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COME INTO THE CIRCLE

Voice 1: Come, enter the circle.

Voice 2: Enter the space.

Voice 1: Open yourself to redeeming grace

Voice 2: Jesus is present.

Voice 1: ... in our hearts

Voice 2: ... in our midst

Voice 1: So, come into the circle

Voice 2: Create a space

Voice 1: Jesus is present your soul to embrace.

Reader: In the beginning was the Word;
the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
The Word was in the beginning with God;
All things were made through the Word,
and without the Word
was not anything made that was made.
In the Word was life,
and the life was the light of all
The light shines in the deepest night,
and the night has not overcome it.

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Reader: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,
full of grace and truth;
we have beheld the Word's glory,

glory as of the only Child
from God the Father and Mother.
And from the fulness of the Child
we have all received, grace upon grace.

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Woman Accused of Adultery

Woman 1: Against a wall. Trapped. Terrified. Against a wall. Surrounded. Pulled and dragged. Men. A mob. Screaming. Me? Them? Pulling at my arms. NO! NO! Dragging at my hair. No chance to say anything. No time to cover myself. Hurlled forward. Against the wall. The mob closing in. Trapped. Nameless.

Voice 2: At daybreak Jesus went to the temple area. When the crowd gathered he began to teach them.

Voice 3: The scribes and Pharisees dragged a woman who had been caught in adultery before Jesus.

Voice 2: They made her stand in front of everyone.

Woman 1: ...in front of everyone. Everyone knew. Exposed in front of everyone.

Voice 3: "Teacher," they said to him, "this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. In the law, Moses ordered such woman to be stoned. What do you have to say about the case?"

Voice 1: They were posing this question to trap him,

Voice 2: ...so that they could have something to accuse him of.

Woman 1: I closed my eyes. Maybe if I couldn't see I could shut it all out. Maybe, pretend it wasn't happening. Not to me. To someone else maybe. Not me.

Voice 3: Jesus bent down and began tracing on the ground with his finger.

Voice 1: They kept at him. "What do you say?"

Voice 2: He straightened up and said to them, "Let the man among you who has no sin be the first to cast a stone at her.

Woman 1: Stones. Jagged stones. Any second now. Cowering. Hands, arms, cover head, cover face. I knew.

Voice 3: A second time he bent down and wrote on the ground.

Voice 1: Then the audience drifted away one by one beginning with the elders.

Woman 1: Nothing. No jagged stones. Quieter. Silence. Lower arms. Open eyes.

Voice 2: This left him alone with the woman, who continued to stand there before him.

Woman 1: I stood. I wondered. What did he think? What would he say?

Voice 3: Jesus finally straightened up and said to her,

Voice 1: "Woman, where did they all disappear to? Has no one condemned you?"

Woman 1: "No one sir."

Voice 1: Jesus said, "Nor do I condemn you. You may go. But from now on avoid this sin."

Woman 1: He saved my life. I had been destroying myself for years, years before I faced the stones. He saved my life. Has he ever saved yours? How would you feel if you were me? What would you do with your new life?

(She engages the audience. Questions them. Draws them in.)

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Voice 1: There was a woman in the crowd around Jesus who suffered from a flow of blood for twelve years.

Voice 3: No doctor could cure her.

Voice 2: ...and she had been to many.

Voice 1: She had suffered much at their hands.

Voice 3: Her savings were gone.

Voice 2: If anything she had only grown worse.

Voice 1: For all that time she had been ritually unclean. For the Law of Moses said, "If a woman has a flow of blood outside her period, or when her flow continues beyond the ordinary period, she shall be unclean, the same as for her monthly periods. Anything she touches or anyone who touches her shall be unclean."

Woman 2: Someone had come back to the village with stories of this Jesus. Everyone was talking about him; a miracle worker they said. I wondered if this miracle worker could help me. I wondered if he would. I am, after all only a woman, an unclean woman. They said that I defiled all that I touched. Jesus was a holy man, a rabbi. We heard that Jesus had returned to Galilee. That he was in the next town. I decided to go there.

Voice 3: The crowd around Jesus was heavy.

Voice 2: A synagogue official had just approached Jesus begging him to come and save his little daughter who was dying.

Woman 2: I had come a long way. I was exhausted. I was always exhausted. My strength had oozed away with my blood for twelve years. Now everything was an

effort and he was turning away. I was desperate.

Voice 1: The woman came up behind Jesus and touched the tassel on his garment.

Woman 2: If I just touch his clothes, I thought, I shall get well. I dared to touch. What would you have done? Despised, unclean, would you have dared to touch the great rabbi?

(She directs her question to the audience. Points at people, draws them in.)

Voice 3: Immediately, the flow of blood dried up.

Woman 2: The feeling that I was cured ran through my whole body.

Voice 2: Jesus was conscious at once that healing power had gone out of him.

Voice 1: "Who touched me?" Jesus shouted.

Voice 3: His disciples said to him. "The crowd is huge. People are jostling one another. How can you ask, 'who touched me?'"

Voice 2: But he kept on shouting, "I felt power go out of me. I know someone touched me? Who touched me?"

Woman 2: I was terrified now. I had touched him. Unclean, I had touched the rabbi. I had touched one I recognized now to be the Holy One. But my new strength gave me courage. I understood what had happened. I came and told him the whole truth.

Voice 1: Jesus said to her, "Daughter it is your faith that has made you well. Go in peace and be free of this illness.

Woman 2: Have you touched him? Have you ever felt his healing power in you? Has your body ever been healed, made whole? What about you?

(She points at people in the group, inviting them to tell how they have been touched, made whole, redeemed.)

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(Mary of Bethany)

Voice 1: In the course of his journey, Jesus came to a village named Bethany where a woman named Martha invited him to her home.

Woman 3: Let me tell you about my sister Martha. Martha is one of those people that everyone notices. She enjoys making the grand gesture. It was just like her to invite Jesus and all his disciples to our home. It was also just like her to assume that what ever she wanted to do was alright with me. It usually is. Martha usually knows best. That day was different, though. I knew where I wanted to be.

Voice 2: Her sister Mary sat at Jesus' feet and listened to his words.

Woman 3: I sat at his feet and listened. For the first time in my life I heard words, ideas that were more powerful than my own fear. For these words I was willing to stand firm, to be true to myself, to say yes when I meant yes, and no when I meant no.

Voice 3: Martha, who was busy preparing the food for the meal came to Jesus and complained.

Voice 1: "Aren't you concerned that my sister Mary has left me to prepare the meal for you by my self? Tell her to get up and help me."

Voice 2: Jesus said, "Martha, you are anxious and concerned about many things, but Mary has chosen well and she shall not be deprived of what she has chosen."

Woman 3: I never said a word. I sat. I listened, but that day, I didn't just go along. Jesus said yes to who I was. Yes, to Mary. I became myself. How have you become yourself? How has he said yes to you?

(She invites a response from the group. How have they become themselves through their relationship with Jesus?)

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(Mary Magdalene)

Woman 4: Another world. A world I couldn't be sure of.
Paralyzed. Terrorized. Almost dead. Cut off from
life. I lived with my demons and they lived on me.

Voice 1: There were women who followed Jesus from town to
town.

Voice 2: They cared for him, sharing with him whatever they
had.

Voice 3: Many of them had been freed from evil spirits.

Voice 1: From one of them, Mary Magdalene, Jesus had
expelled seven demons.

Woman 4: I lived in a demon world. I lived in a pit in the
deepest part of myself. No light. No voices,
except my own, which shrieked of itself. Only fog.
Far away I knew there was life, but I couldn't
reach it. I couldn't touch it

Voice 2: One day Jesus met Mary.

Voice 3: Perhaps he touched her...

Voice 1: ...or embraced her.

Voice 2: He spoke to her.

Voice 3: Somehow in that touch, in that embrace, Mary knew
real human contact.

Voice 1: Somehow through that voice, she knew real human

presence.

Woman 4: I felt warmth. I felt a power in my body that was greater than the power of the demons. I was afraid. I heard my voice cry out.

Voice 2: Jesus held Mary close. His eyes drew her to look at him.

Woman 4: I felt someone holding me. His eyes drew me free. He held me as the demons left me. He held me as I wrenched myself free from each one. I struggled. Seven times my whole being convulsed as it tore itself free from all that held it bound.

Voice 1: Mary was free.

Voice 2: Freedom from the demons was salvation. It was new life.

Voice 3: Mary became free to feel. Free to decide.

Woman 4: I decided to leave Magdala. I decided to follow Jesus, to give my life to the one who had given me life.

Voice 1: For Mary freedom from her demons meant salvation. One equaled the other.

Woman 4: I am Mary of Magdala. I am his friend. I became his apostle. Tell me, has he freed you? Has he drawn out your demons, given you back your life? What have you done with your new life?

(Mary draws forth a response from the group)

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*And here we are... we are like in
a year to join us in a prayer, saying our own*

Hands

I see, Lord, in my tightly clenched fists
a symbol of my self.
I grasp my life,
hiding all I don't want others to see.

I hold my pride:
my desire to appear right,
my desire to appear strong.

I hold my anxieties:
my fear that I won't be accepted as I am,
my inability to be who I am.

I hold my anger:
my violence that protects me
against anyone
who comes too close to my secrets.

I ache with this tension,
with the immense energy required
to hide myself -
from you, lest you change me,
from them, lest they hurt me.

With these fists, I want to strike out -
against you,
against them,
against all that threatens me.

(pause)

But I see,
in these whitened knuckles
and straining forearms,
what this is doing to me:
I am enslaved,
imprisoned within myself.
I am destroying myself and others.

(pause)

But I sense your presence, Lord,
your open hands
reaching out to me.

I slowly open my hands,
and release myself to you.
I offer all I have been grasping so tightly:
the fear of being known,
the anxiety of being alone,
the anger, the guilt, the pain.

Lord!
My arms no longer ache!
My hands can move again!
They can stretch and wiggle.
They are open and able to receive -
Fill them with your love!
Show them how to touch,
how to serve.

Freed from my own grasp,
I am suddenly aware of others.
I reach out to my sisters and brothers.
Let my hands be your hands
as I take their needs and ~~care~~
and lift them to you.
Give us your sustaining grace,
touch us with your healing love.
Take us and shape us together
into the body of your Son.

Let our hands be your hands
to reach out to the world you love.

original author unknown
adaptation by Martha Keys Barker
and Patricia Beall

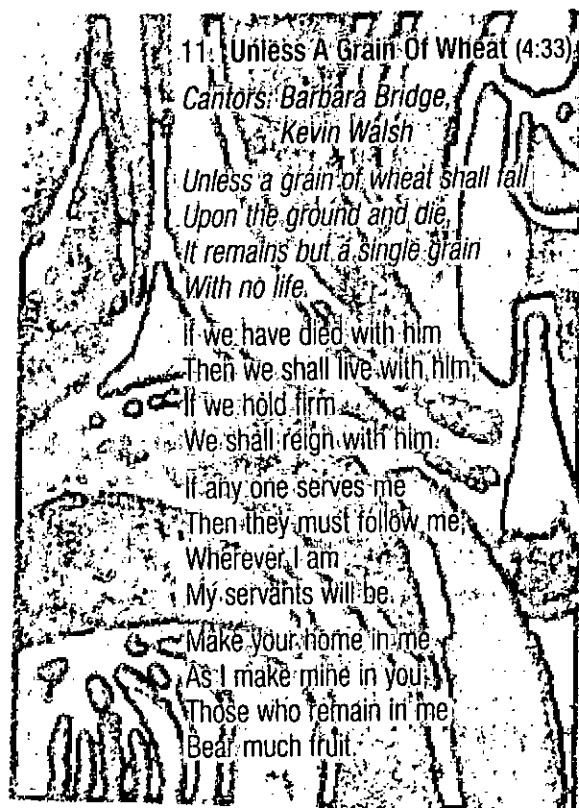
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*From 'The Folk Arts in Renewal' - Beal & Barker
Hodder & Stoughton in paper back.*

The Peace All hold hands and sing:

Shalom my friends, shalom my friends, shalom, shalom
The peace of Christ I give you today, shalom, shalom

Communion Song CD Unless a grain of wheat (background or join in chorus)



11. Unless A Grain Of Wheat (4:33)

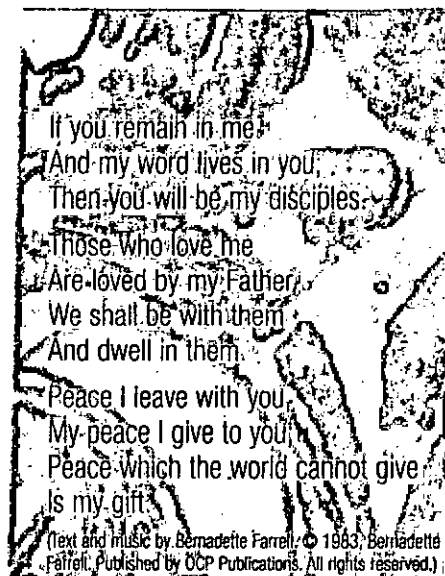
Cantors: Barbara Bridge,
Kevin Walsh

Unless a grain of wheat shall fall
Upon the ground and die,
It remains but a single grain
With no life.

If we have died with him
Then we shall live with him,
If we hold firm
We shall reign with him.

If any one serves me
Then they must follow me,
Wherever I am
My servants will be.

Make your home in me
As I make mine in you,
Those who remain in me
Bear much fruit.



If you remain in me,
And my word lives in you,
Then you will be my disciples.
Those who love me
Are loved by my Father,
We shall be with them
And dwell in them.
Peace I leave with you,
My peace I give to you,
Peace which the world cannot give
Is my gift.

(Text and music by Bernadette Farrell, © 1983, Bernadette
Farrell, Published by OCP Publications. All rights reserved.)

The anointing with oil from the Holy Land

One person holds up the oil all holding out our hands to the oil:

All: We bless this oil and may it be for us a source of empowerment and healing, so
that we may use our giftedness to build up the body of Christ

(Each anoints the person next to them in turn, saying something like "may you be
strengthened in your spiritual journey")

Short silence followed by final words from the Celebrant

Final Song: Praise with joy the world's creator (tune of praise my soul)

Benedictions May the God of gentleness, support, and sustaining love gather us in Her arms this night and bless us with sleep that restores both body and soul. Amen.

May God bless you and keep you.
May God make Her face shine on you and be gracious to you.
May God lift up the light of Her countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit of Wisdom,
whose truth and faithfulness guide and keep us,
fill this day with Her blessing. Amen.

Psalm 78:1-7

O my people, listen to my teaching!
Open your ears to the words I speak.
I will speak in parables and with ancient, mysterious sayings,
speak of what we have heard and known, of what our mothers have told us.
We must not hide these things from our children.
We must pass them on to the next generation.
We must tell them of all the wonders God has done.
We must praise Her strong and marvelous love!

She has made us Her witnesses among all the people.
She has given us Her wisdom,
and has commanded us to teach that wisdom to our children.
In this way the next generation will know Her,
and will pass on Her wisdom to their children's children.
Let us pray that they will all place their hope in God,
remembering Her wonderful works and always walking in Her wisdom!

Psalm 127

If God does not build the house, its builders labor for nothing.
If God does not keep the city, its protectors guard it in vain.
It is useless to rise up early and stay up late,
eating the bread of anxious toil.
God gives Her beloved peaceful sleep!

Daughters are a heritage from God.
The fruit of the womb is Her reward.
Like threads of colored silk in the hand of a weaver,
so are the daughters of one's youth!
Happy is the woman who has a hand full of them!
She shall not be ashamed when critics confront her!

SOME MOTHERLY/FEMININE IMAGES OF GOD

Blessing for a pregnant woman

May our Mother God keep you safe until the time of
your deliverance.
May you, and those eagerly awaiting your 'hour' be
enfolded in peace.
May our God of patient waiting be your strength
during these days of anticipation.
May our Midwife God protect and comfort you during
your labour.
May our God of love and life transform your labour
pains into joy, in the gift of a healthy child.
May our Nurturing Mother God provide you with an
abundance of milk, to nourish your newborn
infant.

And may the blessing of the God who conceived us
with joy, birthed us in pain, and transforms us in
love, to fullness of life and fruitfulness; may this
God bless you, and keep you in her womanly
tenderness today and always.

Maria
Kersten

Amen.

Benedicite omnia opera

All you works of God, bless your creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

Let the wide earth bless the creator;
let the arching heavens bless the creator;
let the whole body of God bless the creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

You returning daylight, bless your creator;
twilight and shadows, bless your creator;
embracing darkness, bless your creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

Mountains of God, massive and ancient rocks, bless
your creator;
valleys and pastures, moorland and rivers, bless your
creator;
ocean depths and lonely abyss, bless your creator,
praise her and glorify her for ever.

Storm and mighty wind, bless your creator;
bitter cold and scorching sun, bless your creator;
mist and cloud and tender rain, bless your creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

Seed and sapling, tree and vivid flower, bless your
creator;
greenness and flourishing, withering and barrenness,
bless your creator;
harvest and springtime and deadness of the year, bless
your creator,
praise her and glorify her for ever.

first 6 verses - by Janet Morley

157 Mother of infinite wisdom

Mother of infinite wisdom,
Christ of infinite compassion,
Holy Spirit, guarantee of change,
bring us to our knees in shame,
bring us to our feet in action,
bring us to our senses in prayer,
that with you we may all inherit
a new heaven and a new earth.

Kate
McIlhugga

Blessing Song

May the blessing of God go before you.
May her grace and peace abound.
May her spirit live within you.
May her love wrap you round.
May her blessing remain with you always.
May you walk on holy ground. Amen.

Miriam
Therese
Winter

1 DEAR MOTHER GOD

- 1 Dear Mother God, your wings are warm
around us,
We are enfolded in your love and care;
Safe in the dark, your heartbeat's pulse
surrounds us,
You call to us, for you are always there.
- 2 You call to us, for we are in your image.
We wait on you, the nest is cold and
bare —
High overhead your wingbeats call us
onward.
Filled with your power, we ride the empty
air.
- 3 Let not our freedom scorn the needs of
others —
We climb the clouds until our strong
heart sings —
May we enfold our sisters and our
brothers,
Till all are strong, till all have eagles'
wings.

Janet Wootton (1952 —)

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wings.

Janet Wootton (1952 —)

PRAYERS ON A THEME OF WATER

Poem Envoi (verses spoken round the room)

A A stone is thrown
 into a calm lake
 and the stone makes waves
 spreading, reaching to the far side.

B Let us throw stones into the deadly calm
 of the lake that is our world, no matter how small
 is the stone,
 no matter how small is the wave.

A The stone brings awakening,
 the stone is a movement
 and the movement spreads
 when all of us
 standing on all sides
 around the lake
 keep throwing
 our little stones.

A || The wave will never cease
 till the whole lake
 starts bubbling with life.

Silence

My Lord is the source of Love: I the river's course
Let God's love flow through me. I will not obstruct it.
Irrigation ditches can water but a portion of the field.
the great Yangtze River can water a thousand acres.
Expand my heart O Lord, that I my love yet more people.
The waters of love can cover vast tracts,
nothing will be lost to me.
The greater the outward flow, the greater the returning tide.
If I am not linked to Love's source, I will dry up,
If I dam the waters of Love, they will stagnate.
Can I compare my heart with the boundless seas?
But abandon not the measure of my heart, O Lord.
Let the waves of your love still billow there!

(one line each)

translated from the Chinese

A ||
May the earth continue to live
May the heavens above continue to live
May the rains continue to dampen the land
May the wet forests continue to grow
Then the flowers shall bloom
And we people shall live again.

Prayer of Jesus

God, who cares for us,
The wonder of whose presence fills us with awe.
Let kindness, justice and love shine in our world.
Let your secrets be known here as they are in heaven.
Give us the food and the hope we need for today.
Forgive us our wrongdoing
As we forgive the wrongs done to us.
Protect us from pride and from despair
And from the fear and hate which can swallow us up.
In you is truth, meaning, glory and power,
While words come and go Amen.

Closing Blessing (all)

May God bless us and keep us

May God's face shine upon us

and give us peace.

And the blessing of God

Redeemer and life-giving Spirit

Be with us now, and forever. Amen

Sample Liturgies

ry, wandr'ing through the desert,
v'lling on uncertain, anxious,
d by arms, supporting, loving,
ch us how to persevere.

ry, reaching Bethl'em's safety,
iting in a place so lowly,
ing birth in painful hoping,
ich us how to persevere.

ry, dreaming of a future
ien her son would grow to manhood,
ving, trusting, planning, hoping,
ach us how to persevere.

ie Boyce-Tillmann, *In Praise of All Encircling Love*, Vol. 1)

agnificat

O compelling God, announcing your presence not among the
mighty but in obscurity.

You move us with a compulsion to acknowledge the injustice in
our midst,

To reject the structures and attitudes that discriminate and to
bring insight and change to those in positions of dominance.

Send your transfiguring spirit to overshadow us, removing the
obstructing divisive shadow of prejudice and ignorance which
clouds the vision of your Church.

Make us worthy witnesses, as Mary in the transforming work you
have planned.

Give us energy and determination in our choosing to co-operate
with you through Jesus Christ incarnate.

(Lala Winkley)

tercessions

uring the prayers, flowers were placed in the vase.

eadar Mary was prepared to fly in the face of social custom in

Reclaiming Mary

patriarchal mindsets and reclaim liberation for ourselves. As
we place the flowers we have here in the vase, we can silently
or aloud pray about aspects of liberation.

Blessing of Food and Drink

Leader Blessed are you, O Lord our God, creator of this food and
drink that we share together as a sign of your kingdom, which
is to come in glory, and yet is already here now in so far as you
live among us in the love we have for one another.

The wine was poured out.

All We give thanks to you, our creator, for this wine, remember-
ing Israel your people, brought like a vine out of Egypt, and
planted in the promised land.

The wine was passed round and drunk.

The bread was then broken and passed round.

All As we break the bread we thank you, O Creator, for the life
and knowledge of yourself which you gave us through Jesus
Christ.
To you be glory for ever.

As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains but
was brought together and became one, so let your children be
gathered together from the ends of the earth into your king-
dom, for yours is the glory and the power, through Jesus
Christ for ever.

(from the Agape prayers of the early Christian document, *The Didache*)

All ate.

1 DEAR MOTHER GOD

- 1 Dear Mother God, your wings are warm
around us,
We are enfolded in your love and care;
Safe in the dark, your heartbeat's pulse
surrounds us,
You call to us, for you are always there.
- 2 You call to us, for we are in your image.
We wait on you, the nest is cold and
bare —
High overhead your wingbeats call us
onward.
Filled with your power, we ride the empty
air.
- 3 Let not our freedom scorn the needs of
others —
We climb the clouds until our strong
heart sings —
May we enfold our sisters and our
brothers,
Till all are strong, till all have eagles'
wings.

Janet Wootton (1952 —)

LOVE

1. We sing a love that sets all people free,
That blows like wind, that burns like scorching fire,
Enfolds like earth, springs up like water clear.
Come, living love, live in our hearts today.
2. We sing a love that seeks another's good,
That longs to serve and not to count the cost,
A love that, yielding, finds itself made new.
Come, caring love, live in our hearts today.
3. We sing a love, unflinching, unafraid
To be itself, despite another's wrath,
A love that stands alone and undismayed.
Come, strength'ning love, live in our hearts today.
4. We sing a love that, wand'ring, will not rest
Until it finds its way, its home, its source,
Through joy and sadness pressing on refreshed.
Come, pilgrim love, live in our hearts today.
5. We sing a burning, fiery, Holy Ghost
That seeks out shades of ancient bitterness.
Transfig'ring these, as Christ in ev'ry heart.
Come joyful love, live in our hearts today.

Text: June Boyce Tillman
Tune: Woodlands (Tell out my Soul)

Chorus

Ab- ba, Ab- ba, Fa- ther,
you are the pot- ter, we are the clay, the
work of your hands, I. Mould us,
mould us and fash- ion us in- to the im- age of
Je- sus, your Son, of Je- sus, your Son.

2. Father, may we be one in you,
as he is in you,
and you are in him,
and you are in him.

3. Glory, glory and praise to you,
glory and praise to you
for ever, amen,
for ever, amen.

Words and Music: Carey Landry

1. Bring many names, beautiful and good,
celebrate, in parable and story,
holiness in glory,
living, loving God.
Hail and Hosanna!
bring many names!

2. Strong mother God, working night and day,
planning all the wonders of creation,
setting each equation,
gen-i-us at play:
Hail and Hosanna,
strong mother God!

3. Warm father God, hugging every child,
feeling all the strains of human living,
caring and forgiving
till we're reconciled:
Hail and Hosanna,
warm father God!

4. Old, aching God, grey with endless care,
calmly piercing evil's new disguises,
glad of good surprises,
wiser than despair:
Hail and Hosanna,
old, aching God!

5. Young, growing God, eager, on the move,
seeing all, and fretting at our blindness,
crying out for justice,
giving all you have:
Hail and Hosanna,
young, growing God!

6. Great, living God, never fully known,
joyful darkness far beyond our seeing,
closer yet than breathing,
everlasting home:
Hail and Hosanna,
great, living God!

Brian Wren

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me to revive my drooping spirit.

(Antiphon) His Goodness shall follow me always, to the end of my days.

He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff, with these you give me comfort.
(His Goodness....)

You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing. (His Goodness.....)

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever. (His Goodness.....)

To the Father and son give glory, give glory to the Spirit.
To God who is, who was and who will be, for ever and ever. (His Goodness.....)

Advent Prayer (St Johns women's spirituality group)

Lk 1. 78-79

By the tender mercy of our God
The down from on high will break upon us,
To give light to those who sit in darkness
And in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace
(Song of Zachariah)

All:

*O God, power of creation and constant carer,
you were there at our conception,
in the miracle of new life;
you are there in the natural and social forces
by which we are shaped and changed;
you are there in our stumbling attempts
to comprehend you, in the different expressions of our faith.
We believe that you are there, that you know and care.
In your power, may we soar as though on eagles' wings,
may we run and not feel faint,
march on and not grow weary...
in your name, eternal God.*

Sing: O Lord hear my prayer (Taize) x3

All:

*art and science, song and story,
birth and death, mountain and mustard seed
are all icons –
pointing beyond themselves to a greater light,
inviting us into divine encounter and transformation.*

*Let us never take for granted the signposts that you give,
nor despise the lone voice or sacrificial life.
But forgive us, in this age of instant access,
when we fail to look beyond the pointer or go further.
Give us imagination to seek that which is still hidden,
patience to wait, the will to travel on,
courage to reach towards the things we cannot grasp,
humility to be led and met and taught and loved by you.
May we thank, yet never idolise, messengers you send,
but rather hear the message, and hunger for the light.*

The Grace of

Carol "Woman in the night" (tune: in the bleak midwinter)

Woman in the night
spent from giving birth
guard our precious light
peace is on the earth

(Brian Wren, in
Faith Looking forward)

Chorus Come and join the song,
Women, children, men
Jesus makes us free,
free to live again.

Woman at the well
questions the Messiah
find your friends and tell;
drink your heart's desire.
Chorus Come and join.....

Woman at the feast
let the righteous stare
come and go in peace
love him give your hair

Chorus Come and join....

Woman in the house
nurtured to be meek
leave your second place
listen, think and speak

Chorus Come and join...

Woman on the road,
welcomed and restored,
travel far and wide;
witness to the Lord, Chorus Come and join...

Taizé Chant

O Lord hear my pray'r, O Lord hear my pray'r;
when I call answer me. O Lord hear my pray'r, O
Lord hear my pray'r. Come and lis-ten to me. O...

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

LEADER:

The Hebrew *shalom*, translated 'peace' in the Bible, has no equivalent in the English language, although in my native Welsh, we have a word *Tangnefedd* which comes very close, there being another word for 'peace', namely *Heddwch*. *Shalom* is both broad and deep. *Shalom* is to human society what health is to a living, breathing body. It is not static or negative; it is a dynamic state of 'right order', like the living, organic balance and harmony of a healthy body. It is liberty with responsibility, order with justice, peace with prosperity . . . and at the heart of it is GOD, Creator, Healer, Restorer.

SILENCE

Shalom is broken whenever families are split or children neglected or abused; when peoples are oppressed, or minorities persecuted, or equality denied; when nations war with nations; when the world is divided into rich and poor; and when we alienate ourselves from our Creator and poison or misuse his creation.

SILENCE

Let us pray together:

Loving Lord, we have nothing to give that we have not first received from you. Accept us as we are; cast out our doubts and release us from both self-satisfaction and self-accusation; deliver us from dependence on the material supports of so-called 'civilised' living; help us to entrust ourselves always and only to your grace, and commit ourselves always and only to your leading; and grant us the peace of knowing, each day, that we are forgiven, accepted, commissioned and empowered to go forward.

SILENCE

God, give me the ability to see clearly the border lines in life and the wisdom not to cross them. Help me never to stray over the narrow line between

HELPFULNESS and interference
SELF-CONFIDENCE and arrogance
LOVE and possessiveness
ENTHUSIASM and fanaticism
FRANKNESS and tactlessness
ADMIRATION and idolatry
ENJOYMENT and excess
IDEALISM and naivety
SELF-RELIANCE and obstinacy
COMPASSION and sentimentality
RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION and vengefulness
SELF-AWARENESS and self-centredness.

(c. Tim Tiley, Ltd.)

SILENCE

BIBLE READING: 1 CORINTHIANS 12: 14-27

LEADER:

St Paul's hymn to interdependence, which we've just heard, presents a powerful picture of the Church as the Body of Christ, each of us limbs or organs of it - of equal worth and all needing one another. But as an image of human society it has its limitations. The limbs and organs of the body have neither autonomy nor democracy - they are ruled directly by the head.

Democracy, as we understand it, is a fairly recent phenomenon, and it has not yet solved the problems of human governance. Communism, in many ways a noble vision, in practice produced states built on the concept of enforced compliance with centrally controlled plans, which comes close to the image of human society as a body, its limbs and organs controlled by the head. But it is now clear that this model not only fails to meet human aspirations, but also fails to organise human lives efficiently.

Capitalism, the other major economic model of the twentieth century, based on competition and market forces, is in theory closely analogous to the control mechanisms of nature, but it has proved to be exploitative, and divisive, and on the global scale has created a crisis of division, poverty and debt.

from 'Shalom' by. d. p. r. - Fellowship of Reconciliation -

**TO GO FORWARD IN THIS 21ST CENTURY WITH A PROSPECT OF HUMAN SURVIVAL
REQUIRES NEW CONCEPTS OF TOGETHERNESS AND NEW MECHANISMS FOR
BRINGING THEM TO FRUITION.**

SILENCE

LEADER:

And so, as we seek further direction in our quest for a living spirituality, let us pray together:

**Creator God, in a world of fast-changing events,
hold us to your eternal purpose.**

**In a world where leaders come and go,
keep us loyal to Jesus and his way.**

**In a world ruled by selfish aims and material rewards,
reveal to us anew the things of the spirit.**

**In a world where new knowledge blossoms every day,
help us to use it creatively and well.**

**In a world where poverty and injustice are rife,
teach us how to channel the forces of good.**

**In a world where good causes seem to struggle against perpetual odds,
give us eyes to see the chariots of fire round the camps of the faithful.**

**In a world that is floundering for lack of faith,
proclaim through us the message of reconciliation - of us to you and to one
another. AMEN**

(Quietly sing together the Taize chant 'UBI CARITAS' three times)

WIDENING THE WEB Celebration of Christian women
at the EMBRACING OF THE BASE Indigo Gate, Greenham Common December 1965

Song- (sung in canon to the tune of By the Waters of Babylon)

By the wire, the wire of Greenham

we sit down and weep

and weep for this our land,

We remember, we remember, we remember Hiroshima (Nagasaki for 2nd verse)

Magnificat (adapted from Phoebe Willet's version)

My heart is bubbling over with joy

With God it is good to be woman

From now on tell all peoples, proclaim

It is a wonderful gift to be,

The One in whom power truly rests

has lifted us up to praise,

God's goodness shall fall like a shower

on the trusting of every age,

The disregarded have been raised up

the pompous and powerful shall fall.

Gpd has feasted the empty-bellied

and the rich have discovered their void.

God has made good the word

Given at the dawn of time.

Gospel. Story of the visitation

(one of the women then preached on this)

"Lords prayer"

Jesus taught us to pray:-

God, lover of us all

Most holy one

Help us to respond to you

to create what you want for us here on earth

Give us today, enough for our needs

forgive our weak and deliberate offences

Just as we must forgive others

when they hurt us,

Help us to resist weaknesses and

to do what is good

for we are yours

endowed with your power

to make our world whole.

Blessing of the Bread Carter Heyward. In No Longer Strangers p22

Sharing of the bread

(we need to recognise that women are the body of Christ and in our sufferings share in Jesus' death and resurrection. So we can all say to one another as we share the bread "you are the body of Christ"

(After sharing the bread share thoughts and reflections with those near you, weaving all into a web as we make connections.

A web had been prepared with 16 radial spokes made of strips of rag. Women stepped forward and as they weaved in strips over and under the spokes, they would contribute their prayers, reflections and thoughts.)

Song - Building Bridges

On the day itself once the web was complete, spontaneously the women holding the web went slowly to the Indigo Gate and attached it to it, across the opening where it stayed for some time until traffic came through.

S.London CWN group.

NOTES (NJBC New Jerome Biblical Commentary BGH The Beatitudes Giles Hibbert
SPB Spirituality of the Beatitudes Michael Crosby OFM.Cap.)

Poor in Spirit - (Luke's version "the poor") sense of spirit here breath of life - poor whose hold on life is t
downtrodden etc. BGH The poor are not happy/blessed because of their poverty but because of Jesus' spe
servant themes in Hebrew Bible and Isaiah - good news to lowly -. Poverty not God's will but a sign that C
strive to reverse the situation. SPB

The Gentle (often translated as "meek") Those without power to defend themselves, the lowly (inherit the
God casting out oppressors) BGH Means slow to anger NJBC A meek person dedicates life to God's p
exercising power, possessions and prestige SPB

Mourn The bereaved lacked justice through loss of status - the old, the widowed etc. BGH All those who
to all who mourn ..a glorious mantle instead of a listless spirit " - We need to own our own brokenness to

Uprightness (also translated as Justice) Refers to those who need justice to survive. The first 4 beatitud
then with those who are doing something about it BGH To achieve the experience of God's justice in us,
power and care for us, and in turn live by these norms SPB

Merciful pardoning, loving neighbour and even ones enemies. Excludes all vengeance NJBC

Pure in Heart in Mt is close to justice and involves fidelity, covenant, loyalty to God's commands, sincere
impurity- means a cleansed, open mind. Committed. BGH

Peacemakers .. recognised as children of God implies heirs of God, inheritors of position and responsibi
called seriously to be his brothers and his sisters to be co-workers, co-Christ with him" BGH The term is
that involves total well-being NJBC

Persecuted in the cause of justice Commitment to justice, mercy, peace and love will bring persecution
beatitudes means continual resistance and readiness to reverse these norms in society that do not reinforce

**DISCUSSION QUESTION - WHAT DO THE BEATITUDES MEAN IN
OUR LIVES TODAY?**

THE BEATITUDES

From the New Jerusalem Bible Mt 5:3-12
of Luke 6:20-23 * mean also in Luke.

Giles Hibbert OP's translation
based on his scriptural study

How blessed are the poor in spirit*
the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

Blessed are the gentle:
they shall have the earth as inheritance.

Blessed are those who mourn: *
they shall be comforted.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for*
uprightness:

they shall have their fill.

Blessed are the merciful:
they shall have mercy shown them.

Blessed are the pure in heart:
they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers:
they shall be recognised as children of God

Blessed are those who are persecuted in the
cause of uprightness

the kingdom of heaven is theirs:

Blessed are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you false
for your reward will be great in heaven*.

APPENDIX

POSSIBLE COMPONENTS OF ALTERNATIVE LITURGY

The items in each column are examples of the many elements from which people can choose. They are by no means exhaustive.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome

Naming selves

Talking to the person next to one & then introducing her to the group

Telling our own stories

Relaxation/breathing exercises

READINGS/PRAYER

Scripture (using inclusive versions, or adapting the text)

Prayers, poems & prose
a. written by members of the group
b. published work

Reflection on the readings (silently, in pairs or in the group)

Meditation

THEMES

Liturgical seasons and feasts

Celebrations for anniversaries

Marking rites of passage (including moving house, new stage in life or job, breakdown of relationship etc)

healing and peace liturgies

Themes of importance in seeking Christian wholeness e.g. justice, friendship images of God, relationships, wilderness, mutuality, journey, growth, creation etc.

SYMBOLS

Candles, water, oil, food, growing things; the Cross (including "Christa", the feminine image of Christ), ikons, wreaths, fruit, sowing seeds.

USING THE SENSES

VISUAL

Collages, weaving webs, clay modelling, drawing, painting (on a theme, expressing feelings and beliefs)

Choosing pictures/posters and then talking about your choice

Casting away stones or building cairns

MUSIC & DANCE

Making music.
Tapes

Circle dancing

Silence

vocal expression of feelings e.g. wailing or groaning at the oppression of women, humming opposition.

BODY

Centring exercises

holding hands

kiss of peace

anointing or blessing with ashes

washing feet

living statues

ONE WORLD: "WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST?"

INTRODUCTION

OPENING HYMN

READINGS

"Have you many children?" the doctor asked.

"God has not been good to me. Of 16 born, only nine live", he answered.

"Does your wife work?"

"No, she stays at home."

"I see. How does she spend her day?"

"Well, she gets up at four in the morning, fetches water and wood, makes the fire and cooks breakfast. Then she goes to the river and washes the clothes. After that she goes to town to get corn ground and buys what we need in the market. Then she cooks the midday meal."

"You come home at midday?"

"No, no. She brings the meal to me in the fields - about three kilometers from home."

"And after that?"

"Well, she takes care of the hens and the pigs. And of course she looks after the children all day. Then she prepares the supper so that it is ready when I come home."

"Does she go to bed after supper?"

"No. I do. She has things to do around the house until nine o'clock."

"But you say your wife doesn't work?"

"No. I told you. She stays at home."

[A man, Africa]

"I'm just a housewife."

[A woman, Europe]

"I don't like it when a grown-up leans over, pinches my cheek and says, 'How did things go at school today. Have you been a good boy?' Lots of adults don't know how to talk to kids. They think all kids are the same whether they are eleven or five years old."

[A child, North America]

COMMENT

Why "Women and Children, First?"

Compare the statements that we have just heard read. What do they tell us about being a child, a woman or a man in this world?

The experience of each appears very different. To a woman the world might seem very much like a 'Man's World' - which takes little notice of her point of view. A child might be justified in thinking it to be a world geared mainly to adults.

Can the world be truly one until everyone's experience is valued equally? These statements bring home how rarely the voices of women and children are heard.

JESUS' TEACHING

Jesus came to set us free, so that we could worship God with the whole of our lives. Where there is injustice and oppression, people are not free and neither are their oppressors.

In this country there is little open oppression of women and children, but they are often forced into a role that does not leave them free to enjoy the fullness of life that God intended for them.

We think of the isolated life of the nuclear family, the pressure from press and television for people to live in particular ways. Pressure for people to have a life-style that requires ever more money to keep up.

Both women and men can feel locked into a system from which there is no escape.

But Jesus challenges such systems. In the following story Mary breaks with the convention that said a woman could not be a disciple of a Rabbi or sit at his feet. And Jesus approves.

READING: Luke 10.38-42

PRAYERS (Sit or kneel)

Leader: There is only one world, Lord. One planet for us all to share.
For the times we have thought of our advancement and prosperity and not the needs of all those with whom we share this world, women, children men,

ALL: LORD HAVE MERCY.

Leader: There is only one people, the people of God. All equal in your sight.
For the times we have discriminated on grounds of race, or creed, or colour,

ALL: LORD HAVE MERCY.

Leader: There is only one human race, man and woman, female and male. For the times we have not fully valued those of the opposite sex and their point of view,

ALL: LORD HAVE MERCY.

Leader: There is only one Christ, one Church. For the times we have supported or promoted division among Christians,

ALL: LORD HAVE MERCY.

Leader: Someone, Lord, somewhere is crying for our help, in suffering and deprivation, in prison, in the shanty towns. For the times we have not responded to the cries of the suffering,

ALL: CHRIST HAVE MERCY.

Leader: Someone Lord is dying of hunger and thirst while we have plenty, For the times we have turned away from the needs of others, of the poor and the needy,

ALL: CHRIST HAVE MERCY.

Leader: Someone Lord is working to change this earth, to build the Kingdom of God. For the times we have not supported them, not wanted to stand with them,

ALL: CHRIST HAVE MERCY

HYMN (On the sheet)

SERMON (Given by Eileen Lake)SILENCELITANY (Sit of kneel)

Each petition will end: Leader: Lord hear us

All: LORD GRACIOUSLY HEAR US.

Leader: We pray for all peoples throughout the world, especially the oppressed and exploited, and those denied freedom and dignity by those with power. And tonight we think particularly of women and children who suffer because they are treated as second class.

We pray:

For mothers who do not have enough to feed and clothe their families and for children who are sick and die for want of basic medical care, vaccines and clean water. Lord hear us.....

For women and children who toil many hours for a pittance, often producing food and goods to be sold to wealthier countries. Lord hear us.....

For refugees made homeless as a result of conflicts begun and sustained by men, and for all women who lose their husbands in war, and for children whose fathers die fighting. Lord hear us.....

For women who are the victims of assault by men on whom they may depend for support, and for all who bring up children alone. Lord hear us.....

We pray for immigrant women in this country who lead isolated lives because they do not speak English or because of prejudice against them, and for those women cut off from a full life because of tradition. Lord hear us.....

Help us, Lord, to strive for a more equal society at home, while not forgetting the much greater oppression of our sisters in many other parts of the world. And we pray for a world which will care for all its children, for those who will grow up to inherit the world we have made.

Let us therefore love one another. For if we do not love our sisters and brothers whom we see, we cannot love God whom we do not see. This is the commandment Christ gave us. We who love God must love our sisters and brothers too. AMEN.

PEACE (Stand)

Dear friends, let us love one another, because love comes from God. Whoever loves is a child of God and knows God.

JESUS CHRIST, THE LIFE OF THE WORLD, AND OF ALL CREATION. FORGIVE OUR SEPARATION AND GRANT US PEACE AND UNITY

The peace that Christ gives is to guide you in the decisions you make; for it is to this peace that God has called you together in the one body.

JESUS CHRIST, THE LIFE OF THE WORLD.....

Do your best to preserve the unity which the Spirit gives by means of the peace that binds you together. There is one body, one spirit, just as there is one hope to which God has called you.

JESUS CHRIST, THE LIFE OF THE WORLD, AND OF ALL CREATION,
FORGIVE OUR SEPARATION AND GRANT US PEACE AND UNITY.

(We share a sign of peace)

HYMN (On sheet)

FINAL PRAYER AND BLESSING

EILEEN LAKE
65 KINGSMEAD HOUSE
KINGSMEAD WAY,
HOMERTON, E.9. 5QJ.

Service of Thanksgiving

This is based on *A Service of the Word in Common Worship*. Additional material (prayers, hymns and translations) has been created by June Boyce-Tillman. It is designed to precede her Inaugural Lecture as Professor of Applied Music

All sitting

INTROIT: *O virtus Sapientiae* by Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179)

O, the power of Wisdom,
 You, in circling, encircle all things.
 You are embracing everything
 In a way that brings life into being:
 For you have three wings
 One of them reaches highest heaven,
 And another is sweating in earth,
 And the third is flying everywhere.
 Therefore it is right to give you praise,
 O Wisdom.

All standing

HYMN:

This hymn encompasses the thinking that underpins my book *Constructing Musical Healing – The Wounds that Sing*. It concerns the need for balance in our own lives and our theology and was first tried out with Myra Poole SND. It was first sung to Michael Finnissy whose encouragement has been so important to me. In its choral version it was first sung on 11th October 1998 in St. Mary de Haura, New Shoreham (West Sussex) by Philip Adam's choir.

1. (Sung by all)

God of justice, wind the circle,
 Making all the cosmos one,
 Show us in millennial visions,
 How on earth Your will is done;
 Help us see the mercy flowing
 From the wounding of Christ's side;
 Heal us with compassion spreading
 As a purifying tide.

2. (Sung by the choir to the tune *Hildegard* by June Boyce-Tillman)

God of dreams and intuition
 Inspiration from the night,
 Temper reason's rigid systems
 With the leap of faith's insight.
 God of passion, fill our knowing
 With Divine authority
 And a sense of mystery leading
 To a right humility.

3. (Sung by all)

God of faith's heroic journey,
 May Your Truth direct our way;

To hold means to minimise risk and to reconcile differences rather than to sharply accentuate them. Holding is a way of seeing with an eye towards maintaining minimum harmony, material resources and skills necessary for sustaining a child in safety.

Ruddick, Sara (1989), *Maternal thinking: Towards a Politics of Peace*, New York: Ballantine Books: p79

We pray especially for:

Those feeling alienated from family and friends

Those struggling to find an identity

The abused and the unloved

The broken and the wounded

The anxious and those who grieve

The angry and the distraught

The hungry and the needy

All creators and artists, especially musicians

All, who speak where many listen, write what many read, or perform where many will be present

All who exercise authority over the lives of others

Creative Spirit, encircle the world with Your mighty wings that they may be protected and strengthened by Your loving presence.

We offer these prayers in the name of One Who still shares the strength and the vulnerability of our humanity

Amen.

All standing

MINISTER: Fall in love with living

Wrestling with the chaos and the pain

Within yourself and within the world;

Join the celebration of life,

Dancing with the angels and the clowns,

And may the God of peace and joy,

Who is continually making all things new,

Embrace you

As a partner

In the divine creating.

ALL: Amen

All standing

HYMN:

This was originally written for a liturgy written by Nicola Slee for the Southwark Ordination Course in 1990 entitled *Broken Silence*; but it has been used for a wide variety of situations including weddings and funerals and a service for World Aids Day in Westminster Abbey.

1. We shall go out with hope of resurrection.
We shall go out, from strength to strength go on.
We shall go out and tell our stories boldly,
Tales of a love that will not let us go.
We'll sing our songs of wrongs that can be righted.
We'll dream our dreams of hurts that can be healed.
We'll weave a cloth of all the world united
Within the vision of a Christ who sets us free.
2. We'll give a voice to those who have not spoken.
We'll find the words for those whose lips are sealed.

Aged four, you came to school and said 'I am Jill. This is how I dress. This is how I speak. Do you like me? This is the note I sing. Do you like it?' If it conformed to the stereotype above, you found that your teacher both liked it and sang it herself. You gathered therefore that it was an acceptable sort of note to have. If, however, it wasn't, you were told not to sing. The process of the non-acceptance had begun.

One man in a group with which I was working described one of his earliest school memories thus:

'I was singing in a group. We stood in rows. The teacher came down the room. If we sang out of tune he slapped us. I have never liked the sound of my own voice, even my speaking voice.'

Boyce-Tillman June B. (1996) *Getting our Acts Together: Conflict resolution through Music*. Chapter in Liebmann Marian (ed.) *Arts Approaches to Conflict*, London: Jessica Kingsley p215

And praise him with the lyre of profound emotion, and with the harp of softness and gentleness.

And praise him with the timbrel of mortification and with the dance of exultation ...

And praise him with the strings of repentance, and with the organ of divine guidance.

Praise him also with cymbals of true joy. ...

In music...you can hear a twig coming into bud. You can hear the brightness of the spiritual light shining from heaven. You can hear the depth of thought of the prophets. You can hear the wisdom of the apostles spreading across the world. You can hear the blood pouring from the wounds of the martyrs. You can hear the innermost movements of a heart steeped in holiness. You can hear a young girl's joy at the beauty of God's earth. In music, creation echoes back to its creator its joy and exultation; it offers thanks for its very existence. You can also hear in music the harmony between people who once were enemies and now are friends. Music expresses the unity of the world as God first made it, and the unity which is restored through repentance and reconciliation....

Musical harmony softens hard hearts. It brings in them the moisture of reconciliation, and it invokes the Holy Spirit. When different voices sing in unity, they symbolise the simple tenderness of mutual love. When different voices blend in song, they symbolise the blending of thoughts and feelings which is the highest pleasure human beings can know.

All standing

SOLOISTS: *Magnificat*.

This is a setting of the words from The Book of Common Prayer which I wrote for a dance in a nativity play at St Mary's, Southampton in 1960.

All sitting

SERMON: Professor Elizabeth Stuart, Professor of Christian Theology

All sitting

ANTHEM: *Gugulethu* by June Boyce-Tillman

I found these words on the wall of a Xhosa household in South Africa.

I asked for strength and God gave me difficulties to make me strong;

I asked for wisdom and God gave me problems to learn to solve;

I asked for prosperity and God gave me brains to work;

I asked for courage and God gave me danger to overcome;

I asked for love and God gave me troubled people to help;

I asked for favours and God gave me opportunities.

I received nothing that I asked for

And everything I needed.

All sitting or kneeling

PRAYER (all)

God of justice and mercy,

We lay the brokenness of our world before You.

Empowerment

Challenging Procedures

Nurturing Procedures

Singing as Empowerment

Cultural Empowerment

Music in Health Promotion

Holy Spirit,
giving life to all life,
moving all creatures,
root of all things,
washing them clean,
wiping out their mistakes,
healing our wounds,
you are our true life,
luminous, wonderful,
awakening the heart from its ancient sleep.

(Hildegard of Bingen)

Litany - facing change

A. We are your pilgrim people, Lord, yet we fear to leave the trodden path

All: Come, Spirit, embolden us to embrace change

B. Help us, O Creator God, to abandon outworn ways of thinking and reinvisage the meaning of life

All: Come, Spirit of truth, give us the power of discernment of the way ahead

A. Loving Christ, we are called to walk in your footsteps yet we falter on the way

All: Send your spirit to infuse us with your generosity and courage

B. We find it hard to stand out against current false values

All: Come, Spirit of renewal, inspire us to work for change

A. Let us rejoice in all that God has done for us

All: May our hearts be open to joy.

All: Let us face the future with anticipation not fear. May we be prepared to sow seeds but not be anxious about the reaping. May we be thankful for our families, networks and communities but also use our gifts for those beyond.

Taize chant O Lord hear my prayer,

A Celebration of the Civil Partnership of Rosie Miles and Nicola Slee

After a civil ceremony in Pershore, Holland House at Copthorne, with its river, garden, ancient house and modern chapel, was the milieu for an imaginative and creative celebration.

The first station. *All gather under the large pine in the garden, with their previously written "leaves".*

Welcome and introductions

Leader Love is like a tree: deep rooted
With branches reaching outwards to others.
Like this tree, Rosie and Nicola's love
Has weathered storms and taken many knocks
Yet still stands tall and proud

Reading *(from Woman and nature, Susan Griffin: this looks at how branches and trees re inseparable, amazing in variety)*

Symbolic Action *Each person is invited to attach their leaf to ribbon on the tree.*

Leader As this tree gives shelter to many
All May our love be roomy and wide.

The Second Station – the river

All make their way down to overlook the river.

Leader Love is like a river: always changing,
Flowing onwards, full of strong currents.
Like this river, Rosie and Nicola's love
Will travel through many unknown landscapes:
Yet never running dry.

Reading *(Song of Songs 8:6-7)*

Set me as a seal upon your heart,
As a seal upon your arm;
For love is strong as death,
Passion as fierce as the grave.
Its flashes are flashes of fire,
a raging flame.
Many waters cannot quench love,
Neither can floods drown it.

keep warm; but how can one keep warm alone? And though one might prevail against another, two will withstand one. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Blessing of the rings

Leader May these rings be blessed, and you who wear them.
 May they be a sign of the pledges you have made.
 May the three strands remind you of your need of others
 And of the Other who sustains and upholds your lives.
 May you be strengthened to remain faithful
 to the vows you have made this day,
 and may your love grow deeper and stronger
 as the years pass.

Exchange of rings

 This ring is a sign of all that I am and all that I have.
 Receive it and treasure it as a token of our love;
 And of the love that is over and under all human loves.

Song We sing a love that sells all people free (*June Boyce Tillman*)

Blessing

All May the blessing of God,
 Giver of Life,
 Bearer of Pain,
 Maker of Love,
 Weave in and under and through
 the rest of this day
 and all the remainder of our loves and lives

*

and so to feast and party

*

The booklet for the celebration also included "further readings on the theme of love". These were the Confirmation by Edwin Muir, To say I love you by Carter Heyward, Two lighthouses by Julia Darling, A day of blessing by Jim Cotter, So many kinds of love by Nicola Slee, Given by

CWO - Liturgy July 3rd.

Opening song Come Spirit Circle Us (June Boyce Tillman).

Leader: Just before the time of the Ascension the apostles met together and were told by Jesus that

"You will receive the power of the Holy Spirit which will come upon you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria and indeed to the earth's remotest end".
(Acts 1: 6-8)

We too are called upon to be witnesses to the way, the truth and the light and to act prophetically when we see the way twisted, the truth distorted and the light dimmed.

If we are to work and pray together we need both to be one as a community and also to affirm our individual gifts. As part of the binding process we need to know each other by name.
(get into pairs preferably not with someone you know well, tell your partner your name and where you feel your gift or potential for ministry lies (2 mins each way) then each of the partners introduces the other to the circle)

Song Will you come and follow me (1st 3 verses) (Iona)

Penitential liturgy

Reader A: O God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, pattern of mutual love, forgive us for failing to understand that being Church means loving well and accepting each other.

All: Help us to create a loving community.

Reader B O God of justice and integrity, forgive us for the times we have not indentified ourselves with the oppressed and deprived, and for the times when we have kept silent in the face of injustice

All Give us courage and the strenmgth to uphold eachother

Reader C Loving Creator, in whose image both women and men have been made, forgive us in colluding with a distorted understanding of what it means to be human or divine

All Help us to mirror the truth

Reader D Merciful and compassionate God, forgive your Church for treating women as inferior and excluding them from the ordained ministry of your sacraments and word.

All Help us to stand for the wholeness of your people and learn to counter discrimination and prejudice.

Leader, in this month of the feast of Mary Magdalen, let us recall in prayer the experience of this so close follower of Jesus.

All

Christ our healer
beloved and remembered by women,
speak to the grief which makes us forget,
and the terror that makes us cling,
and give us back our name:
that we may greet you clearly,
and proclaim your risen life
Amen.

(All Desires Known, Janet Morley)

(Short silence)

Leader

Moved by a compulsion of the Holy Spirit we cannot remain ignorant of
the injustice in our midst.

We long for all humanity to be acknowledged as equal, particularly among
the Community of the Church.
So we pray:

All

Grieving for the lost gifts of so many women, we ask you "God of all
peoples" to bring insight and humility to all those in positions of
dominance and an understanding that the ascended Lord called us all to
act, doing Christ's work here and now.

We ask this in the name of

God our Creator
Jesus our Redeemer
and Spirit our Sustainer

Song Sophia

LUNCHE TIME AGAPE

Song We sing a love (June Boyce Tillman)

Prayer. Behold I am with you (p87, Bread of Tomorrow)

Agape Prayers said together

As the bread that is scattered on the hillside,
was gathered together and made one,
so too, we, your people,
scattered throughout the world,
are gathered together around your table,
and become one.

(The bread is broken and passed around the group, but please do
not eat it.)

As grapes grown in the field,
are gathered together and pressed into wine,
so too are we drawn together
and pressed by our times to share a common lot
and are transformed into your life-blood
for all.

(The wine is poured).

On passing the bread the suggested words are the bread of sustenance,
to be repeated by the person receiving it, similarly with the wine, the
cup of solidarity.

As a final act before eating lunch all hold hands and sing shalom (x 3)
and then greet each other with the peace.

Concluding liturgy

Reading of aims of CWO

Anointing of each other, commissioning us to go out and spread the Good News.

Prayer on the Visitation (All Desires Known, Janet Morley)

All

O God our deliverer,
you cast down the mighty,
and lift up those of no account
as Elizabeth and Mary embraced
with songs of liberation,
so may we also be pregnant with your Spirit
and affirm one another in hope for the world,
through Jesus Christ, Amen.

Last 2 verses of IONA hymn

MAGNIFICAT OF Now

John 2:1-12

My spirit watches for the potent moment, Yahweh,
and in the midst of this celebration
you are a throbbing presence.

All of us are here.

All of us are ready.

Yes, in this time the nearness of your blessing is felt.

"Wine they have not," I said to him.

"What is this to me and thee," he said.

"Not yet has come my hour."

Holy is this work now beginning.

Blessed is the first step.

Blessed are those who, prepared,

have the courage to begin.

Blessed are you, Yahweh, the enabler of deeds

great and simple for these people today.

The fruit of this work offers nourishment to generation after generation for those who harvest it.

You show us the potency of people with a clear commitment;
you scatter the energies of those who vacillate.
You remove the moderators and the intercessors;
you speak directly to those who speak to you.
You provide answers for those who question;
to those who know the answers, you are silent.

You are here now, the Available One,
for the work of these times,
mindful of your continuing newness
... according to the traditions of all searching people ...
mindful of the continuing newness of each one of us,
we come with open minds
to accomplish the work of this day.

GRACE

We are grateful for the greening power that gives this food its life,
Gives this food its life, gives this food its life.

We are mindful of the people who are on the edge of life
And offer these prayers to God.

June Boyce-Tillman August 2001

et

Let us pray:

Spirit of God, Spirit of our Creator-Mother,
We do not pray: "Come" —
for we believe that you are already present with us.
You penetrate all creation,
you bring it to be,
You are cause of its identity, its goodness, its beauty.
Your Presence penetrates each one assembled here —
for you made each to be to your image and likeness,
you made us to reflect your goodness, your beauty —
on the world's many areas of shadow and darkness.

We call to you: Penetrate us —
Penetrate each one —
Penetrate us together —
with the brilliance of your light, the dynamism of your strength
We want to diffuse your Presence
in those as yet unlit places in church and society
where you dwell, but are as yet unrecognised.

We open ourselves to be
penetrated by your presence —
to be absorbed, to be saturated with your divine indwelling —
to be absorbed in your divine purpose:
THAT ALL MAY BE ONE —

women and men — in your image and likeness

Spirit of God, PENETRATE US !

Kor.

I typed it quickly to make it legible + to catch the main point —

assembled in your garden...
I will be with you at the meeting ! And here 's my love to all
her but like the Celts of old, I believe that her "spirit"
I'm sure someone will have an obituary word for Anne. You'll miss
I wish you the best of luck and the best of weather for the AGM
I hope it or some of it is of some use.

Ianthe Dear,

Alliance
Internationale
Jeanne d'Arc



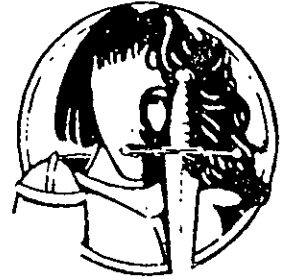
FOUNDED 1911
London

ST. JOAN'S INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE

Non-Governmental Organization having consultative status with the
Economic and Social Council United Nations

TO SECURE DE JURE AND DE FACTO EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN IN STATE, SOCIETY AND CHURCH

Alleanza
Internazionale
Giovanna d'Arco



ALL On the same night that he was betrayed,
the Lord Jesus took bread,
and thanked God for it,
and broke it,
and he said,
'This is my body, broken for you;
do this in memory of me.'

The bread is broken and shared.

7 Let us remember now, how after supper
Jesus took the cup and said:

ALL 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood.
Whenever you drink it,
do this in memory of me.'

Wine is passed round. After a short silence, the following is said:

8 Let us proclaim the mystery of faith.

ALL When we eat this bread and drink this cup
we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,
until you come in glory!

9 May the blessing + of God,
God's peace and love,
rest upon our table.

ALL Amen.

After a longer silence, a simple meal is shared.

EMMAUS TABLE LITURGY

*After readings, discussion and a period of silent reflection,
someone begins:*

1 Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus,
we pause to break bread together.

2 May our eyes be opened,
and in this act of common sharing
may we see the Risen Lord,
in one another.

3 May we see the Lord of Life in our food,
our conversation,
and lives shared in common.

Bread may be lifted up by one person saying:

4 Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation;
You bring forth bread from the earth.

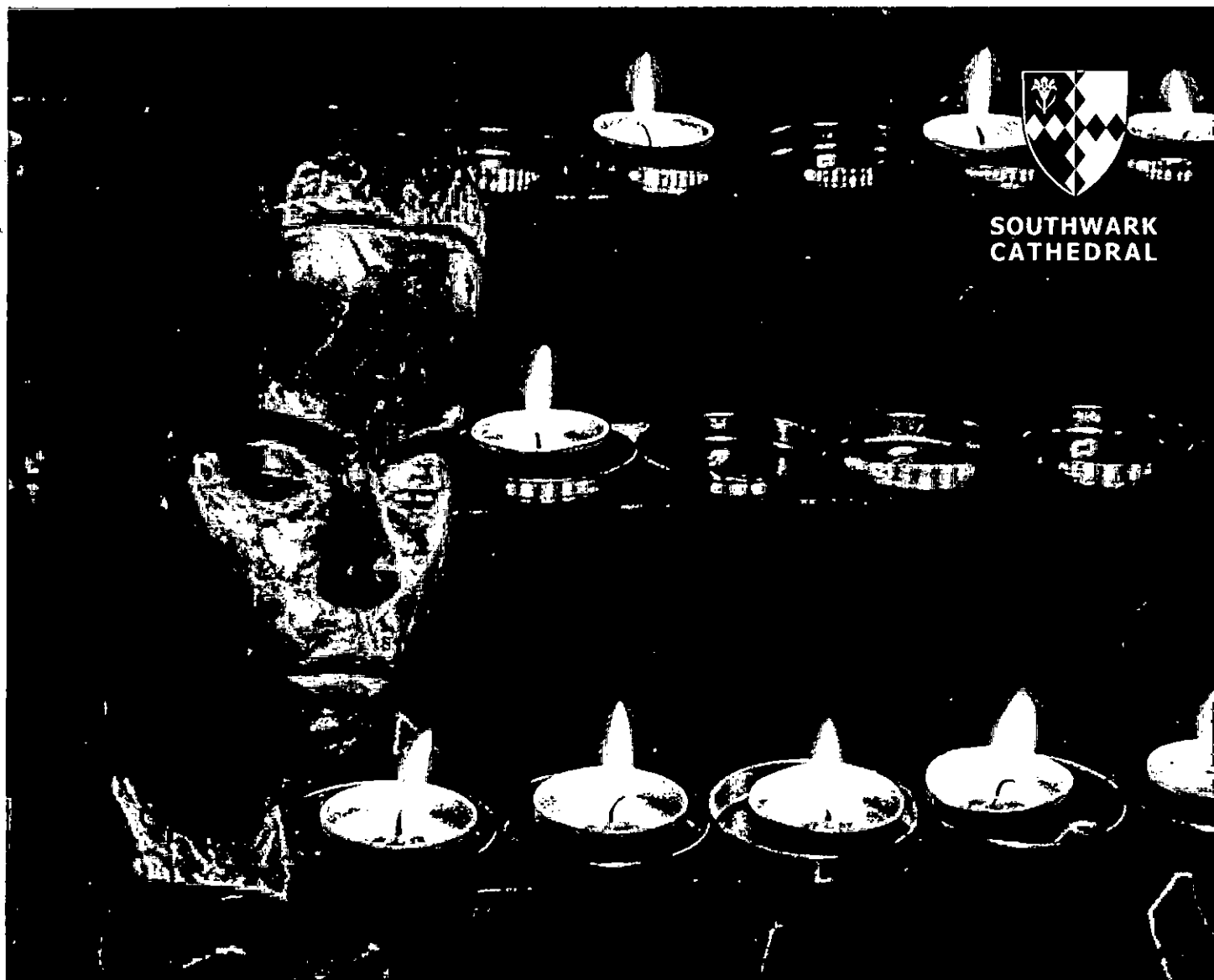
ALL Blessed be God for ever.

A glass of wine may be lifted up by one person saying:

5 Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation;
Creator of the fruit of the vine.

ALL Blessed be God for ever.

6 As we prepare to eat and drink together,
let us remember:



Service of Light

LED BY *The Southwark Feminist Theology Group*

Sunday 9 September 2012, 6.30pm

SONG Wait for the Lord (Taize)

Mixed Voices
Lento ♩ = 48

Wait for the Lord, his day is near.

Wait for the Lord be strong, take heart!

PRAYER

We give thanks for Mary's intimacy with God:
The intimacy of being called and chosen,
The intimacy of being touched and overshadowed by the Spirit,
The intimacy of consenting to God's new birth in her life.

We give thanks for Mary's intimacy with Elizabeth:
The intimacy of being recognised and known,
The intimacy of being held and embraced,
The intimacy of being encouraged and affirmed.

We give thanks for the sharing of Mary's intimacy with the world:
The intimacy of sharing God's blessing with others,
The intimacy of participating in God's justice in the world,
The intimacy of extending God's friendship to all people and places.

Amen.

SONG Psalm 139

D G/D D A/D D A D D/C# G/B D9/F#

1 O God, you search me and you know me. All my thoughts lie

o - pen to your gaze. When I walk or lie down you are be -

- fore me: ev - er the ma - ker and keep - er of my days.

O God, you search me and you know me.
 All my thoughts lie open to your gaze.
 When I walk or lie down, you are before me:
 Ever the maker and keeper of my days.

You know my resting and my rising.
 You discern my purpose from afar,
 and with love everlasting you besiege me:
 In ev'ry moment of life and death, you are.

Before a word is on my tongue, Lord,
 you have known its meaning through and through.
 You are with me beyond my understanding:
 God of my present, my past and future too.

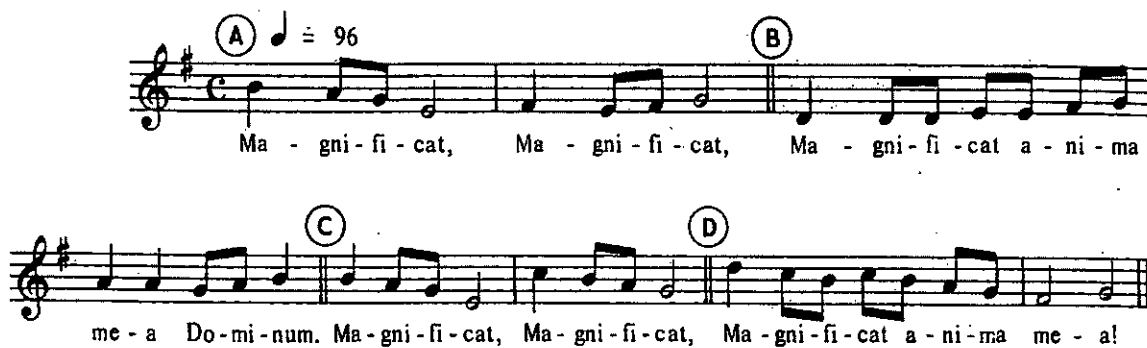
Although your Spirit is upon me,
 still I search for shelter from your light.
 There is nowhere on earth I can escape you:
 Even the darkness is radiant in your sight.

For you created me and shaped me,
 gave me life within my mother's womb.
 For the wonder of who I am, I praise you:
 Safe in your hands, all creation is made new.

WORD OF GOD Luke 1. 26-38

REFLECTION ON THE WORD Nicky von Fraunhofer, Southwark Cathedral Ordinand

SONG Magnificat (Taizé)



INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Holy and incarnate one,
at whose unexpected touch
the ordinary world
is charged with God:

we pray for those
whose hardship is overwhelming, who cannot find you;
who live in poverty, anxiety, and hunger;
whose lives are fearful or lonely;
who are exploited, exhausted or ill.

For the Word was made flesh
And dwelt among us.

We pray for those
whose ambition is overwhelming, who do not want to find you;
whose lives are choked with overwork or consumption;
who have chosen an unreal path;
who have hardened their hearts.

For the Word was made flesh
And dwelt among us.

We pray for those
who have begun to find you, and are overwhelmed;
for whom the risk of healing is too painful;
who are afraid of your embrace,
and fear your energetic power
to reconstitute the world.

For the Word was made flesh
And dwelt among us.

COLLECT

O God,
you fulfil our desire
beyond what we can bear:
as Mary gave her appalled assent
to your intimate promise,
so may we open ourselves also
to contain your life within us,
through Jesus Christ,
Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

SONG

QUEM PASTORES 8.8.8.7.

*German 14th-century carol
arranged June Boyce-Tillman (1943-)*

Gently

Ma - ry, cho - sen to be mo - ther Of a child in mys - tery hid - den,

Not o'er-come by fear or ter - ror, Teach us how to per - se - vere.

1. Mary chosen to be mother
of a child in myst'ry hidden,
not o'ercome by fear or terror,
teach us how to persevere

2. Mary, wand'ring through the desert,
trav'ling on uncertain, anxious,
held by arms, supporting, loving,
teach us how to persevere

3. Mary, reaching Beth'lem's safety,
resting in a place so lowly,
giving birth to painful hoping,
teach us how to persevere

4. Mary, dreaming of a future
when her son would grow to manhood,
loving, trusting, planning, hoping,
teach us how to persevere

ACCLAMATION

**Into his joy, the Lord has received you,
Virgin God-bearer, Mother of Christ.**

**You have beheld the King in his beauty,
Mary, daughter of Israel.**

**You have made answer for the creation
to the redeeming will of God.**

**Light, fire and life, divine and immortal,
joined to our nature you have brought forth,**

**that to the glory of God the father,
heaven and earth might be restored.**

BLESSING

**May the Maker's blessing be yours,
encircling you round,
above you,
within you.**

**May the Son's blessing be yours,
the wine and the water,
the bread and the stories,
to feed you,
to remind you.**

**May the Spirit's blessing be yours,
the wind, the fire,
the still small voice,
to comfort you,
to disturb you.**

Amen.

Southwark Feminist Theology Group

Our aim is to contribute women's voices and spirituality to our shared life and worship

We are an ecumenical group of women who meet for worship, reading, food and discussion. We usually take it in turns to host and prepare our monthly sessions; occasionally we go to shows and exhibitions. We also enjoy week-ends in beautiful places a couple of times a year.

We try to bring speakers to Southwark Cathedral for open gatherings and joint sessions with other groups once a year or so. Each year for the last few years, we have helped organise one of the Cathedral's monthly Sunday evening services of light.

We welcome new members and invitations to meet, with others, to do feminist theology.

To join the mailing list, please contact Ann Orton
ann_orton@hotmail.com

Southwark Cathedral,
London Bridge,
London SE1 9DA
www.southwarkcathedral.org.uk



Feminist
Theology
Group

SOURCES:

Opening prayer from The book of Mary; Nicola Slee: SPCK
Psalm 139 Bernadette Farrell © 1992; Published by OCP Publications
Intercessory Prayer from All Desires Known; Janet Morley: SPCK
Song: Mary's Journey: June Boyce-Tillman :tune Quem Pastores
Acclamation: Anthem to the Theotokos; The Daily Office: SSF, OSB West Malling
Blessing adapted from The Maker's blessing; Wild Goose Publications.

IMAGES

Front image adapted from the Annunciation, Durham Cathedral: http://www.images-on-durham.co.uk/photo_8406401
Rear image from fresco by Massacio: detail of woman and child from SS Peter and Paul distributing Alms c1427 http://prints.culturelabel.com/art/470661/Detail_of_the_woman_and_child_from_St_Peter_and_St_Paul



SPIRITUALITY

A Friendship Blessing

May you be blessed with good friends.

May you learn to be a good friend to yourself.

May you be able to journey to that place in your soul where there is great love, warmth, feeling and forgiveness.

May this change you.

May it transfigure that which is negative, distant or cold in you.

May you be brought in to the real passion, kinship and affinity of belonging.

May you treasure your friends.

May you be good to them and may you be there for them; may they bring you all the blessings, challenges, truth and light that you need for your journey.

May you never be isolated; but may you always be in the gentle nest of belonging with your anam cara.

John O'Donohue

USE FOR PRAYER

Dear God, please make us dangerous women.
May we be women who acknowledge our power
to change, and grow,
and be radically alive for God.
May we be healers of wounds and righters of
wrongs.
May we weep with those who weep and speak
for those who cannot speak for themselves.
May we cherish children, embrace the elderly,
and empower the poor.
May we pray deeply and teach wisely.
by the power of Christ, may we change the
world.
Dear God, please make us dangerous women.
Amen.



Dangerous Women Creed
by Lynne Hybels

Carrying the Cross

Response: Jesus, grant us strength to carry our cross.

† On those days when life seems too demanding with all its cares, burdens, and concerns . . .

† When we experience great loneliness deep inside and the pain of separation fills our spirits . . .

† When we feel the pain of our world and unite in compassion with the Earth's suffering people . . .

† When we struggle with decision-making and the time comes to make good choices about our lives . . .

† When we are with others in their physical pain or when we vigil with one who has a terminal illness . . .

† When we are asked to go the extra mile, to be generous with our time and our presence . . .

† When we feel weary and worn out, when it seems like all of our energy has been drained away . . .

† When we are challenged to risk our security and to accept new growth in our relationship with you . . .

† When we experience the effects of aging or extended illness on our bodies or our minds . . .

† When we feel discouraged, desolate, and depressed and want to withdraw from others . . .

† When worries and concerns choke our peacefulness and leave us with anxiety and fear . . .

† When we harbor old wounds and are called to offer or to receive forgiveness . . .

Together

Crucified Jesus, help us to take up our cross day by day. Through these crosses we can grow closer to you. Help us to lean on you and to learn from you. May we not give in to self-pity or self-doubt. Rather, let us trust in your presence which strengthens us. Encourage us on our tomb-like days. Remind us of your resurrection. Help us to keep our vision focused on life and growth. Amen.

The Fruit of Silence is Prayer
The Fruit of Prayer is Faith
The Fruit of Faith is Love
The Fruit of Love is Service
The Fruit of Service is Peace

Mother Teresa

Women's liturgy – 8 January 2016

Theme of today: Renew

We go round, say our name and where we have come from today

Song: love's energy Deep in creation's heart an energy calls (June Boyce-Tillman)

We read the following prayer (in groups A and B)

WWS Prayer

- | | |
|--|---|
| (A) Spirit of Life, bless us
as we bless each other | (A) We are carriers of a new vision
committed in our efforts
to become a community |
| (B) We are on a journey to bring justice
and liberation
to all women in the world | which lives simply, loves tenderly and acts justly;
which calls us to be creative, loving and free |
| (A) We have a vision that the struggles
--of our foremothers
will not be in vain | (B) To that end,
expand the horizons of our imaginations;
awaken in us
dangerous dreams of a new tomorrow;
rekindle in our hearts
the fire of prophetic enthusiasm
so that our network may continue
to be a sacred place
where God and women meet |
| (B) We dream dreams for the women
who come after us
that they may be upright and strong
in their lives and work | |

SILENCE

Mairin Valdez wrote in the last WWS newsletter on her journey about climate change. She has adopted 7 Rs, to which I added an 8th:

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| Refuse | Reuse |
| Repair | Recover |
| Recycle | Respect |
| Reduce | Renew |

Use these words to reflect on what you want to do in and throughout the New Year. Write down your thoughts on one of the flower cards.

We share our reflections aloud or silently by adding our writings into the middle.

That we may be healed – adapted from a litany by Therese Vanier (Epiphanie 1999)

That oppressed people and those who oppress them may free each other...
That those who are handicapped and those who think they are not may help each other...
That those who need someone to listen may touch the hearts of those who are too busy...
That the homeless may bring joy to those who open their doors reluctantly...
That the lonely may heal those who think they are self-sufficient....
That the poor may melt the hearts of the rich...
That the seekers for truth may give to those who are satisfied that they have found it...
That they dying who do not want to die may be comforted by those who find it hard to live....
That the unloved may be allowed to unlock the hearts of those who cannot love....
That prisoners may find true freedom and liberate others from fear....
That those who sleep on the streets may share their gentleness with those who cannot understand them....
That the hungry may tear the veil from the eyes of those who do not hunger after justice...
That those who live without hope may cleanse the hearts of those who are afraid to live...
That the weak may confound the strong and save them...
That those who inflict hurt may be bound by law and transformed by true and firm compassion...
That the cries of the violated may be absorbed by the prayers of the pain-bearers....
That those who are violent may be overwhelmed by those who are totally vulnerable...
That we may be healed...

Intercessions:

We light a candle and remember those people, occasions, where GOD's love was present

SILENCE

We share bread and wine together in memory of God's son, Jesus Christ.
His life on earth, over 2000 years ago, has transformed countless lives and his call to follow him has called us all here into this room to worship God, our creator, and to remember today and every day of our life what Jesus has taught us.
Let us give thanks to our creator for the gift of Jesus Christ, our friend and our brother, our food and our nourishment.

We share bread and water

Song:

We come to share our story
We come to break the bread
We come to know our rising from the dead

Final Song: God the strengthener (June Boyce-Tillman)

things... God's love never ends... So faith, hope love abide in God, but the greatest of these is love'.

Angelina and Dean we now come to the blessing on your recent marriage as you bless and renew your vows to each other:

'I promise to take full responsibility for myself

For my spiritual, mental and physical well- being

I create me, I take half the responsibility for our marriage

Together we create our marriage

Because of this understanding our possibilities are limitless'.

May God be with us all the days of our lives. AMEN

(Myra will seal this blessing by making the sign of the cross on their foreheads and on the palms of their hands).

Prayer: May there always be work for your hands to do

May your purse always hold a coin or two

May the sun always shine upon your window pane,

May a rainbow be certain to follow each rain

May the hand of a friend always be near you and

May God fill your heart with gladness to cheer you.

Final prayer and wish all a very happy, joyful evening etc.

May the road rise up to meet you

May the wind be always at your back

May the sun shine warm upon your face

The rains fall softly upon your fields and until we meet again

May God hold you all in the palm of her hand.



All is Well

Death is nothing at all
I have only slipped away into the next room
I am I and you are you
Whatever we were to each other
That we still are

Call me by my old familiar name
Speak to me in the easy way which you always used
Put no difference into your tone

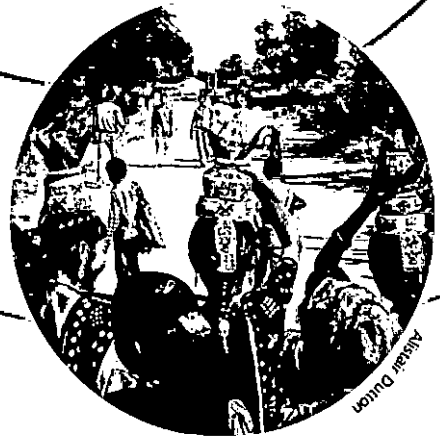
Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow

Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes we enjoyed together
Play, smile, think of me, pray for me
Let my name be ever the household word that it always was
Let it be spoken without effect
Without the trace of a shadow on it

Life means all that it ever meant
It is the same as it ever was
There is absolutely unbroken continuity

Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight?
I am but waiting for you
For an interval
Somewhere very near
Just around the corner
All is well

Food for the Journey a pilgrimage



stage one

As pilgrims we stand on the threshold.

O Lord hear my prayer.

Greeting and welcome

Leader: To be a pilgrim is to go on a journey. We will move out from our familiar places to take a path of discovery, where we will be open to new possibilities. Our journey can bring about change; change in those who take part and change in the world. In so doing heaven and earth are brought closer together.

Since a pilgrimage brings heaven and earth closer together, it also has the power to bring people closer to each other. Today we gather to undertake this journey together. In our minds and hearts we are joined by pilgrims from the poor countries of the South – from Africa, Asia and Latin America – whose lives are affected by the unfairness of trade in our world. We will be listening, to their stories, praying with and for them, and asking God to inspire us to act for change.

Symbolic

Opening litany

ALL

Leader: In our journeying, in our celebrating:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Leader: In times of plenty, in times of pain:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Leader: In our concern for our world, in our search for justice:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Leader: In our awareness, in our encounters:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Leader: In our care for each other, in our response to God's call:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Leader: In our fellowship, in our sharing:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Leader: In our seeking, in our hoping:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Song of the prophets – voices from the South

You will now hear stories from different countries. At the end of each story you will hear the words:

Let justice flow like a river.

(Amos 5:24)

Your response is: And goodness like a never failing stream.

Act of dedication of the basket

Prayer

The basket is carried to each stage, where a traded food will be added to it.



stage two

As pilgrims we celebrate God's generosity.

ALL

Leader: In our journeying, in our celebrating:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Opening reflection

Leader: We begin our journey by celebrating God's generosity. As creator of the universe, God shows love for the world in the abundance and variety of food and crops provided for our health and well-being. God, from the very beginning of time, and with each new day, desires the good things of creation to be shared fairly by all.

ALL

Readings

Reader A

There will be a pause for reflection after each reading.

God destined the earth and all it contains for all people and all nations so that all created things would be shared fairly by all humanity.

Gaudium et Spes, 1965

From your high walls you water the mountains,
Satisfying the earth with the fruit of your works:
For cattle you make the grass grow,
And for people the plants they need,
To bring forth food from the earth,
And wine to cheer people's hearts,
Oil to make their faces glow,
Food to make them sturdy of heart.

Psalms 104: 13-15

Pause for Reflection

Story from the South

* Veg: + potato - carrot

Reader 1: I'm Feliciano Martinez from Honduras, a country where most people depend on farming. I grow vegetables and potatoes, and I believe the land is God's inheritance to all. I think we should produce food firstly in order to decrease poverty and tackle malnutrition. Exports should not be a priority while people do not have enough food to eat.

Let justice flow like a river:

Response: And goodness like a never failing stream.

Leader: As we walk to the next stage let us think about what Feliciano says. Let's

consider the world we have inherited, which will be passed on to future generations, and ask why it is so different from the world God intended.

Leader: In our journeying, in our celebrating:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.



Move to next stage.

Prayer. Make Poverty History.



stage three

As pilgrims we carry only what we need.

Leader: In moments of plenty, in times of pain:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Opening reflection

Leader: As pilgrims we take only what we need for the journey. Carrying more than we need will weigh us down. Taking more than we need will mean that others have less. The way of the world suggests that greed is good, but our faith calls us to take a different path – a path that leads to a better life for all.

Readings

Reader B Esther

There will be a pause for reflection after each reading.

Jesus said: "Look, I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Take no purse with you, no haversack, no sandals. Salute no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, let your first words be, 'Peace to this house!'"

Luke 10: 3-5

Never has the human race enjoyed such an abundance of wealth, resources and economic power, and yet a huge proportion of the world's citizens are still tormented by hunger and poverty.

Gaudium et Spes, 1965

Pause for Reflection

Story from the South

coffee

Reader 2: My name is Margaret and I'm from Kenya. To me trade is the exchange of goods and services. But when trade is an end in itself, you lose sight of the original purpose. Profit is valued more

highly than people. In my own village, the number of children going to school has fallen dramatically. The reason is that parents have no money because they can't sell their coffee. Fair profit is okay, but the world trading system at the moment is not fair.

Reader 2 - Let justice flow like a river:

Response: And goodness like a never failing
ALL stream.

Leader: As we walk to the next stage let us consider Margaret's village. When you go shopping do you choose fairly traded goods that help poor producers in developing countries?

Leader: In times of plenty, in times of pain:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.



Move to next stage.

Walk to back of Church.

"We are Marching."



stage four

As pilgrims we follow a path taken by people before us.

Leader: In our concern for our world, in our search for justice:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Opening reflection

Leader: As people of history and people of faith, we follow in the footsteps of other pilgrims before us. The Christian message was spread along trade routes. Now these same paths connect us to our sisters and brothers across the world. Goods and products, shaped by human hands, are carried, shipped, driven and flown to our homes and tables. These goods connect us to one another.

Readings *Reader C.*

There will be a pause for reflection after each reading.

But Ruth said,
'Wherever you go, I shall go,

Wherever you live, I shall live.
Your people will be my people,
And your God will be my God.'

Ruth 1:16

We are one human family. By simply being born into this world, we are of one inheritance and one stock with every other human being. This oneness expresses itself in all the richness and diversity of the human family: in different races, cultures, languages and histories. And we are called to recognise the basic solidarity of the human family as the fundamental condition of our life together on this earth.

Pope John Paul II, World Day of Peace, 1987

Pause for Reflection.

Story from the South

Sugar

Reader 3: I'm David Dlamini, and I've been farming sugar cane in South Africa for the past 27 years. When I started, Europe imported most of its sugar. But today, due to subsidies that cover over half the cost of production, the European Union is the second-largest sugar exporter and it has pushed world prices right down. Last year I had to give up. My cane is rotting in the fields. It isn't worth farming any more; my expenses never cover my costs.

Reader 3 Let justice flow like a river:

Response: And goodness like a never failing
ALL stream.

Leader: As we walk to the next stage let's consider David's experience. How can we encourage change in trade rules that currently widen the gap between rich and poor countries?

Leader: In our concern for our world, in our search for justice:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.



Move to next stage.

Prayer.



stage five

As pilgrims we walk with others and with God.

Leader: In our awareness, in our encounters:
Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

stage eight

As pilgrims we journey
in hope.

Leader: In our seeking, in our hoping:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Opening reflection *ALL*

Leader: As we continue on our spiritual journey as pilgrims, we see the needs of the world around us. Through our hope in God's promise we know our journey's end. Our task is to take sure and firm steps on the path that will help bring about God's kingdom here on earth.

Readings

There will be a pause for reflection after each reading.

Al: On this mountain, for all peoples,
Yahweh Sabaoth is preparing
A banquet of rich food,
A banquet of fine wines,
Of succulent food, of well-strained wines.
On this mountain, he has destroyed
The veil which used to veil all peoples,
The pall enveloping all nations;
He has destroyed death for ever.

'Look, this is our God,
in him we put our hope
that he should save us,
this is Yahweh, we put our hope in him.
Let us exult and rejoice
Since he has saved us.'

Here the Deacons *ALL* ✓ *Isaiah 25: 6-9*
Hope keeps us going. We may not be able to help everyone, we are a relatively small organisation, but we can help some, maybe hundreds or even thousands, and that has to be worthwhile. The people themselves are filled with hope, and that gives us strength. What we need is solidarity with people in the UK.

Maria, CAFOD partner, Mexico

Leader
Leader: I invite you to close your eyes as we picture and pray for a better world for all.

Leader *ALL* *Imagination*
Loving Creator God,
We gaze in wonder
At the splendour of your creation.
We see a banquet spread before us,
Rich carpeted fields of yellowing grain,
And overflowing baskets of ripe fruit.
We see a banquet prepared for all peoples,
Of fine wines and rich food,
A generous feast for all to share.

Help us to learn from your generosity,
How to share our bread with the hungry,
And open our hearts to the poor,
To commit ourselves to preparing
A banquet for all peoples,
A generous feast for all to share.
Amen.

ALL
Leader: We open our eyes to our surroundings; mindful that bringing about God's kingdom begins with each one of us, at this time, in this place. Spirit of God, we go out from this place, renewed, inspired and guided by your presence in our hearts.

ALL
Leader: In our journeying, in our celebrating:
Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Leader: In times of plenty, in times of pain:
Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Leader: In our concern for our world, in our search for justice:
Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Leader: In our awareness, in our encounters:
Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Leader: In our care for each other, in our response to God's call:
Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Leader: In our fellowship, in our sharing:
Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Leader: In our seeking, in our hoping:
Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

(p612. Shalom, Hold hands. Hymn)

CAFOD

Romero Close, Stockwell Road, London SW9 9TY

Tel: 020 7733 7900 Fax: 020 7274 9630

E-mail: campaign@cafod.org.uk Web: www.cafod.org.uk



Opening reflection *ALL*

Leader: As pilgrims we walk as a group. We keep pace with one another, making our way together, ensuring that no one falls behind. We listen, finding out what we hold in common, recognising Christ in those we meet. We draw strength from one another and from God's presence amongst us, giving witness to the values we share.

Readings *Reader D.*

There will be a pause for reflection after each reading.

Now that very same day, two of them were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. And it happened that as they were talking together and discussing it, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but their eyes were prevented from recognising him.

Luke 24: 13-16

Even though you're British and I'm Filipino, you're Christian and I'm Muslim, we're all brothers and sisters. It's just like a boat and we're all riding in the same boat. If it overturns all of us will drown.

Mufun Datu

Pause for Reflection *back of church* **Story from the South** *Milk*

Reader 4: I'm Father Sarath Iddamalagoda. I want to tell you that in Sri Lanka it's not easy to get fresh milk. Here multinational corporations control every aspect of agriculture. The malnourished mothers cry that they can't afford to feed their children. But the milk companies flourish.

Let justice flow like a river:

Response: And goodness like a never failing stream.

Leader: As we walk to the next stage we will think about the people of Sri Lanka and ask why so many people are being left behind and left out when we live in a world of plenty?

Leader: In our awareness, in our encounters:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.



stage six

As pilgrims we share what we have.

Leader: In our care for each other, in our response to God's call:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Opening reflection *ALL*

Leader: As companions we become aware of others' needs and concerns. We respond gladly, sharing what we have to benefit the whole group. We are motivated by the knowledge that all are equal in dignity and have value in the sight of God.

Readings *Reader E.*

There will be a pause for reflection after each reading.

If one of the brothers or one of the sisters is in need of clothes and has not enough food to live on, and one of you says to them, 'I wish you well; keep yourself warm and eat plenty,' without giving them these bare necessities of life, then what good is that?

James 2: 15-16

At the moment money rules life ... money comes before Christian values. Through a spirit of co-operation we can make trade work for everyone. The idea must be that my profit is not only my profit, but also the fruit of everyone's labours.

George Anastacio, CAFOD partner, Mozambique

Story from the South

*Onion
Bans*

Reader 5: I'm Roxana Liendo from Bolivia. Here the government has opened up our markets to competition. This has driven down prices for everyday food like onions, potatoes and fruit. This is bad news for small-scale peasant farmers when they come to sell what they have grown. They are already very poor. Our delegates negotiating at the World Trade Organisation only represent their own interests, the interests of business, putting aside those of the small-scale peasant farmers.

Let justice flow like a river:

Response: And goodness like a never failing stream.



Move to next stage.

*Walk to front of church
We are Marching*

Leader: As we move to the next stage we will remember Roxana's story and ask how we can ensure that everyone's concerns are heard and heeded when important trade decisions are made.

Leader: In our care for each other, in our response to God's call:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.



Move to next stage.

*Prayer
Make Prov. Hist.*



stage seven

Through our actions, and today as pilgrims, we are visible signs of God's concern for the world.

Leader: In our fellowship, in our sharing:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Opening reflection *ALL*

Leader: As pilgrims, moving out, into and through our world, we witness to our faith every day. Our beliefs are made visible in the way we treat those we meet. They can also be seen in the way we treat those whom we may never meet face to face, but to whom we are connected through our involvement in trade.

Readings *Reader F*

There will be a pause for reflection after each reading.

Listen to this, you who crush the needy and reduce the oppressed to nothing, you who say, 'When will New Moon be over so that we can sell our corn, and Sabbath, so that we can market our wheat? Then we can make the bushel-measurer smaller and the shekel-weight bigger, by fraudulently tampering with the scales. We can buy up the weak for silver and the poor for a pair of sandals, and even get a price for the sweepings of the wheat'. Yahweh has sworn by the pride of Jacob, never will I forget anything they have done.

Amos 8: 4-7

It is a question of building a world where everyone no matter what their race, religion or nationality, can live a fully human life, freed from

servitude imposed on him by others or by natural forces over which he has not sufficient control; a world where freedom is not an empty word and where the poor man Lazarus can sit down at the same table as the rich man.

Pope Paul VI, Populorum Progressio.

Story from the South

Beans.

Reader 6: I'm Maria Atilano from Mexico. Maize and beans represent our life here. In other places, like the US, maize is just another food, but for us, it is life itself. Since Mexico signed up to the North American Free Trade Agreement cheap corn has flooded in making life impossible for small-scale farmers here. So many people are hungry now. We want trade to take place in a situation of peace and respect for human rights – right now it doesn't.

Reader 6 Let justice flow like a river:

Response: And goodness like a never failing stream.

Leader: As we move to the next stage let us recall Maria's community and ask how we can use our voice to call for justice in international trade.

Leader: In our fellowship, in our sharing:

Response: Guide our ways, Lord.

Symbolic action

A large bunch of grapes, symbolising the fruits of the earth, is passed around the group. As you offer the fruit to your neighbour say:

This fruit represents all the fruits of the earth, given by God, to be shared equally amongst all. By the spirit of the living God, may we learn to share what we have and work to create a fairer world.

And your neighbour says: Amen



Move to next stage.

*Prayer
Make Prov Hist.*

Prayer on a theme of relationships

All: God, our loving creator, it is your will to gather us all
as one family in yourself.

Fill our hearts with the fire of your love,
and the desire to ensure justice for all our sisters and brothers.
May we secure justice and equality for every human being, an end
to division.

And a human society built on love and peace.

We give thanks for the loving mutuality of the Trinity,
which is a pattern for our relationships.

Reading: Wisdom 7.27 The work of Sophia (wisdom)

... She can do all things,
and while remaining in herself, she renews all things;
In every generation she passes into holy souls
And makes them friends of God, and prophets.

Pause

John 15 13-15 Greater love...

(ALL) There is no greater love than to lie down one's life for one's friends. And you are
my friends, if you do what I command you.
I no longer speak of you as subordinates,
Because a subordinate doesn't know a superior's business.
Instead I call you friends,
Because I have made known to you
Everything I have learned from Abba God.

A prayer for our pilgrimage (in two groups)

You call us O God to travel into the risk and opportunity of your future.
We pray for the nations and peoples of the world as well as our friends
As together we seek new ways of shaping our lives.

Heal us of the hurts we have experienced on the road.
Forgive us the pain we have caused those who travel with us,
Bind up our old wounds, that out of reconciliation may burst
Forth endless possibilities and harmony.

Draw us into a closer unity of respect and understanding
That justice may be foster,
That life may be cherished,
That the gifts of creation may be used wisely.

And give us grace to recognize Christ
In the faces of those who walk beside us.

(All) God, who cares for us,
The wonder of whose presence fills us with awe.
Let kindness, justice and love shine in our world.
Let your secrets be known here as they are in heaven.
Give us the food and the hope we need for today.
Forgive us our wrongdoing
As we forgive the wrongs done to us.
Protect us from pride and from despair
And from the fear and hate which can swallow us up.
In you is truth, meaning, glory and power,
While words come and go Amen.

Blessing: (All)

May God bless us and keep us,
May God's face shine upon us and give us peace.
And the blessing of God the Creator,
Redeemer and life-giving Spirit
be with us, now and for ever, Amen

Most of these prayers come from the recent mass of thanksgiving for 25 years of friendship and commitment to justice.
The "prayer of our pilgrimage" is adapted from Peter Trow's prayer in "Wisdom is Calling" (Geoffrey Duncan) and the
prayer of Jesus is Monica Furlong's in "Women Included".

Mk 15-18

¹⁵Then they went on to Jerusalem. Jesus entered the Temple and began driving out those engaged in selling and buying. He overturned

the money-changers' tables and the stalls of those selling doves;
¹⁶moreover, he would not permit anyone to carry goods through the Temple area.

¹⁷Then he began to teach them: "Doesn't scripture say, 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples'? But you have turned it into a den of thieves!"

¹⁸The chief priests and the religious scholars heard about this and began looking for a way to destroy him. At the same time, they were fearful because the whole crowd was under the spell of his teaching.

Discussion in twos or threes

When is anger justified? what are the best ways of dealing with negative feelings? Are there constructive approaches to the problem?

Collage Make a collage expressing anger

Reading: The Poison Tree by William Blake

I was angry with my friend :
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe :
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I water'd it in fears,
Night and morning with my tears ;
And I sunned it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,
Till it bore an apple bright ;
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine,

And into my garden stole
When the night had veil'd the pole :
In the morning glad I see
My foe outstretch'd beneath the tree.

Intercessions either lighting candles or laying down a stone

Song: Peace flowing outward (June Boyce Tillman) tune Lord of All hopefulness-

Peace flowing outward and peace flowing in,
Draw peace from the centre in which we begin;
Find peace in the ending, the close of the day,
Let peace in the heart wipe the evil away.

Strength flowing outward and strength flowing in,
Draw strength from the centre in which we begin;
Find strength in the ending, the close of the day;
Let strength in the heart wipe the evil away.

Hope flowing outward . . .

Joy flowing outward . . .

Love flowing outward . . .

WIMBLEDON LITURGY GROUP NOV 98 ANGER AND PEACE

Music - Taverner

Readings Credo (Ruth Burgess) *from 'Pushing the Boat Out' Ed K Galloway, Wild Goose*

Today has been a restless day
things going wrong in all directions
and my anger is rising
at others, at circumstances, at myself.

God, you are in the midst of this
I sense your presence
prowling like a tiger
pushing me, pursuing me,
restless yourself until I change.

I am ready to let rip
to hurl stones into oceans
to pound my fists into a brick wall
I am ready to shout
to rip sheets into darkness
to bury my head into warm flesh and sob

I am afraid, God
that there is no one here but you and me
my friends are out or busy or far away.
Do I trust you enough to give you my anger, my loneliness?
Do I believe you enough to reach through the emptiness
and grasp for your hand?

Credo
God, I love you,
I can say no other words.

Short silence

Mt 5 21-6

“I tell you, unless your sense of justice surpasses that of the religious scholars and the Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

“You’ve heard that our ancestors were told, ‘No killing’ and, ‘Every murderer will be subject to judgment.’ But I tell you that everyone who is angry with sister or brother is subject to judgment; anyone who says to sister or brother, ‘I spit in your face!’ will be subject to the Sanhedrin; and anyone who vilifies them with name-calling will be subject to the fires of Gehenna.

“If you bring your gift to the altar and there remember that your sister or brother has a grudge against you, leave your gift there at the altar. Go to be reconciled to them, and then come and offer your gift.

11/11/90 A.L.L.
'Hildegard of Bingen' evening

AN EVENING WITH HILDEGARD OF BINGEN

Viridissima Virga (sung as part of "her story")

O viridissima virga ave,
que in ventoso flabro sciscitationis
sanctorum prodisti.

Cum venit tempus
quod tu floruisti in ramis tuis:
ave, ave est tibi,
quia calor solis in te sudavit
sicut odor balsami.

Nam in te floruit pulcher flos
qui odorem dedit omnibus aromatis
que arida erant.

Et illa apparuerunt omnia
in viriditate plena.

Unde celi dederunt rorem super gramen
et omnis terra leta facta est.
quoniam viscera ipsius
frumentum protulerunt,
et quoniam volucres celi
nidos in ipsa habuerunt.

Deinde facta est esca hominibus.
et gaudium magnum epulantium:
unde, o suavis virgo,
in te non deficit ullum gaudium.

Hec omnia Eva contempsit.

Nunc autem laus est altissimi.

Hail, o greenest branch,
sprung forth in the airy breezes
of the prayers of the saints.

So the time has come
that your sprays have flourished:
hail, hail to you,
because the heat of the sun has exuded from you
like the aroma of balm.

For the beautiful flower sprang from you
which gave all parched perfumes their aroma.

And they have rediated anew
in their full freshness.

Whence the skies bestowed dew upon the pasture,
and all the Earth was made joyful
because her womb
brought forth corn,
and because the birds of the firmament
built their nests in her.

Then there was harvest ready for Man
and a great rejoicing of banqueters.
whence, o sweet Virgin,
no joy is lacking in you.

Eve rejected all these things.

Now let there be praise to the Highest.

MEDITATION WITH HILDEGARD

Hymn (see separate sheet)

The meditation will fall into sections taking an image from her writings. At the beginning of each section we sing (to the same tune as the hymn) a verse including the image. The main part of the text is the same as printed below, with only the underlined words including the image changing. Also included are translations of the latin of Hildegard's songs that are sung.

a. The Holy Spirit

(Translation) Through you, the clouds stream, the upper air flies
The stones have their temper,
the waters lead forth their rills
and the earth exudes freshness.

Song b. With the living Spirit we're going)
feather on the breath of God,) Twice
with the living Spirit we would go
Feather on the breath of God.

c. With the living Spirit we're going,
Gold within the flame of God etc.

(translation) O fire of the comforting Spirit,
life of the life of all Creation
You are holy in quickening all kind.

You are holy in anointing the dangerously stricken:
you are holy in wiping the reeking wound.

Song d. Scent within the perfume of God

(translation) O breath of holiness
O fire of love
O sweet draught in the breast
and flooding of the heart
in the good aroma of virtues

Song e. Arc within the wheel of God

" f. Drop within the fountain of God

(translation) O purest fountain
in whom it is seen
that God has summoned the gentiles
and sought out the lost.

Song g. Seed within the earth of God

" h. Phrase within the song of God

(translation) You always lead forth the comprehending
made joyful by the inspiration of wisdom

Song i. Harp within the hands of God

(translation) Whence praise be to you
who are the sound of praise
and bliss of life.
Hope and richest gift
giving the rewards of light.

Song j. Child within the arms of God

" k. Warmth within the kiss of God

Dance For this we sing the song again, using "Feather on the Breath of God."

LITURGY ON A THEME OF MOTHERING , CREATIVITY AND NURTURANCE

Centring music

The Candle is lit

Introduction: Although being a mother is central for many women for part of their lives, it is only rarely celebrated in women's liturgy groups or in collections of experiential worship. This may partly be because there has been a reaction against having one's identity defined in terms of being a mother, a wife, a daughter and so on. Another reason might be because there are many women in our midst who have not given physical birth.

This last however neglects the aspect of people "giving birth" to all sorts of creativity, not only in the arts but in their relationships and work, including the nurturing help for other adults which women are so often involved in.

It is easy to be unrealistic about being a mother. As well as the joys and enrichment many mothers experience it is also a process that brings much exhaustion and anxiety. Tonight we bring all our own varied experiences – we have all had mothers, and we are all called on to nurture and connect, for in essence our lives are a reflection of the motherly aspects of the divine.

Song Dear Mother God (Janet Wootton, In "Reflecting Praise")

Discussion in 2s and 3s What are your experiences of being mothered/mothering or nurturing? Are there painful aspects you want to leave behind you? What were/are the good aspects?

Rejection of the painful The participants, if they so wish, throw a small stone into a small bin, praying out loud about what this represents, or silently

Silent reflection asking for help in forgiving others for these hurts, or for forgiveness of the hurts you have yourself given.

Rejoicing in the good aspects Flowerheads are placed in a bowl of water, each offering a prayer of thanksgiving, or silently.

Prayer (written shortly after the death of a beloved husband)

God the Motherer
The all-nurturing
Source of all loving relationship.
Empowering
Growth evoking
Supportive yet releasing

Creation sharing
Shelter in the dark
Impelling onwards the light
Strengtheners and comforters

Mirrored in the love that enriches
In the times of shadow
Sustain us when the journey becomes hard

Collect God our mother, you hold our life within you (Janet Morley, in "All Desires Known" Lent 4.

Discussion in twos and threes on what the mothering image of the divine means to you

Song

Leader: When we are creative we bring new things to birth, whether it be in the arts, in our relationships, in making a garden or a cake. All of us here are involved in mothering, bringing birth, whether we have physical children or not. Tonight we honour one of our most creative and long standing participants, Lillalou, who has both brought up a family and nurtured us through her companionship, leading us in circle dancing and in her work for the British and Irish School of Feminist Theology. On the occasion of her 70th birthday this week we celebrate her wisdom through crowning her. In the past crowning has been a derogatory term for the older woman but women today are reclaiming this name as denoting the wisdom of the older woman.

Prayer by Lala leading to crowning with cloak/scarf

Anointing with wishes bestowed upon Lillalou by the participants in turn coming and anointing her while speaking their wish.

Sharing of cake response: we celebrate the past and seek sustaining in the future

Circle dance

Song: Spirit of Fire (see song/readings sheet)

Readings (each followed by short silence)

- A. Breath
- B. Wisdom

Song to Wisdom

- C. Energizer and Connector
- D. Nurturer and Birther

Song: Urban Spirit

Reading taken from Hildegard of Bingen

The Holy Spirit is a Burning Spirit.
It kindles the hearts of humankind.

Holy Spirit is life-giving-life, all movement.
Root of all being. Absolver of all faults.
Balm of all wounds.
Radiant life, worthy of all praise,
the Holy Spirit resurrects and awakens everything that is.

The Spirit is an unquenchable fire, bestows all excellence
sparkles all worth, awakes all goodness,
ignites speech, enflames humankind.

Yet in this radiance is a restorative stillness.
It is the stillness that is similarly in the will to good.
It spreads to all sides.

You are the mighty way in which everything
that is in the heavens,
on the earth and under the earth,
is penetrated with connectedness,
is penetrated with relatedness.

You are the source of human understanding
You bless with the breath of wisdom

Taken from Meditations with Hildegard of Bingen, pp 37-42

The Blossoming Tree blossoming twigs are bound on to a branch

Prayer (from Bread of Tomorrow)

Exuberant Spirit of God,
bursting with the brightness of flame
into the coldness of our lives
to warm us with a passion for justice and beauty
we praise you.

Exuberant Spirit of God,
sweeping us out of the dusty corners of our apathy
to breathe vitality into our struggles for change,
we praise you.

Exuberant Spirit of God,
speaking words that leap over barriers of mistrust
to convey messages of truth and new understanding,
we praise you.

Exuberant Spirit of God,
flame
 wind
 speech,
burn, breathe, speak in us;
fill your world with justice and with joy.

Jan Berry in "Bread of Tomorrow"

Intercessions shells from Caesarea Philippi laid on spiral as
each prayer made

Blessing of the food

All: We share this loaf today, as a sign that we are all one in the body of Christ. Just as many grains came together into the one loaf, so we are all one in Christ Jesus. Help us to reflect the life giving love of the Creator, Redeemer and Spirit in all our relationships and actions.

(on passing the bread, each says to the person next to them "may this bread sustain you on your journey")

Circle dance and song

Come Spirit, circle us, keep love within, evil outside.

June Boyce Tillman

(June Boyce Tillman's songs used in this liturgy are taken from "In Praise of All Encircling Love, Vol 1")

List of Themes of Eucharistic Picnics 2012-1997

- 2012 The realm of God
- 2011 ? Liturgy of healing and wholeness
- 2010 ↙
- 2009 Justice and the Care of Creation
- 2008 Water
- 2007 The People of God
- 2006 Creation and co-responsibility with God
- 2005 Collaborative Ministry: What sign should we give?
- 2004 Journey
- 2003 Healing and Wholeness
- 2002 Water
- 2001 Friendship of God and Neighbour
- 2000 Growth
- 1999 Liberation
- 1998 Beatitudes
- 1997 The fatherly and motherly God

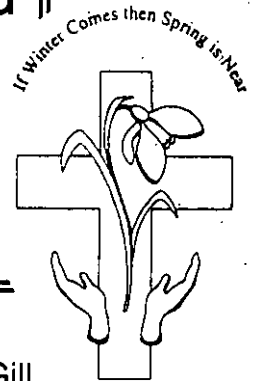
Older file with eucharists on themes of ~~integrity~~ and truthfulness *ev*

ess, prophecy ^{? usumy} istening, Go tell everyone,

(another file before this)

**Christian Survivors of Sexual Abuse -CSSA-
Vigil in remembrance of Eric Gill's victims and
all victims and survivors of Child Sexual
Abuse.**

27th June 1998 4pm - 6pm



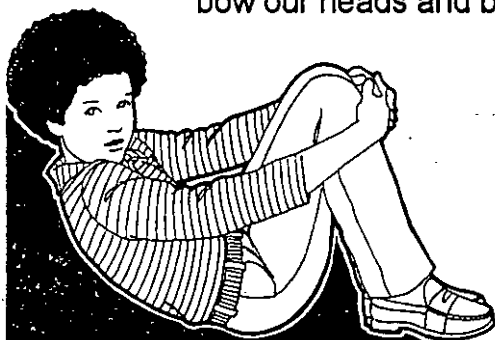
We are here this evening to **bring to mind** the women and girls that Eric Gill sexually exploited. Eric Gill, famous Catholic Sculptor, carver of the 'Stations of the Cross' within these Cathedral walls, was an active sexual predator. He believed in the submission of women and the dominance of man. He believed he had sexual rights over women and girls. He exercised those 'rights' by exploiting his daughters, prostitutes, housemaids....(and dogs !). He had sex with his two sisters, these same sisters had to be protected from their father. Eric Gill himself said, that Rev. Gill, senior, had incestuous leanings also. Eric Gill's wife, Ethel..... what must she have thought? How was she to cope with a sexually deviant husband? **We remember her too.**

We also remember today all survivors of child sexual abuse. Women and men, girls and boys. The terror, the fears, the shame and guilt that can last a lifetime. We pray and remember all victims of Catholic Clergy abuse, and all victims sexually abused by any priest/minister, whatever the denomination. What a travesty of Ministry.

We ask here especially, outside, yes, **outside**, this beautiful Cathedral....into which we survivors of sexual abuse feel too uncomfortable to go, that the Catholic Church see fit to consider our Spiritual and pastoral needs. How can we pray inside this defiled Cathedral? Defiled by the hands of Eric Gill, a paedophile's carvings on every wall..... to remind us of our horror. We don't want them there. 'We are Church', have suggested the Cathedral commission another carving, **to remember us, to remember Gill's victims, to remember all victims of Catholic Clergy abuse**, to be put in a special place within these walls. **Yes, that would be fitting and just.**

We pray this afternoon, in sadness, it is a time for mourning. Mourning the pain of children, of adults, cruelly sexually abused, raped, sodomised. Let us bow our heads and begin.

Music for a while



A large Candle is lit

Leader: Come to Him for He is Light

All: No darkness shall overcome us

Leader: Come to Him for He is truth

All: No falsehood shall deceive us

Leader: Come to Him for He is Love

All : No hate shall destroy us

All say together: God of the dispossessed,
 defender of the helpless,
 you grieve with all who weep,
 because their children are no more,
 May we refuse to be comforted,
 until the violence of the strong,
 has been confounded,
 and broken victims have been set free
 in your name, Amen.



All: Who do we remember ?

Leader: The victims of Eric Gill ?

All: Who are these victims ?

Leader : His Daughters.....(Their Names are read out and laid in front of the large candle.)

All: We also remember:

Leader: His young housemaids , girls in their teens.....(Their names are read out and laid in front of the candle)

All: We also remember:

Leader: The prostitutes he exploited.....(A card is placed in front of the candle.)

All: We also remember:

Leader : His sisters, perhaps sexually abused by their father, certainly *used* by their brother.....(Their names are read out and laid in front of the candle.)

All: We also remember:

Leader: Gill's wife, what did she think, did she too suffer?..... (Her name is read out and laid before the candle.)

All: We also remember:

Leader: All victims of Clergy Sexual Abuse. (Flowers laid down)

All: We also remember:

Leader: All children and adults sexually abused in childhood. (Flowers are laid down.)

As we sing this hymn light your candle, in your own time, slowly, and place it on the ground in a place that is significant to you.

All Sing:

I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and shame,
my hand will save.
I who make the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright,
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

Refrain

Here I am, Lord, is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, If you lead me,
I will hold your people in my heart.

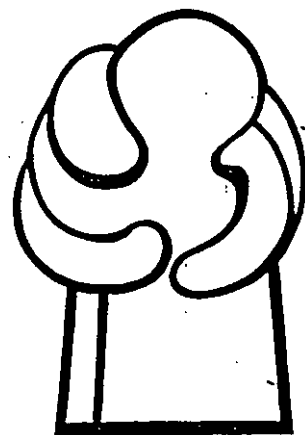
I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for Love of them.
They turn away.
I will free their hearts of fear,
give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them.
Whom shall I send?

Refrain Here I am Lord.....

Two readers now read:

The Stations of the Cross

Amy's crucifixion, death, and resurrection



1. Amy is condemned to death

Amy was abandoned into the arms of her abuser. There was no one to come to her defence, protect her, shield her. She was a little lamb to the slaughter. Not just once, but many times, for many years. Her father, who drank.....oh how she hated the smell of his breath. She was innocent. **She did nothing wrong.** Her death was..... no safety, no security, no love, no warmth.

2. Amy is made to carry her cross

They gave Amy a cross. They blamed her, said it was all her fault. They said she encouraged it, even wanted it. She felt awful, dirty and so used....she tried to forget... It didn't work. She felt shame and guilt, this was her cross. It was unjust that she should take this cross. It did not belong to her.

3. Amy falls for the first time

It was all too much. Amy felt tired, disheartened, weak and depressed. She sat on the kitchen floor, got wildly drunk, took loads of pills then cut her wrists.

[PAUSE FOR MUSIC]

Someone found her. She went to hospital, was saved.....this time .

4. Amy meets her mother.

Amy tried to tell her mother. But her mother didn't understand. What could she do? After all she had three other children to care for. She could not leave her husband, where would she live, where would the money come from? Amy's mother tried to ignore what Amy was trying to say. It was too painful for her. She could not cope and her husband was violent. Better to keep him happy, so Amy suffered daily, for years.

5 Simon helps Amy to carry her cross.

Simon is in Amy's class in school. She is his best friend. They get on well together, like twins. Simon has a tough home too. He gets beaten by his Dad. So they share a lot. They can talk about the nasty things because they are honest with each other and do their best to carry each other's cross. They don't quite know how they can resolve the difficulties, but it is good to have a friend to share the load.

6 Veronica wipes the face of Amy.

Veronica is a woman who lives next door to Amy. She knows the family well. Amy went there yesterday after a really awful family row. She was crying. She hates crying, it's cissy she thinks. Only babies cry, but she felt wretched. She couldn't tell Veronica what the real awfulness was but Veronica wiped her tears and made her tea. Amy stayed there for three hours, being comforted but not telling. How could she tell? If only Veronica would ask....

7 Amy falls for the second time

She did it again. Got drunk, took pills, cut her wrists.

[PAUSE FOR MUSIC]

She was found again. She was grappling with the confusion. Torn with shame and guilt, wanted to die. Hated her life, hated herself. She was useless. She couldn't even stop what her father was doing. God she was pathetic....that's what she thought. She'd had enough. This time she got to see the psychiatrist. He was useless. What did he know about this, she couldn't tell him either. Her father would thrash her, she knew. She went home in despair. Trapped in the terrible secret.

8 The women of London mourn for Amy

This is where Amy lives. Not far from here. Not far from this Cathedral. There are so many women who had lives like Amy. We are grown up now but we remember what it was like. Not only women either, men too. Grown men, grown women, all mourning for the little children still being sexually abused today. Right this minute. We mourn and we cry for you Amy, we cry for all the children.

9 Amy falls a third time.

This was the worst time. She had to be taken to intensive care. They pumped her stomach in casualty. A doctor remembered her and wonderedwhy? Only 16 years old and all her life ahead of her and look, she's in intensive care

[PAUSE FOR MUSIC]

Amy was unconscious for three weeks. When she came round she screamed "NO, NO I want to be dead."But she was not dead. Amy lived.

10 Amy is stripped of her garments.

Shortly after coming home from hospital. After spending two months on a psychiatric ward where she still refused to tell. Her father raped Amy for the last time. He stripped her clothes off. She struggled she fought, but he was too big, too strong.

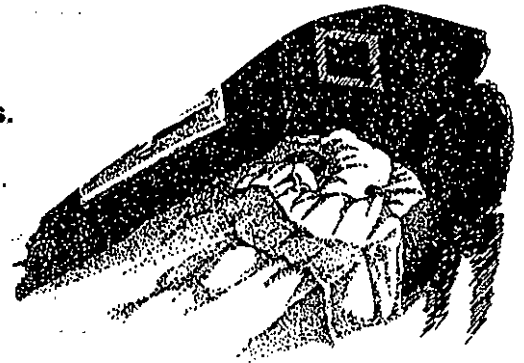
11 Amy is nailed to the cross.

She felt so degraded, so humiliated. Stripped, sore, bleeding. He viciously raped her.

[Pause for Music]

12 Amy dies on the cross

Amy did not cry...there were no more tears to shed. She left home. She'd had enough. She wandered the streets. Pimped herself for food, for drugs, did anything to get by. Her world was dark. The pits. There was no living, no life. She was a 'thing', she felt like a 'thing', not human, dead. No one knew she was alive. No one saw her. No one heard her. No one listened. Yes, she was dead.



13 Amy is taken down from the cross.

Someone cared. Found her in a doorway. Stopped to listen. Said nothing, just listened. Did nothing, just listened. For weeks, for months. Just listened. The story took a long time to tell. The hurt was dreadful, it was painful. She stayed in the doorway. Her security. Then she began to see life. She began to feel. She realised she was alive.

14 Amy is laid in the Tomb.

Nearly. Amy nearly **was** buried. Just another few weeks, another few months and she would have been really dead. Physically no more. God knows she tried often enough. Luck, chance, she lived. Some survivors don't make it. Some of us died. Yes, some of the children lived to commit suicide years later. They are buried....and forgotten. Some of us were killed by paedophiles. Like the little girls in Belgium, like the little boys in Hackney. Dead.

15 Amy rises from the tomb.

Amy remembers the time she took the overdoses, the times the police picked her up, the intensive care, the rapes by her father. These things you don't forget. But the person who came to the doorway showed her *life*. She grew, she wanted more, she found a love in animals and began working in an animal rescue centre. Animals would not hurt her like humans had. She has a job, a good job, but she still needs support. She's vulnerable, fragile, but in the midst of her darkness she wants to live. She's only 20 now but she wants to train as a veterinary nurse.

She'll make it. Amy has guts. She's strong. She's tough. She'll make it.

All Sing: Kum ba yah, my Lord, Kum ba yah (3)
O Lord, kum ba yah.
Someone's crying Lord, Kum ba yah (3)
O Lord, Kum ba yah.
Someone's drinking Lord, kum ba yah (3)
O Lord, Kum ba yah.
Someone's angry Lord, Kum ba yah (3)
O Lord, Kum ba yah.
Someone's hurting Lord, Kum ba yah (3)
O Lord, Kum ba yah.
Someone's praying, Lord, kum ba yah (3)
O Lord, Kum ba yah.
Someone's Living Lord, Kum ba yah (3)
O Lord, Kum ba yah.



Quiet music will now be played.

If you wish to write *anything* on a card to place amongst the candles please do. This could be a comment to the Cardinal or the Catholic Church. These will be sent to the Cardinal.

If there is some personal issue you need prayers for, write on a card & these will be gathered by CSSA and taken to our retreat in July where we will pray for you and your intention.

A LITANY FOR SURVIVAL

For those of us who live at the shoreline
standing upon the constant edges of decision
crucial and alone
for those of us who cannot indulge
the passing dreams of choice
who love in doorways coming and going
in the hours between dawns
looking inward and outward
at once before and after
seeking a now that can breed
futures;
like bread in our children's mouths
so their dreams will not reflect
the death of ours;

For those of us
who were imprinted with fear
like a faint line in the center of our foreheads
learning to be afraid with our mother's milk
for by this weapon
this illusion of some safety to be found
the heavy footed hoped to silence us
For all of us
this instant and this triumph
We were never meant to survive.

And when the sun rises we are afraid
it might not remain
when the sun sets we are afraid
it might not rise in the morning
when our stomachs are full we are afraid
of indigestion
when our stomachs are empty we are afraid
we may never eat again
when we are loved we are afraid
love will vanish
when we are alone we are afraid
love will never return
and when we speak we are afraid
our words will not be heard
nor welcomed
but when we are silent
we are still afraid.

So it is better to speak
remembering
we were never meant to survive.

From 'The Black Unicorn'. Poems by
Audre Lorde published by W. W. Norton
& Comp. Inc. New York.
1978 by Audre Lorde.

If you need to contact us,
our address: BM CSSA
London WC1N 3XX
(This is the full address)

We have a journal, groups,
retreats, conferences and
training events.

Leader: We were never meant to survive
All : We were meant to be silent

Leader: We were imprinted with fear
All: We are no longer afraid

Leader: We were not supposed to talk
All: We were meant to be silent

Leader: We were meant to keep it a secret
All : But now we are talking

Leader: We were not suppose to be angry
All : But now we are raging

Leader: We were not allowed to cry
All: Now we are weeping

Leader: We were unloved and forgotten
All : We are forgotten still

Leader : We are hurt by our Churches
All: We call for Christ's love

Leader: We are not supposed to challenge
All: We protest and seek Justice

Leader: We were supposed to be silent
All: Never again.....NO WAY !

Leader: We will remember them
All : We Will remember them

All sing;

1. We shall overcome,
we shall overcome,
we shall overcome some day.
Oh, deep in my heart I do believe
that we shall overcome some day.
2. We'll walk hand in hand, (2)
we'll walk hand in hand some day.
Oh, deep in my heart I do believe
that we'll walk hand in hand some day.
3. We shall live in peace . . .
4. The Truth shall makes us free . . .
5. We shall live with him . . .

IMAGES OF GOD

Song: Bring Many Names Brian Wren (In book of that name)

Pentitential litany (Read round the group, all responding as indicated)

O God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, Pattern of mutual love, forgive us for failing to understand that being Church means loving well.

(All) Help us to create loving community

God of justice and integrity, forgive us for our offences against solidarity with other women, and for the times we have put down others

Help us to uphold each other

O God the disturber, forgive us for the times when we have sought security in the familiar rather than going out to seek new life in the wilderness

Help us to be joyful pilgrims trusting in your
guidance

God, maker of both women and men in your own image forgive us for colluding in sexist distortions

Help us to have confidence in ourselves

O Creator God, forgive us for not affirming the goodness of the bodies you have given us, and for forgetting the importance of Mary caressing Jesus feet with her hair.

Help us to accept ourselves in our Godgiven
wholeness

O God, friend and lover, forgive us for our failing to understand our calling to friendship and honesty.

Help us to be creative and healing in our
relationships

O God, source of all insight, forgive us our shallow understanding of sacrament, when we fail to recognise the meal taken together, the joy or sorrow shared as a meeting with the divine.

Help us to recognise where You are among us.

(All) O Spirit that empowers the powerless, give us the strength to forge communities of loving friends who seek to bring about the new life promised in the Resurrection.

Buzz unhelpful names/images of God. Write these on a large sheet of paper. When finished pass this round the group for each to help tear it up, pieces to be put in basket)

Psalm said antiphonally (See separate sheet. (All Desires Known, Janet Morley, p 94)

Readings:

All language about God is metaphorical. It has been claimed that it is a form of idolatry when we mistake the image for the reality. "While we are immediately aware that the personal God is not really a rock or a mother eagle, it is easy enough to imagine God is really a king or a father" (Schneiders, Women and the Word)

Rosemary Radford Ruether (Sexism and God Talk) points out that Jesus use of "Abba" for his Father affirms a relationship based on love and trust that transforms the patriarchal concept of fatherhood into a more maternal and nurturing role. The early Jesus movement used the concept of God as Abba it liberate the community from dominant-subordinate relationships. Unfortunately this did not last and much of the language we now use reinforces patriarchal images.

God as covenant maker: "This is the covenant I shall make with the House of Israel...within them I shall plant my Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I shall be their God and they will be my people. (Jer31;33-34)

"I am the one who taught Israel to walk .. I drew them to me with love and affection, I picked them up and held them to my cheek, I knelt down to them and fed them" (Hosea 11). When the people of Israel claimed the Lord had abandoned them the answer was "can a woman forget her own body and love not the child she bore" Is 49.15 (the key biblical concept of compassion - pity, mercy, tender loving-kindness - comes from a root word meaning womb.

"God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all (1 Jn 1:5)...We know we have come to know him if we keep his commandments (1 Jn 2:3) Whoever fails to love does not know God, because God is love. (1 Jn 4:8)

"Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father .. I am in the Father and the Father is in me"(Jn 14.9-10)

"When you succeed in changing
all your abstract nouns
for a few concrete ones
whose meaning can be felt,
perhaps it will make sense again
for you to talk to us of Christ and God.
When it is seen to be true,
in a way that can be genuinely proclaimed,
that Justice has "pitched its tent in our midst",
and that Love has "dwelt amongst us"
then perhaps what your Bible calls
the "name of God"
can make itself known.(unnamed Brazilian poet in "Practical Theology of Liberation")

Discussion in twos or threes: What images of God have we personally found the most relevant in our spiritual journey?

Haikus write a haiku (5-7-5 syllables) on an image of God. Then write them on a leaf shape and put them on the "tree" eg twigs or branch

Song "Catch the Bird of Heaven" (Sydney Carter)

Intercessions lighting candles.

Agape (grapes, wine and bread)

All: We share together these grapes, reminding ourselves how we are branches and fruit of the one true vine: This is an important metaphor for us, for it gives us a vision of "the christian community as a community of interrelationship, mutuality and indwelling" (Uail O day, in "Women's Bible Commentary")

(pass the grapes around)

All: In wine the fruit of the vine is crushed and becomes one, uniting us in a cup strengthening us for the journey

(the cup of wine is passed, saying "may the fruit of the vine energize you")

the bread is blessed, all saying;

We share this loaf today, as a sign that we are all one in the body of Christ. Just as many grains came together into the one loaf, so we are all one in Christ Jesus. Help us to reflect the life giving love of the Creator, Redeemer and Spirit in all our relationships and actions.

(the bread is passed, saying "bread for the journey")

Final Song Mother God (in Reflecting Praise) or "God the All-Holy (tune: Morning has broken)

M11 M

MEDITATION FOR THE BEGINNING OF THE MILLENNIUM.

Taize Music - Watch and pray (listen or join in)

Reader A. Words from Pope John Paul II on the message of the Spirit and hope.

In this period it is necessary to increase our sensitivity to 'what the Spirit is suggesting' to the different communities, from the smallest ones, such as the family, to the largest ones, such as nations and international organizations, taking into account cultures, societies and sound traditions. Despite appearances humanity continues to await the revelation of the children of God, and lives by this hope like a mother in labour, to use the image employed so powerfully by St Paul in his Letter to the Romans (8:19-22).

Hope

The Great Jubilee will enable humanity to cross the threshold of the third millennium as a threshold of genuine hope. The basic attitude of hope, on the one hand, encourages the Christians not to lose sight of the final goal which gives meaning and value to life, and on the other, offers solid and profound reasons for a daily commitment to transform reality in order to make it correspond to God's plan.

Short Silence

Reader B. Ezekial 36:26-29

A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people and I will be your God.

Short Silence

Prayer of repentance (All say words in bold print)

Creator God

**You have called us to serve the cause of right
You have chosen us to bring true justice to the nations
And to be messengers of your freedom
to those who are not treated as your children.
We confess together our failures in your service
and ask forgiveness and healing
for we are not worthy to be called your sons and daughters**

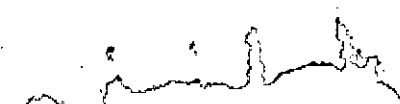
Leader: God of Community, we are tempted to carry our burdens alone

All: **Forgive us and unite us as your body**

L. God who loves the poor in spirit

We are tempted to believe in our own power

A. **Forgive us and remind us of our dependence on you**



- L. God of grace in our pride we are tempted to hold
on to our guilt in the face of your love
- A. **Forgive us, and open our hearts to your gifts**

**All: Nothing can separate us from the love of God.
May we receive the gentle healing which is ours as a loved child of God
Ask and it shall be given to us:
Knock and life will be open to us.
May we rise up and live, free for ever
In the name of the Creator, the Christ and the Spirit of God**

Silence, Taize music in the background

Reader John 13: 34-35

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

Silence

Readers: Prayer: making all things new

- A. "I am making all things new"
The words are yours, our God
and we come before you
to offer all that we are and have
for your new creation.
- B. Purify us as gold is made pure
renew us as the rain renews the dry land.
Teach us not to cling on to what we have
but to share what you have entrusted to us.
- C. In the face of friend and stranger
we see your Son, our saviour Jesus Christ.
Deliver us from walking past
his outstretched hand
his hungry frame.

**All: Teach us your royal command
in the cry of the needy,
the groans of the oppressed.
and when we leave this place
to join our friends, teach us,
who dare so much for those we love,
to love those for whom we dare so little.**

A time for personal reflection on how we can work towards making all things new and bringing about the kingdom in the circumstances of our own lives

Song (all) Peace flowing outward (to tune of Lord of all hopefulness - Separate sheet)

The Peace - using the quiet way whereby the first person in the circle enfolds the hands of the person next to them in theirs, saying "Peace be with you" - response "and with you", and then pass this on round the circle.

Silence

Taped song Christ be our Light (Bernadette Farrell) join in the chorus

Light the Millenium candle while all say millenium resolution

**Let there be
respect for the earth
peace for its people
love in our lives
delight in the good
forgiveness for past wrongs
and from now on, a new start**

Intercessory prayers using small lights. (people light these with a spoken prayer, or silently if preferred)

Silence

Prayer - God of new beginnings.

God of new beginnings,
we thank you for the birth of Jesus, your Son,
by which we mark the start of a new era in human history.
Help us by your Spirit to celebrate the fact
that you shared our human experience
and understand us from the inside.
In this year 2000 give us thankfulness for the past,
strength for the present, and vision for the future.
Make us more aware of the needs of ourselves
and those who share our world,
then give us the mind and heart to find ways to meet those needs.
Let your Spirit energize our prayers and our actions,

so that this 'Amen' is the pledge of our full commitment,
for the love of Jesus our Saviour.

Amen.

Final taped song from Iona "Christ is our touching place"
(All listen to first verse and join in thereafter)

(prayers and readings are taken from the "Westminster Diocese Jubilee 2000 Prayers and Prose", from the Conference of Religious journal and from the ecumenical "Worship 2000")

L

Theme of love.

Agape (based on the early Christian prayer meal)
Introduction (1P)

Song: Love is his word 803

Scripture: Luke 10: 25-28
Rom 13: 8-10

Pause

Reflection on the different forms of love (Alex)

Pause, then bidding prayers
hymn: Love divine 801

Prayer
(groups A
& B)

A: We belong to one another and all creation and through this bond to Jesus, who, on the day on which he was handed over his freedom to those who would abuse him, had a meal with his friends, eating and drinking with them.

So we eat together as a symbol of sharing our common humanity.

B: We celebrate our freedom to choose, born of the breaking down of old ways

We proclaim the possibility of new life

We declare our intention to live in that hope.

A: Now we are joined together, women and men of faith, with all who seek God's freedom.

We live and together for a shared vision of cosmos in which all are free to enjoy God's generosity.

We keep alive the memory of the Crucifixion of Jesus together with his Resurrection

We root the possibility of our freedom in this experience

B: Strengthening God, take away all that prevents us achieving this;

Strengthening God, take away all that prevents us achieving this;

Strengthening God, give us true peace.

Blessing of the Bread (the bread is broken and passed round, then all say)

And as we break the bread we thank you, Source of all our being, for the life and knowledge of yourself which you gave to us through Jesus your child. To you be glory for ever. As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, but was brought together and became one, so let your Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory and the power, through Jesus Christ for ever.

(Adapted from the Didache ix 3-4)

Final hymn: Lord of all hopefulness

Jesus Talks With a Samaritan Woman

4 Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John— ²although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. ³So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

⁴Now he had to go through Samaria. ⁵So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

⁷When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" ⁸(His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

⁹The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.^[a])

¹⁰Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

¹¹"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?" ¹²Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?"

¹³Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

¹⁵The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

¹⁶He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

¹⁷"I have no husband," she replied.

Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. ¹⁸The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

¹⁹"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

²¹"Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You Samaritans worship what

you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

²⁵The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

²⁶Then Jesus declared, "I, the one speaking to you—I am he."

The Disciples Rejoin Jesus

²⁷Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

²⁸Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, ²⁹"Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" ³⁰They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

³¹Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."

³²But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

³³Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?"

³⁴"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. ³⁵Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. ³⁶Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. ³⁷Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. ³⁸I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labour."

Many Samaritans Believe

³⁹Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." ⁴⁰So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. ⁴¹And because of his words many more became believers.

⁴²They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world."

St John's Womens Spoken Word Group, Jan 2017

(leader) Myths they say -

These hallowed stories never took place
but how powerful are the messages
that are contained in myth and symbol!!
Epiphanies more illuminating than facts
bringing light to our shadows.
Let us come out of the dark and welcome our inheritance

Journey of the Magi

A 'A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey; and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.

B There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.

A At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.

B Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation,
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the
darkness,

And three trees on the low sky.

A And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.

B But there was no information, so we continued
And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory.

A - All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt, I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.

All We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here; in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods,
I should be glad of another death.

Litany

Reader: The magi journeyed far to find you, Redeemer and Saviour, we too must search for you all our lives

All: Help us to find you, Lord

Reader: The Magi brought precious gifts to you. Our treasure must be the gift of building up your kingdom here and now

All: Help us to find you, Lord

Reader: The coming of the strangers from the East, marked the showing forth of Christ to the whole world. As Christians we are called to show forth Christ's love in our everyday lives.

All: Help us to find you, Lord

Reader: You were in the world but they did not know you. You came to your own and they did not receive you. There was no room for you at the inn. Is there any room for you in our hearts?

All: Help us to respond to you

Reader: The magi were prepared to leave their homes to search for the new king whose sign was a star in the east. We too must be prepared to search and become a pilgrim people

All: Give us the strength to put false security behind us and live as if we were on a journey

Reader: God has called us out of darkness into the light. May we experience his kindness and blessing and be strong in faith, hope and love.

All: Because we are followers of Christ, who came as a light shining in the darkness, may we show the light of God to the people we find around us.

Pause for Reflection

Final Prayer

O God, source of all insight,
whose coming was revealed to the nations
not among men of power
but on a woman's lap:
give us grace to seek you
where you may be found,
that the wisdom of this world may be humbled
and discover your unexpected joy,
through Jesus Christ, Amen

(From All Desires Known Janet Morley)