



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND NURTURE SUNDAY

2 September 2018

WORDS FOR MEDITATION

Christian Education and Nurture is the continuing process of enabling Christians, individually and in community, to know God's love, to truly worship God and to have a basic understanding of and a commitment to the mission of Jesus in the world.

PRELUDE

PROCESSIONAL

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

*SONG OF PREPARATION

I Need You Every Hour

Hymnal of a Faith Journey, 220

I need You every hour, O God of grace;
The peace your voice affords, I now embrace.

Refrain: I need You, how I need You!
Every hour I need You;
O bless me now, my Savior.
I come to You.

I need You every hour, in joy or pain,
Come quickly and abide, or life is vain. (Refrain)

SHARING OF CONCERNS ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

(A Pantomime Presentation. Show scenes that will portray the needs, problems and challenges of the teaching and nurturing ministry of the church. Read Deuteronomy 6:5-9 after all scenes are presented.)

LITANY OF SUPPLICATION

Psalm 119: 33-38, 40

Liturgist: Teach me, O Lord, to follow your decrees; then I will keep them to the end.

People: Give me understanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart.

Liturgist: Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight.

People: Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain.

Liturgist: Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word.

People: Fulfill your promise to your servant so that you may be feared.

All: How I long for your precepts! Preserve my life in your righteousness.

***SONG OF FAITH I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry** *Hymnal of a Faith Journey, 45*

I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old;

I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.

I was there when you were but a child, with a faith to suit you well;

I'll be there in case you wander off and find where demons dwell.

When you found the wonder of the Word, I was there to cheer you on;

You were raised to praise the living God, to whom you now belong.

Should you find someone to share your life and you join your hearts as one;

I'll be there to make your verses rhyme from dusk till rising sun.

In the middle ages of our life, not too old, no longer young;

I'll be there to guide you through the night, complete what I've begun.

When the evening gently closes in and you shut your weary eyes,

I'll be there as I have always been with just one more surprise.

I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old

I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.

***INVOCATION (All)**

Almighty God, we come together as one body to manifest our deepest longing for Your Presence. We come as your servants and disciples who you entrusted with the work of teaching and nurture. Accept us, O God, in your presence and bring us to a meaningful experience with You and with each other. Come to us now, Lord, and refresh our spirits. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

***SUNG RESPONSE Spirit of Gentleness**

Chorus: Spirit, spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness calling and free,

Spirit, spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness,

Wind, wind on the sea.

You called from tomorrow, You break ancient schemes
From the bondage of sorrow, the captives dream dreams

Our women see visions, our men clear their eyes
With bold new decisions, your people arise. (Chorus)

CALL TO CONFESSION (Liturgist)

Isaiah 55: 6-7

Seek the Lord while he may be found, call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts. Let them turn to the Lord, and God will have mercy on them; and to our God, who will freely pardon.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (All)

O God, you entrusted to us the work of teaching and nurturing your people, but we believe we have not done much that would please You. We fall short in our response to Your call to teach and proclaim your love. We fall short in living out the life you have exemplified. We fall short in responding to the needs of the least of Your people. Forgive us from our failures in doing our task, for the unwillingness to share our gifts and refusing to recognize our weaknesses. We also fail to discern Your will for us and choose to live and do that which is easy and comfortable. We are no longer shaken by the pain and struggles of the people. We grow content with what we have already learned and refuse to be renewed by Your Word. Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray. Enliven us and stir us from our sleep, apathy and selfishness. Move us to commit ourselves in the work of ushering in Your Kin-dom. Come to us with power that we may live as forgiven people, called to right relationship with You and others. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (Minister)

Psalms 12: 6; 25: 8-10

The words of the Lord are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of day, purified seven times. Good and upright is the Lord; therefore, God instructs sinners in God's ways. God guides the humble in what is right and teaches them in the way. All the ways of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness for those who keep the demands of the covenant. Amen.

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

Liturgist: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Liturgist: Let us stand up and pass the peace of God.

(Each one may greet each other with a handshake, a hug or smile while singing "Oh, I Love You with the Love of the Lord".)

Oh, I love you with the love of the Lord

Yes, I love you with the love of the Lord

I can see in you the glory of our God

Yes, I love you with the love of the Lord!

COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND NEWS

PASTORAL PRAYER

RESPONSE

Hear Our Prayer

Hymnal of a Faith Journey, 85

Hear our prayer, O Lord, hear our prayer, O Lord!
Incline Thine ear to us and grant us Thy peace. Amen.

***READING OF THE SCRIPTURES**

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15

James 1:17-27

CHORAL PROCLAMATION

THE MESSAGE OR SERMON

RESPONSE

Wonderful Words of Life

Hymnal of a Faith Journey, 358

Sweetly echo the gospel call, wonderful words of life;
Offer pardon and peace to all, wonderful words of life.
Jesus, only Savior, keep me with you forever.
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

CALL TO OFFERING

Liturgist: God has been faithful and just. By God's grace, we receive more than what we ask for. By God's love, we are restored from brokenness and brought to wholeness. In response to God's faithfulness and generosity, let us offer our gifts and symbols of gratitude with joy and praise.

OFFERING OF LIFE AND LABOR

***DOXOLOGY**

***OFFERTORY PRAYER (All)**

Lord, you have given us the opportunity and miracle to enjoy life. You not only gave us our material needs, our potentials, our talents or skills. You also give us the ability to feel and embrace the pains of the people, the groans of creation. Help us to use these gifts, with one hope and faith, to build and prepare the people we teach in order that together we may serve in the ministry for Your new heaven and new earth. Jesus taught and lived Your truths and wisdom. Help us proclaim these teachings through these humble offerings. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORDS SUPPER

***HYMN OF DEDICATION**

My Task

Hymnal of a Faith Journey, 311

To love someone more dearly ev'ryday, to help a wand'ring child find the way,
To ponder o'er a noble thought and pray, and smile when evening falls,
And smile when evening falls. This is my task.

To follow truths as blind ones long for light, to do my best from dawn of day till night,
To keep my heart fit for Christ's holy sight, and answer when he calls,

And answer when he calls. This is my task.

And then my Savior by and by to meet, when faith has made her task on earth complete;
And lay my homage at the Master's feet, within the jasper walls,
Within the jasper walls. This crowns my task.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (All)**

Christ, your summons echoes true when you call our names. We will turn and follow You and never be the same. In Your company we'll go, wherever your love and footsteps show. Thus, we will move and live and grown in You and You in us. Amen. [Based on "The Summons", John Bell]

***THE BLESSING**

Minister: We will leave this place as empowered servants and disciples of Christ. Let us go out into the world, teaching others of Christ's way and life, proclaiming God's love and serving for the coming of God's Kin-dom.

All: May the blessing of the Creator who made the world and all that lives, may the blessing of the Redeemer who gives us new vision and hope, and the blessing of the Holy Spirit who guides us into new ways of living be with us all, now and forever. Amen.

RESPONSE

Trees of the Field

Hymnal of a Faith Journey, 100

You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace;
The mountains and the hills will break forth before you.
There'll be shouts of joy and all the trees of the field
Will clap, will clap their hands.

And all the trees of the field will clap their hands;
The trees of the field will clap their hands.
The trees of the field will clap their hands,
While you go out with joy!

POSTLUDE AND RECESSIONAL

Prepared by REV. ANNABELLE AZARCON-URIARTE, CEN Writer



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY

9 September 2018

WORDS FOR MEDITATION

Don't Forbid Them

*Said a precious little laddie to his Father one bright day,
"May I give myself to Jesus? Let him wash my sins away?"
"Oh, my son, but you're too little, wait until you older grow,
For bigger folk 'tis true they need Him, but little ones are safe, you know."*

*Said the Father to the laddie as a storm was coming on,
"Are the sheep all safely sheltered, safe within the fold, my son?"
"Ah— the big ones are, my Father but the lambs, I let them go;
For I didn't think it mattered, little ones are safe, you know."*

*Oh, my brother, oh, my sister, have you made that common mistake?
Little hearts that now are open may be hardened then too late;
Before the evil days come near them, "Let the children come to me,
And forbid them not," said Jesus "Of such shall my Kingdom be."*

-Author unknown, paraphrased

PRELUDE

PROCESSIONAL (Children will enter together with the Minister and Liturgist and remain standing at the center.)

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE (A child will light the candle)

COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

***FELLOWSHIP SONGS** (To be led by the children)

Ang Umaga Ngayon

Children Praise God, 92

Ang umaga ngayon kay ganda, kay ganda
Ang umaga ngayon kay ganda, kay ganda
Tayo ay magsaya, magbigay ng ligaya
Ang umaga ngayon kay ganda, kay ganda.

Sing a Little Song to Jesus

Children Praise God, 85

Sing a little song to Jesus, you'll be right, sing a little song to Jesus, you'll be right
Phewa, phewa, hatunao, phewa, phewa kiwahu
Sing a little song to Jesus, you'll be right.

Say a little prayer to Jesus, you'll be right, say a little prayer to Jesus, you'll be right

Phewa, phewa, hatunao, phewa, phewa kiwahu
Say a little prayer to Jesus, you'll be right.

We Are the Church

Refrain: I am the Church, you are the Church,
We are the church together
All who follow Jesus, all around the world
Yes, we're the church together.

The Church is not a building, the Church is not a steeple
The Church is not a resting place, the Church is people. (Refrain)

We're many kinds of people, with many kinds of faces
All colors and all ages too, from all times and places. (Refrain)

And when the people gather, there's singing and there's praying
There's laughing and there's crying sometimes, but always saying: (Refrain)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Child: In every birth,

People: Blessed is the wonder!

Child: In every creation,

People: Blessed is the new being!

Child: In every child,

People: Blessed is life!

Child: In every hope,

People: Blessed is the potential!

Child: In every transition,

People: Blessed is the beginning!

Child: In every existence,

People: Blessed are the possibilities!

Child: In every love,

People: Blessed are the tears!

Child: In every life,

People: Blessed is the love!

All: Bless this coming together of your children, O God. May our life become pleasing in your sight and our works be of worth in your Kingdom. Amen.

***SONG OF PRAISE** **It's a Great Thing to Praise the Lord** *Children Praise God, 142*

It's a great thing to praise the Lord, it's a great thing to praise the Lord,
It's a great thing to praise the Lord, walking in the light of God.

Chorus: Walk, walk, walk, walk in the light, walk, walk, walk, walk in the light,
Walk, walk, walk, walk in the light, walking in the light of God.

It's a great thing to love the Lord, it's a great thing to love the Lord,
It's a great thing to love the Lord, walking in the light of God. (Chorus)

It's a great thing to serve the Lord, it's a great thing to serve the Lord,
It's a great thing to serve the Lord, walking in the light of God. (Chorus)

INVOCATION (By a child)

Thank you, God, for this new day, and for the time to work and play.
Please be with us all day long, in every story, game and song.
May all the happy things we do, our praise and offering too,
Make You, our God, love us more today and forevermore. Amen.

SUNG RESPONSE **Whisper a Prayer** *Children Praise God, 103*

Whisper a prayer in the morning, whisper a prayer at noon,
Whisper a prayer in the evening, to keep your heart in tune.

ACT OF CONFESSION

(Children with placards or posters of the Children's Rights will stand in front)

Child 1: Like all created beings, we children have rights that deserve your attention and implementation. Please hear us and ask yourselves why there are still children who are sad, hungry, crying, afraid and in pain. What is happening around us? Let us humbly confess to God what we have done and have not done.

People: (Singing) Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison.

Child 2: It is my right to be born, to have a name and nationality. (Moment of silent meditation)

Child 3: It is my right to be free, and to have a family who will take care of me. (Moment of silent meditation)

Child 4: It is my right to have enough food and shelter, a healthy and active body, and special care if handicapped. (Moment of silent meditation)

Child 5: It is my right to have a good education. (Moment of silent meditation)

- Child 6: It is my right to develop my potentials and learn to be a useful member of society. (Moment of silent meditation)
- Child 7: It is my right to be given the opportunity for play and leisure. (Moment of silent meditation)
- Child 8: It is my right to be given protection against abuse, exploitation, danger and violence brought by war and conflict. (Moment of silent meditation)
- Child 9: It is my right to live in a safe and peaceful community. (Moment of silent meditation)
- Child 10: It is my right to be defended and assisted by the government, and to receive priority help and assistance. (Moment of silent meditation)
- Child 11: It is my right to be able to express my own views. I have the right to participation and association. (Moment of silent meditation)
- People: (Singing) Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (Minister)

Remove the scales from your eyes and the armor of your hearts so that you and your children may see visions; so that your sons and daughters may dream dreams, so that we may begin again in the newness of faith to participate in doing Christ's mission.

***READING OF THE SCRIPTURES**

Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23

James 2: 14-17

Mark 7:24-37

MESSAGE THROUGH SONG

(Children may sing "It Could be a Wonderful World", *Children Praise God*, 187 or "Sana" by Gary Granada.)

STORY TELLING OR REFLECTION-SHARING

CALL TO OFFERING (Child)

We may not have the wealth of the world in our hands right now to feed all the hungry. We may not have power over all nations to end war and conflict. What we have is our lives to offer and to join with others who truly care to make God's Reign happen where the hungry are fed and all wars cease. Let us symbolize the giving of ourselves through giving of our gifts and tokens of thanksgiving.

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God, the Source of Life and Birth,
Praise God, the Word who came to earth,
Praise God, the Spirit, Holy Flame!
All honor, glory to God's name. Amen.

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (All)**

Most loving and gracious God, we thank you for the lives of our children reminding us that the Kingdom of God belongs to them. Children are gifts not just to our families but to the community and church as well. Accept our offerings as a symbol of our gratitude for the wonderful gifts we have received. May our offerings be acceptable in Your Presence as a worthy response to Your generosity and faithfulness. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

***HYMN OF DEDICATION**

Christian Unity

Hymnal of a Faith Journey, 272

Jesus Christ our Lord we pray, that our life shall be
Living channels of faith and love, Christian unity.

Refrain: Bless, O Christ, we humbly pray, this our Christian unity;
So our faith and love shall be following your way.

When the way may seem so hard and our faith is tried,
May we help each other Lord, carry each one's load. (Refrain)

May we help each other grow in our faith in You,
May you help us to forgive, and your grace to show. (Refrain)

Our commitment be renewed to your mission, Lord,
Make us channels of unity following your way. (Refrain)

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (By a parent)**

***THE BLESSING**

People: May the Lord watch between you and me while we are absent one from the other.

Minister: May God bless and guide us and keep us safe. May we shine as God's light at home,
at work, at play, in school and everywhere in the name of Jesus Christ our loving
Savior. Amen.

Response: Yes, Amen! Yes, Amen! Yes Amen, Amen, Amen!

POSTLUDE AND RECESSIONAL

Prepared by REV. ANNABELLE AZARCON-URIARTE, CEN Writer



YOUTH SUNDAY

16 September 2018

PRAISE SONGS (To be led by the CYF)

PRELUDE

BRINGING IN OF THE ALTAR SYMBOLS

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE AND OPENING OF THE BIBLE

PROCESSIONAL

CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: We come and gather to worship the Lord. We come and gather as young people and as young at heart in the service of the Lord! Like Jeremiah who was called by God to minister to the people of Judah when he was around 17 years old....

People: We can also minister to our people with fresh and pristine passion!

Liturgist: Like Miriam who as a child had an awesome responsibility of protecting the life of her infant brother....

People: We can also be protectors of the sanctity of life.

Liturgist: Like Samuel who would have been around 12 or 13 when God called him to ministry....

People: We should also be able to hear and recognize the still, small voice of the Lord in these changing times.

Liturgist: Like Esther who as a young queen defended the life of her people....

People: We can also be defenders of human rights.

Liturgist: Like David who was anointed by Samuel when he was in his teenage years, far from perfect if the world would evaluate him yet was called "a man after God's own heart...."

People: We can also serve God through our people and sincerely seek God even with our flaws and failings.

Liturgist: Like Mary who was deemed “blessed among women” for accepting the great task of being the very young mother of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ....

People: We can be active participants in God’s work of bringing in the Reign of God.

Liturgist: Like Timothy who was probably in his late teens when he was asked by Paul to join him on his missionary journey....

People: We can earn credibility and good reputation in doing God’s mission.

All: For when God’s people are called, God equips and gifts them with enough talents and skills. Let us praise the Lord for this assurance; let us give thanks for this chance! Let us worship and work that God’s Kin-dom be advanced!

***HYMN OF PRAISE** **Now Thank We All Our God** *Hymnal of a Faith Journey, 30*

Now thank we all our God, with heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices,
Who from our parents’ arms, has blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love, and still is our today.

O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,
And keep us still in grace, and guide us when perplexed,
And free us from all ills in this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God, our Maker, now be given,
To Christ and Spirit too, our help in highest heaven,
The one eternal God, whom earth and heaven adore,
For thus it was, is now, and shall be ever more!

***INVOCATION** (Unison)

Gracious and almighty God, we thank you and give you praise for making all things new and beautiful. We once again open ourselves to the movement of your spirit, that like you, we may also take part in making things new and beautiful in the light of justice and peace. We ask that you enter into the lives of each one of us today, refreshing and renewing us with your redeeming power, that we may continue to live with purpose, fervor, and courage after the manner of Jesus, who was truly sincere and compassionate. May you be glorified in our gathering and celebration, o Lord, in the name of Christ. Amen.

***RESPONSE** **There’s a Quiet Understanding** *Hymnal of the Family of God, 556*

And we know when we’re together, sharing love and understanding,
That our brothers and our sisters feel the oneness that He brings.
Thank you, thank you, thank you, Jesus, for the way you love and feed us,
For the many ways you lead us, thank you, thank you, Lord!

CALL TO CONFESSION

(Everyone is requested to place one's right hand on the left shoulder of one's neighbor/ seatmate.)

Liturgist: Forgiving Lord, the shoulders we're touching are the shoulders in need of strength. Hear our prayers as we confess our sins.

(Moment of silent reflection)

Liturgist: God who empowers, inspire these shoulders to persistently labor towards justice, self-determination and freedom.

People: Empowering God, grant these shoulders strength and compassion.

Liturgist: When these shoulders become too weary because of injustices and inequities that surround, may your enabling Spirit tap us with kindness and motivate us again to work for your Kin-dom all the more.

People: Gracious God, grant these shoulders kindness and motivation.

Liturgist: When these shoulders refuse to carry the load of your people, especially those who are marginalized and oppressed, may the real substance of spirituality and holiness wake us up.

People: Holy God, bestow upon these shoulders holiness.

All: When these shoulders decline to be your instrument and would rather be numb, please forgive, restore and use us once more. Forgive, restore and use us once more, o Lord.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

O God our Companion, as we say our prayer, may we realize the love and compassion you've always exemplified. We ask for forgiveness for all the things we've done against our sisters and brothers, and for all the things we've neglected or have chosen not to do. We hear and witness the cry of your people who experience injustices and pain. We ask for forgiveness, when we choose to abandon and disregard them for our own comfort. Forgive us, o Lord, when we remain silent and unmoved. Forgive us when we choose blindness over vigilance. Forgive us when we choose sin over you. Forgive us, Lord we pray. Amen.

(Moments of silent prayers with music)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (Minister)

Our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer has promised to forgive all who turn to God in faith. Even now, God forgives us and sets us free to live new lives in Christ Jesus. Let us live not in fear, but secure in God's power and love. Nothing can separate us from the love of God. Let us rejoice as a forgiven people.

RESPONSE

It Is No Secret

Hymnal of the Family of God, 581, chorus

It is no secret what God can do, what God's done for others, God will do for you.

With arms wide open, God will pardon you; it is no secret what God can do.

THE PASSING OF GOD'S PEACE

Liturgist: As forgiven people of God, let us go around and share God's peace with one another as we sing "We Are One in The Bond of Love".

We are one in the bond of love, we are one in the bond of love
We have joined our spirit with the Spirit of God
We are one in the bond of love.

Let us sing now everyone, let us feel God's love begun
Let us join our hands that the world may know
We are one in the bond of love.

CHURCH AND COMMUNITY CONCERNS

CHURCH AT PRAYER (Youth Leader)

RESPONSE

I Would Be True

Hymnal of a Faith Journey, 281, last stanza

I would be pray'rful through each busy moment;
I would be constantly in touch with God;
I would be tuned to sense God's slightest whisper;
I would have faith to keep the path Christ trod,
I would have faith to keep the path Christ trod.

PROCLAMATION OF GODS' WORD

***As Read** **Isaiah 50:4-9a**
 Mark 8:27-38

***Response**

Holy Bible, Book Divine

Hymnal of the Family of God, 34, first stanza

Holy Bible, book divine, precious treasure, thou art mine;
Mine to tell me whence I came, mine to teach me what I am.

As Sung

As Shared

CALL TO OFFERING

Liturgist: Let us be involved in helping, serving and healing....

People: May God give us open hearts and minds that we may feel and understand the hurt of others and come to new commitments of ourselves and our substance to share.

All: May our offering today be blessed as it is used to minister to the least and the lost.

DEDICATION OF FRUITS AND LABOR

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God, the Source of life and birth,
Praise God, the Word who came to earth,
Praise God, the Spirit, Holy Flame,
All honor, glory to God's name. Amen.

OFFERTORY PRAYER (Liturgist)

O God, the Sustainer of all life and blessings, we pray with thanksgiving for the abundance of life in this world. We pray that the gifts you entrusted to us be generously offered and consumed for the advancement of your Kin-dom. May you be glorified by our lives and offering, o Lord. Continue to teach and move us, we pray, on how to be good stewards of life and gifts. We thank you for all that we are enjoying; may we reach out and bless those who are seeking. This we pray in the name of Christ, the One who taught and continually teaches us to give abundantly with joy. Amen.

***HYMN OF COMMITMENT Take Thou Our Minds, Dear Lord** *Hymnal of the Family of God, 467*

Take Thou our minds, dear Lord, we humbly pray,
Give us the mind of Christ each passing day;
Teach us to know the truth that sets us free;
Grant us in all our thoughts to honor Thee.

Take Thou our hearts, O Christ—they are Thine own;
Come Thou within our souls and claim Thy throne;
Help us to shed abroad Thy generous love;
Use us to make the earth like heaven above.

Take Thou our wills, dear God! Hold Thou full sway;
Have in our inmost souls Thy perfect way;
Guard Thou each sacred hour from selfish ease;
Guide Thou our ordered lives as Thou dost please.

Take Thou ourselves, O Lord, heart, mind, and will;
Through our surrendered souls Thy plans fulfill.
We yield ourselves to Thee—time, talents, all;
We hear, and henceforth heed, Thy sovereign call.

***PRAYER OF COMMITMENT AND BENEDICTION** (Minister)

***RESPONSE** **He Keeps Me Singing** *Hymnal of the Family of God, 587*

Though sometimes He leads through waters deep, trials fall across the way;
Though sometimes the path seems rough and steep, see His footprints all the way.

Chorus: Jesus, Jesus, Jesus sweetest name I know,
Fills my every longing, keeps me singing as I go.

POSTLUDE AND RECESSIONAL (Please remain seated in silence for contemplation)

Prepared by
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ZHARA JHANE ALEGRE, NCYF President



FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN SUNDAY

23 September 2018

STAND UP FOR HUMAN DIGNITY

QUIET MEDITATION

The essence of our dignity comes from our being human: beings created in God's image. Treating others with respect and dignity regardless of our many differences is being human. Treating ourselves with respect and dignity in our being women is standing up for human dignity.

-Foreword, Circle of Prayer 24

INVITATION

(Moments of silence)

Liturgist: We are all invited: "Be still, and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10a)

Let us be still. Let us be fully aware we are in the loving presence of God. Let us listen: listen to our breathing—taking in the Breath of God, breathing out Love that is of God.

(Moments of silence)

All (Singing):

Come to the Circle

Come to the circle, and tell your story.

Listen, and share the world inside you.

Come to the circle, and tell your story.

Your friends are waiting, to listen and share their stories, too.

PRAYER (Unison)

God of Life, we praise and feel your loving presence. We pray for openness to hear and wisdom to discern. How can we be more attuned to you today? Grant us humility and grace, we pray, to see you, to hear you, and to know you more, in our worship today. Amen.

LISTENING... DISCERNING...

Reading of the Scripture Texts

Luke 4:18-19 (NRSV)

Micah 6:8 (NRSV)

(Moments of silence)

Readings: Texts of Women's Stories of Today

(Can be presented creatively, e.g., through drama or creative reading)

Reader 1:

I am Isabis from Africa. At a young age I was raped and got pregnant. As an orphan of parents who died of AIDS, there was no one to turn to. Then a women's center helped me and took me in. I learned to read and write, to do math, with my baby taken care of by the center's nursery when I am in school. The center cared to help me demand that my rapist acknowledge my child and give support. As a young woman I also learned baking bread, a kind of work I love doing. Now I am out of the center, and having my small bakery in the community, and taking care of my child.

(Moments of silence)

Response: We hear you, Isabis. Thank you for your story of courage and perseverance. Praise God for the institution that helped you!

Reader 2:

I am Manale, 33, a mother of three, from Lebanon. I am a survivor of domestic abuse and lately was accused of adultery. My family rejected me and I was condemned to jail for one-and-a-half years in a women's prison. I was totally destroyed, depressed and sometimes hysterical. A social worker and a psychologist helped me, and for several sessions I was able to share my story and saw a way through my predicament. A lawyer assisted to shorten my jail term. I later joined a computer class and jewelry making workshop while serving my term in jail. Upon release, I hope to find a safe place to stay and possibly reunite with my family, to embrace my children and find a job.

(Moments of silence)

Response: We hear you, Manale. Thank you for your story of courage and perseverance. Thank you, God, for the kind people you sent to help Manale.

Reader 3:

My sister, Sentila, now a widow, came to visit my boys two years ago. One day she called me up when I was in a women's workshop, saying she was shocked and traumatized by neighbors who quarreled. She sounded a bit different than usual. She wanted me to come immediately. I cancelled my next day train ticket and took the overnight train. My sister Sentila expressed her fear for the first time. She was incoherent. Illogical. Perhaps hallucinating. Not only was she having her pre-menopause, she was also then living in poverty with her abusive and alcoholic husband of 19 years. She wanted me to stay near her. I took her to a psychiatrist and another physician, then to prayers and Bible Study. We recollected fond memories and shared laughter with tears. **I am Renema, from India.** My sister, Sentila, is healing.

(Moments of silence)

Response: We hear you, Renema. Thank you for being a compassionate sister to Sentila. We thank you for your generous heart.

Reader 4:

I am Marie from the United States. I grew up in the foster care system. I was abandoned by my mother and went from one home to another where I was physically and sexually abused. Eventually I ran away and lived on the street. Turning to drugs and alcohol led me into a world of despair and addiction. I ended up in the Barnstable County Correctional Facility on Cape Cod where I experienced a Residents Encounter Christ (REC) weekend. The REC weekends began in the jail in 1991 run by lay men and women from the Roman Catholic Diocese and have been a source of transformation for many of the residents. A team of men and women go in for three days and present a program of love and forgiveness where the sacrament of Reconciliation is offered. The team does not judge but simply presents the message of God's unconditional love. Today I am living at St. Clare House, a transitional home for women coming out of prison. I thank God daily that I did encounter the risen Christ in the men and women who came into the jail to share their time, their faith and their love with me and for my fellow residents.

(Moments of silence)

Liturgist: My friends, these stories are our own. These stories are true stories of our sisters in their struggle to stand up for human dignity— for themselves, for others. We have heard their stories, which are really gifts to discern what God wills for us to do. Let me invite you to share your own story, if you may. Let me invite all of us to listen once more, to stories taking place right in our midst today.

(At this moment, those who are so moved are welcome to share their own stories of standing up for dignity.)

SUNG RESPONSE Chorus of **Blessed Assurance**

This is our story, this is our song; praising our Savior all the day long!

This is our story, this is our song; praising our Savior all the day long!

THE CHALLENGE (Read in unison)

“The situation in the world today calls us to “Stand-Up” for human dignity. This does not necessarily mean physically standing. It rather means doing everything possible with God's help, to uphold, protect and promote human dignity. This could be through prayer, teaching, engaging leaders on issues that violate human dignity, showing love for all, preaching and speaking out against acts of violence, against women, men, youth, children, and all vulnerable people....

The little you do individually or as a group to “Stand-Up” for human dignity will go round and round like the least coin and bear much fruit, for God's glory. Do what you can, with what you have, and right where you are.”

-Introduction, Circle of Prayer 24

SUNG RESPONSE **Draw the Circle Wide**

Chorus: Draw the circle wide; draw it wider still,

Let this be our song; no one stands alone,
Standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

God, the still point of the circle 'round whom all creation turns,
Nothing lost, but held forever in God's gracious arms. (Chorus)

Let our hearts touch far horizons, so encompass great and small,
Let our loving know no borders; faithful to God's call.
Let the dreams we dream be larger than we've ever dreamed before;
Let the dream of God be in us, open every door. (Chorus, twice)

Draw the circle wide; draw it wider still, draw the circle wide....

TAKING PART IN THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN MOVEMENT

(Presentation or sharing on what FLC is and how to be part of it)

OFFERING OF THE 'LEAST COINS'

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures high and low.
Praise God, in Jesus fully known:
Creator, Word and Spirit One. Amen.

-Brian Wren

RITUAL OF RE-COMMITMENT

(A moment may be offered for this purpose for those who wish to renew their commitment to follow Christ by serving others, by coming to the altar and to be prayed over by the Minister or by the congregation.)

THE FLC PRAYER

O loving Creator, we present ourselves in your divine presence to thank you for all the beautiful gifts of life. We are especially grateful for the Fellowship of the Least Coin which binds us together in love and forgiveness around the world. Free us from all doubts and prejudices, we pray. Inspire us to love in solidarity with humankind that we may know the joy of giving and receiving. Dear God, accept the least coin "token of love." Make us mindful of the miracles of these coins. Let us honor your creation with love, as shown through the life and resurrection of your Son, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

HYMN OF DEDICATION

Blessed Be the Tie that Binds

Hymnal of a Faith Journey, 268

Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
The sharing of a common life is like to that above.

Before our God we come and pour our ardent prayers;

Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts, and our cares.

We share each other's woes, each other's burdens bear,
And often for each other flows a sympathizing tear.

When we are called to part, it gives us inward pain;
But we shall still be joined in heart and hope to meet again.

CLOSING PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER (In one's chosen language)

SENDING AND BLESSING

Liturgist: You are the salt of the earth!

Response: We are the salt of the earth!

Liturgist: You are the light of the world!

Response: We are the light of the world!

Liturgist: Miracles happen when we share what we have.

Response: Miracles!

Liturgist: Miracles!

Response: Miracles!

Liturgist: Miracles!

Response: Miracles!

Liturgist: The blessing of God our Creator, of the Holy Wisdom, and of the Son Jesus Christ our
Friend is upon us!

Response: Thanks be to God!

All: Amen, amen!

(From the Conference Spiritual Life Resources, Conference on World Mission and Evangelism, 2018)

THREE-FOLD AMEN (or any song of sending-out)

*Prepared by
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