot do?”

The shop owner replied, “To be honest, I’ve never seen him do anything, but the other two call him Boss!”

**Hymns:**

**Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing, p. 12**

**Shall We Gather at the River, p. 13**

**Fourth Reading:** Quotes on Work

“Every job from the heart is, ultimately, of equal value. The nurse injects the syringe; the writer slides the pen; the farmer plows the dirt; the comedian draws the laughter. Monetary income is the perfect deceiver of a man's true worth.” – Criss Jami, American poet

All life demands struggle. Those who have everything given to them become lazy, selfish, and insensitive to the real values of life. The very striving and hard work that we so constantly try to avoid is the major building block in the person we are today. –Pope Paul VI

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<sup>1</sup> adapted from <http://jokes.cc.com/funny-work/hkl948/the-boss>

Nothing ever comes to one, that is worth having, except as a result of hard work.  
–Booker T. Washington

The only place success comes before work is in the dictionary. –Vince Lombardi

**Hymns:**

**Blest Be the Tie that Binds, p. 14**

**I Need Thee Every Hour, p. 15**

**Closing Blessing:** (Strike bell as you say the word “Lord”)

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and grant you peace. Amen.

**Closing Hymn: Doxology, p. 23**