

Worship - Communicating Gender

This closing worship was prepared by the participants and coordinated by Natalie Pylypiv at the “Communicating Gender: Gender Identities in a Globalised Europe” WSCF Europe gender conference in October 2011. We hope that you can use the prayers and poems and readings in your own setting.

DARKNESS. HAVE ONE LIT CANDLE IN THE CENTRE OF THE ROOM SURROUNDED BY MANY UNLIT CANDLES.

Reading: John 1:1-5

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all people. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Song: Ubi Caritas (Taizé)

SUNG WHILE EACH PARTICIPANT LIGHTS THE CANDLES IN THE CENTRE.

Silence for prayer and reflection

Reading: Psalm 106: 1-3

1 Praise the Lord.

*Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his love endures forever.*

*2 Who can proclaim the mighty acts of the Lord
or fully declare his praise?*

*3 Blessed are those who act justly,
who always do what is right.*

Responsive Prayer:

One: For the body of Christ – that washed his disciples’ feet. For the body of Christ – that is alive today as we join together. We thank you God

All: We thank you God

One: For the Jewish people who knew you as Liberator and Provider. For the first disciples who carried the gospel into the world. We thank you God.

All: We thank you God

One: For the Roman Catholic Church who carried faith down through the ages. For the Orthodox Church who worshipped in awe and devotion. For the Celtic church who held together the holy and the worldly. For the Protestant Reformers who opened your word to the language of the people. For the Quakers who witnessed to you in peace and simplicity. For all our roots in the tree of faith, with one voice we thank you God

All: We thank you God

One: And we thank you for the branches of new life that are growing all around us. For the charismatic renewal which calls us to be open to every gift of your Spirit. For the black-led churches who kept joyful faith in the face of pain and prejudice. For the gay and lesbian Christians who call us to renew our understanding of spirituality and sexuality. For the women in the church who show us that you are not made in the image of men. For the churches of Latin America who teach us that you are on the side of the poor. For all these branches of the one tree with one voice we thank you God.

All: We thank you God

One: For all your children in this world. For the people of Global WSCF. For our brothers and sisters in the six WSCF regions. For your people in every place and time we thank you God.

All: We thank you God

One: For the Danish Folk High school who have blessed us with hospitality. For the ERC, newly elected and those stepping down, who encourage us to cross boundaries. For the PrepCom with everyone who contributed to the Gender conference and the ERA and for the whole company of Heaven. With one voice we thank you God.

All: We thank you God

(adapted by Stephen Canning from Greenbelt main stage)

Song: Shukuru

Praying for your neighbour

EVERYBODY STANDS IN A CIRCLE WITH THEIR HANDS ON EACH OTHER'S SHOULDERS. FIRST HAVE EVERYONE PRAY FOR THE PERSON STANDING ON THEIR RIGHT, THEN FOR THE PERSON STANDING ON THEIR LEFT.

The Lord's Prayer

SAID IN EACH PERSON'S NATIVE LANGUAGE

Reading: Psalm 106: 4-5

*4 Remember me, LORD, when you show favour to your people,
come to my aid when you save them,*

*5 that I may enjoy the prosperity of your chosen ones,
that I may share in the joy of your nation
and join your inheritance in giving praise.*

Song: May the Road Rise To Meet You

Poetry Reading:

Be still

The less I am sure

The more I have to trust

Liberation separates

This body from dust

*The more I seem to give away
The more I possess
Reflection helps me understand
And comfortably regress
The more I get to know you
The less I understand
But nothing seems to matter
When you reach out and hold my hand*
(Stephen Canning)

Song: You Shall Go Out

PARTICIPANTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO LEAVE THE ROOM WHILE SINGING THIS SONG. WHILE EXITING, EVERYBODY RECEIVES THE INSPIRATIONAL BIBLE VERSE PRINTED ON A SMALL PIECE OF PAPER TO TAKE WITH THEM.

Inspirational verses could be the following:

1 Corinthians 13: 13

2 Corinthians 13: 11

Ecclesiastes 7: 9

Galatians 5: 13

John 3: 18

John 7: 24

John 13: 34

John 14: 1

Luke 12: 32

Luke 12: 34

Matthew 5: 3-9

Matthew 5: 13-14

Matthew 6: 19-21

Matthew 7: 1-2

Matthew 7: 7

Romans 12: 10