



Worship Resources 2016

**For celebrations of the 60th anniversary of full clergy rights for women
and 20th anniversary of the full-clergy-membership diaconate**

A Call to Worship

By Rev. Hokari Kokai Chang, New York Annual Conference

A time has come

after long waiting with anguish and anticipation.

This is a moment

to witness a mystery of God's handy works with us, through us, and within us.

Let us unite our energies and minds into one spirit.

God creates something new.

Let us breathe in one accord.

The breath of God gives a life.

Let us push harder with hopes and dreams.

The spirit of God births a new life!

Let's shout a joy!

Let's give thanks, for a new life of church was born!

Halleluiah!

A Responsive Prayer

By Rev. Dr. J. Kabamba Kiboko, Texas Annual Conference

To the One who fashions together our hearts, as stated in Psalm 33:15,

You who continue to form our hearts,

To you we come to seek togetherness—a renewed togetherness.

To the One who forms together our hearts,

You who continue to speak as you form together our hearts,

**To you we come to experience togetherness. Make us one with you and one with each other
that we may discover that we are more than we are. We are one.**

**We are one, birthing together a worldwide church, we are one. We pray this in the name of
our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.**



A Prayer

By Bishop Rosemarie Wenner, Germany Episcopal Area

Gracious, loving and caring God,

You created heaven and earth and you created us as people who are different in so many ways, but one in our longing for love and life abundant.

We give you thanks for Sarah, who nurtured Isaac in a strange land;

for Hagar, who realized that you were looking after her when she was left alone with her son, Ishmael;

for Pharaoh's daughter, who took care of Moses;

for Miriam, who, with her courage to praise you, led your people on their pilgrimage through the desert;

for Mary, who trusted in her son Jesus even while he went out to build up a new family of the faithful;

for Lydia, who gathered your church in her house and shared the bread of life with Jews and Gentiles, with slaves and free people, with men and women;

and for thousands of women who cared not only for their children but for those who were longing for hope and for a home, teaching them the gospel.

We trust that you, who comforts as a mother comforts her child, will continue to bless us through the ministry of your saints.

Let us follow their examples as we are called to follow Christ and to serve you with our manifold gifts.

All this we pray in the name of Jesus, our brother. **Amen.**

A Collect

Nurturing and empowering God, who called Sarah, Deborah, Esther, Mary, Martha, Lydia, and Tabitha: Strengthen and give courage to those among us you have called into set-apart leadership; give the church eyes to perceive their gifts and heed their wisdom. We pray in the name of the Christ who justifies and sanctifies the church. **Amen.**

A Litany

By Rev. Dr. Tracy Smith Malone, Northern Illinois Conference

Leader: We gather to lift our voices as we celebrate 60 years of full clergy rights for women in the Methodist Church.

People: **To God be the glory!**

Leader: We give thanks to God for the faithful women who responded to the call to the ordained ministry when it was unpopular and unwelcomed.

People: **We rejoice and are glad!**

Leader: We honor their legacy and example that continue to inspire others, men and women, to live into their calls, trusting in God's provision.

People: **We remember their witness!**

Leader: We celebrate those who continue to support and advocate for the full inclusion and rights of women clergy in all aspects of ministry and in the total life of the Church.

People: **God, we celebrate your faithfulness to all generations! To God be the glory!**

A Litany

By Rev. Hokari Kokai Chang, New England Annual Conference

Come with a shout of joy from Africa!

[Those who are from Africa, shout:] "Halleluiah!"

Come with a shout of joy from Asia!

God is good!

Come with a shout of joy from South America!

Thank you, God!

Come with a shout of joy from Europe!

Rejoice in God!

Come with a shout of joy from North America!

Dance with God!

We are many

but one body and one spirit, one baptism and one God.

And all children of God now shout out together,

Amen!

A Litany for Such a Time as This

By Rev. Anita Phillips, Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference

One: What we take for granted was once only a dream.

Many: Remind us, Creator,

One: of generations of Methodist holy women making the world their parish.

Many: Tell us again, O God,

One: of struggling for recognition and equality.

Many: Your creation crying out.

One: Our mothers and grandmothers living lives of sacrifice

Many: that we might be here today, for such a time as this.

One: You women who labored throughout the years before we had full clergy rights:

Many: we stand on your shoulders.

One: You women who led the way in claiming full clergy rights in the early years,

Many: we walk in your light.

One: For the baby girls born this year, whose future can include full ordination as elders or deacons,

Many: we lift our hearts in celebration.

All: Beautiful Giver of Life, we come from the four directions to connect with one another and you in this time, in this place. We believe it is for such a time as this that you have called our names. Help us to be worthy of those clergywomen who came before us and those clergywomen who will follow after us even to seven generations. Amen.

A Litany

By Rev. Jacqueline D. Rose-Tucker, North Georgia Conference

Leader: Today, we celebrate 60 years of full clergy rights for women in the Methodist tradition as we continue to birth a global church.

People: PRAISE BE TO GOD FOR WHAT GOD HAS DONE!

Leader: We praise God for the tireless work of the Women's Society for Christian Service for full clergy right for women in the Methodist Church.

People: PRAISE BE TO GOD FOR WHAT GOD HAS DONE!

Leader: We acknowledge that all clergywomen stand on the shoulders of giants who fought the fight so that we may serve.

People: PRAISE BE TO GOD FOR WHAT GOD HAS DONE!

Leader: For the many women to break down barriers in the United States, including Sarah Mallet, Sojourner Truth, Maud Jensen, Sallie Crenshaw, Margaret Henrichsen, Julia Torres Fernandez, Mamie Ming Yan Ko, Mochie Lam, Colleen Kyung Seen Chun, and Lois V. Glory-Neal.

People: PRAISE BE TO GOD FOR WHAT GOD HAS DONE!

Leader: For the many women to break down the barriers in the Central Conferences, including Paula Mojzes, Antonia Wladar, Cornelia Mauyao, Linita Uluave Moa, Gusta A. Robinette, and Mutombo Ilunga Kimba.

People: PRAISE BE TO GOD FOR WHAT GOD HAS DONE!

Leader: For our female bishops, who breaking through the glass ceiling: Bishops Marjorie Matthews, Leontine T.C. Kelly, Minerva G. Carcaño, Rosemarie J. Wenner, and Joaquina Filipe Nhanala.

People: PRAISE BE TO GOD FOR WHAT GOD HAS DONE!

All: All honor and glory to God as we celebrate our past and expand our future as women of God, from all over the globe who serve as clergy in the United Methodist Church. Amen.

A Litany

Leader: We gather as God's children.

People: With open hearts, we gather.

Leader: We come together longing to know God.

People: With open minds, we gather.

Leader: We come together to be refreshed and invigorated to extend mercy and peace in Christ's name.

People: With open spirits, we gather.

Leader: We give thanks for all who have been called to set-apart leadership.

People: We thank God for the bold and compassionate women who have answered God's call, as elders and local pastors who order our congregations and deacons who lead us into ministries of compassion and justice.

Leader: We trust that God has called more leaders among us.

People: We open our hearts, minds, and spirits to see, support, encourage, and build up those women among us whom God has sent to lead our church.

Leader: In Christ, who heralds the reign of God, we praise God.

People: Praise God, who loves us, calls us back to right-living and right-relationship, and urges us into ministry to all the world. Praise God!

Prayers of the People

By Rev. Sally Howell Johnson, Minnesota Annual Conference

For the hands that have reached out to comfort . . .

For the sacrifices made on our behalf . . .

For the words held back and those spoken with conviction . . .

For the wisdom earned through dismissal and denial, through affirmation and assent . . .

For the years when invisibility was their daily food . . .

For the strength with which they stood their ground and spoke their truth . . .

For making the path easier and fuller for us all,

O God, we offer our deepest gratitude for the women who have been your Face, who have reflected your Presence and helped us to be your church. May we continue their legacy with grace and assurance of your eternal blessing. **Amen**

Holy One, may we be a bridge this day between the altar and the world. May we take the gifts you have given us for ministry to the streets and to the classrooms. May the heart of the gospel burn deep within us helping to heal the broken places of our cities and the barren landscapes of the world. Give us a renewed spirit for justice that fills the church and the world to overflowing with your love. We pray in the name of our brother Jesus, **Amen**

A Benediction & Sending Forth

Elder/Pastor:

May God, who breathed life into you, who walks with you like a sister, and who sustains you like a mother, bless you and sustain you.

Deacon:

Depart now into the world to serve God and neighbor, claiming the wisdom of Deborah, the courage of Esther, the vision of Mary, and the compassion of Lydia. Go in the peace of Christ.

A Great Thanksgiving

By Rev. Sally Howell Johnson, Minnesota Annual Conference

In the beginning, Breath poured forth
and goodness was born,
bringing Light from darkness,
life from chaos,
birth from the Womb of Creation.

Circling round the fire,
from the beginning of humanity,
people gathered to tell their story and to give thanks
for the gifts of the Creator:
Promise of seed, hope of new life,
wholeness of heart, sacredness of all that lives and breathes.

And the creatures, in their own language spoke their gratitude:

**The world is full of your goodness and mercy.
We give thanks today, tomorrow and always.**

In the fullness of time,
goodness was once again born,
and the world came to know our brother Jesus,
born of woman, whole in heart and Spirit,
dedicated to the Way of God,
who invited all to the table of grace and continues to invite us now
to this circle of healing and hope.

As he gathered his disciples in his time, we come now to remember and seek to become the Body
of Christ in our own time.

This bread, gift of Earth, promise of seed, is prepared for all to share.
Eat with thankful hearts and hope of life renewed.

This wine, gift of the Vine that connects us all, is offered with joy and celebration.
Seed and fruit are given to feed our hunger and quench our thirst.

These offerings bind us together in this eternal Life-giving act.

Creator, Christ, Sacred Spirit, fill this meal and this circle with the gifts of Life so we may be seed
and fruit for one another and all Creation, for the nourishment of all.

And the creatures continue to say:

**The world is full of your goodness and mercy.
We give thanks today, tomorrow and always.**

As Jesus remained true to the goodness and mercy planted within him, even till death,
may we live lives that help to feed the hunger and quench the thirst of the world.

May we also offer ourselves as Jesus did as gifts of healing through our words of love and our acts
of justice.

O God, may we continue to welcome to the circle all who are in need and share in our awe and thanksgiving, saying:

**The world is full of your goodness and mercy.
We give thanks today, tomorrow and always.**

Let us pray together:

Our Creator,

**Who dwells in heaven and earth,
sacred are all your names.**

**May your circle of mercy and care be present this day
and your will for all Creation bring us into your Light,
even as we are held by your great love throughout time.**

**Feed us today, with the gifts of your goodness,
and bathe us in your mercy.**

**As we offer acts of justice and love to all we meet,
help us to turn from all that leads us from your Way
and save us from all that destroys Life.**

**For this Creation is yours
full of awe and beauty and Mystery,
today, tomorrow and always. May it be so. Amen**

A Service for Diakonia

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Scripture: Acts 6:1-7b

Call to Worship

One: We want to know we are each unique,
Many: but also that we are not alone.
One: We want to be free to follow our dreams and be all we can be,
Many: but we find self-centered lives are not the most fulfilling.
One: We wrestle with belief and doubt, faith and anxiety,
Many: and we trust that God is with us in the struggle.
One: Let us open our hearts and minds to God's presence.
Many: We worship the God who created us, claims us, calls us, and commissions us.
All: Thanks be to God. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer

God of Life,
we praise you for all the ways
your life is made known among us:
for children's laughter as they enjoy summer fun,
for simple nourishment and abundant feasts,
for long-standing friendships and new connections,
for healing of illness and hope of life eternal.

We give thanks for your presence with us
amidst daily struggles with finances or health, mental illness or addiction,
loneliness or cynicism;
whatever chains now bind us or temptation beckons us.

We ask your Spirit to fill and bless each person here,
each person named,
each situation held in our hearts in need of your light and love.

We long to be made whole, O God,
to be restored to right relationship wherever covenant has been broken.

We crave your peace, your wisdom, your renewing power,
that we might face our challenges with courage,
and recover from our failures with grace.

May your compassion flow over us,
drenching us in mercy,
refreshing us in love,
that we might go out into the parched world as fountains of goodness and joy.

We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Living Water,
who taught his followers to pray, saying,

Our Father-Mother, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name . . .

Offertory Prayer

God of humble service and justice-working love,
we thank you for the gifts we have received from you.

Open our eyes to see your image in each person's face;
open our hearts to be filled to overflowing with your love;
open our hands to give back with the same generosity with which you have gifted us.

We ask your blessing on our giving and our gifts, O God,
that they might be dedicated to your purposes
as we learn to be the Body of Christ in our community
and to serve our neighbors in the spirit of Jesus.

Amen.

Prayer of Consecration (unison)

**God of Creation, Redemption, and Transformation,
we thank you for the love with which you create and claim us,
calling us your beloved children,
for the gifts and passions you have given each person here,
for the grace that enables us to follow Jesus,
and for your Spirit leading us out into the world.**

**Guide us to find our true selves in service to you and to our neighbor
as we seek to proclaim the good news
of your love made known in Jesus Christ
through all that we think and say and do. Amen.**

Benediction

Our worship is ended, our service begins.

May you go from here knowing
God has created you for abundant life,
Jesus Christ calls you to serve so that others may live more fully,
and the Holy Spirit guides and empowers you
to find your path of authentic and joyful service in the world. **Amen.**

GBHEM staff prepared the items that are not otherwise attributed.

Other Resources:

"In Praise of Valiant Women," in *WomanPrayer, Woman Song: Resources for Ritual*, by Miriam
Therese Winter. Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2008.