**Liturgy for Celebrating *Inspired, Transformed***

**Welcome/Announcements/Introduction**

Jesus’ words and life were filled with power, and people were amazed by his teaching. God gives us power to serve, and as American Baptists we believe and serve in the power of Christ. We rejoice today for the gifts God has given us so that we may serve as the hands and feet of Christ. Our gifts and ministries today build on the rich, precious and valuable heritage of our faith. We welcome you to this service of worship and invite you to join with us in expressions of thanksgiving, celebration and spiritual worship.

**Call to Worship**

L. Your works are mighty, O God, and your name is worthy to be praised.

P. Through the lives of American Baptist, you have affirmed the gifts of many who went before us to speak truth to power.

L. God is at work among us. God has given us a strong heritage of gifted writers.

P. In the power of Christ, God has gifted our people to be the headlights, leading the way to Christ in ministries of justice, peacemaking, reconciliation and hope.

All. Your works are mighty, O God, and your name is worthy to be praised.

**Invocation (in unison)**

Blessed God, in humility of heart and spirit, we come to worship you and give thanks for your grace at work among us as American Baptists. You have gifted our churches for over a hundred years with courageous teachers who speak to people all over the world in their own language about the power of Christ to transform their lives. Thank you for the path our feet have trod together, and give us today the vision, the creativity and spiritual insight to make our lives meaningful for you. In the Holy name of Christ we pray. Amen.

**Hymn**

*Holy, Holy, Holy*

or *How Firm a Foundation*

**Reading the Hebrew Scripture**

Isaiah 61:1-12

**A Moment of Silent Reflection**

**Announcement and Showing of**

*Inspired, Transformed…American Baptist Churches*

“Today we are very pleased and excited about our new film, showing where we have come from and pointing the way to where we can go as American Baptists. We invited seven inspiring storytellers to say a word about American Baptists through the lens of their own lived experiences. Their challenge for us is to pass on this gift that God has given us. “

**The Sermon for Children**

Talk about an aspect of our American Baptist Life: our diversity, the work of our missionaries (present/past), our core beliefs, one of the ministries of your church, a brief story of how your church began, and so on.

**The Gospel Lesson**

*Luke 4:16-30*

**Music by the Choir/Congregational Singing**

*How Lovely Are the Messengers* – Mendelssohn

*We have a Story to Tell* or

*Here I Am, Lord*

**The Offering/Doxology**

**Pastoral Prayer/Prayers of the People**

We come to you this day with a heart filled with thanksgiving. We come to celebrate your gift to us as a people of faith, serving you through the missional ministry of American Baptist Churches USA. Over the years we have accepted your charge to be global ambassadors for Christ, to be a people involved with ministries of reconciliation, bridge-building, peacemaking, healing, prophetic preaching, servant leadership with all cultures and races of people. For these, we give you thanks. Make us worthy servants as we go forward in our time to build on the legacies of the saints of the past. Empower our youth to take on the heritage we pass on to them. Guide our leaders, both clergy and lay, to take risks for you, confident that you will be with us. Frustrate our plans when they do not serve you and keep us on the path to be worthy disciples for you. Most of all, empower our youth to take on the heritage we pass on to them. You have given to us this one life, so may we use it well to serve the Christ whom we love. It is in His strong and powerful name we make this prayer. Amen.

**Hymn**

*How Great Thou Art*

**The Sermon**

**Hymn**

 *O Jesus I have Promised*

**The Benediction**

We go forward with thankful hearts to celebrate your gifts at work among us, to love all people, and to do the work of Christ – to be the hands and feet of Christ in this world. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with us all. Go in peace.

**Postlude**

*Life High the Cross*

Please fill in or adjust this sample liturgy to fit your church’s order of worship.