

MISSION AWARENESS SUNDAY 2006

Resources for Worship

The Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

Call to Worship:

One: Easter is our reality; Christ is alive!

Many: **Christ brings forgiveness; we may live anew!**

Christ is peace; we may live in peace!

Christ is hope; we may live in hope!

One: Let us celebrate with great joy the new life that is ours in Christ Jesus; let us worship God.

Prayer of Approach: (in unison)

Ever-present God, we rejoice this day in the amazing truth of Easter. You have acted; you have come to us; you are with us. Evil and death have been overcome. Christ is risen. Help us to recognize and be responsive to the presence of our risen Lord among us. May we be aware of his ministering to us, the Church, which bears his name. Resurrect and transform us, we pray, so that we can be healed, energized and guided by your Spirit's power. May our being and serving give you glory. Accept now our praise and worship as an expression of our gratitude for such wondrous gifts of grace. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Hymn of Praise:

436 "God, we praise you for the morning"

Prayer of Confession

Almighty and eternal God, we thank you for not leaving us alone in our sin. You sent Jesus Christ that we may turn to him and our sins may be "wiped out." Loving us, you have brought us good news and set before us the way of life. We confess that we do not always respond to the freedom you offer. Sometimes we hang onto our guilt and regret, seeing ourselves as unworthy. Sometimes we reject the way of life that Jesus brought us and turn to our own agendas, plans and hopes preferring the weight of self-glory over the yoke of Christ. You, Lord, have called your Church to be a witness to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Forgive us for the times that we shirk our responsibility and hoard your gifts of love and freedom for ourselves. Lord, open us to the fullness of your Word and grant that we may know new life and hope in the spirit of the resurrection. We pray in the name of our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon:

God sweeps into our human scene, through Jesus Christ. There is grace, mercy and renewed strength for all who earnestly seek the new life Christ brings. Let us rejoice together, for God forgives. We are freed from the burden of our sin. Thanks be to God.

Children's Time:

Story:

Today, in the Bible reading from the Gospel of Luke, we hear that the disciples are still confused. Jesus' dying and then being alive was very confusing. I am sure they were wondering, "What's next?"

Well, Jesus came to them once more and he answered the question "What's next?"

He said: Go!

The disciples, the ones who saw and experienced the awesome deeds of God, are told to go!
Jesus is alive!

What's next? Jesus says, "Go tell."

Go tell people the Good News that God loves them and will forgive them. When they turn to the way of Jesus, life is like a "burst of flavour" or a "splash of taste" or a "refreshing drink on a hot day" (*these are images on TV advertisements at the time of writing, you might have other images at the time of telling*).

You (*point to children and to adults*) are my witnesses, says Jesus. Go, tell people the Good News.

Then Jesus says, "Go out from here (Jerusalem) to all people."

What's next? After we come here to worship, learn and experience the love and forgiveness of God through Jesus, we go out from here to all people.

We are called to be people on the go. Go tell. Go out and go do.

We are people on a mission—Jesus' mission. That's our job.

Do mission like Karen. Karen was told by the "cool" kids in the out of school day care that if she was their friend she could not be friends with "smelly" Diane. Karen chose to continue to be friends with Diane who had no friends.

Do mission like Jon. Every summer Jon goes up to the church camp to be a counsellor. He doesn't get as much money as some other jobs. He doesn't get much time off. But he loves to be with the kids to share with them God's love and forgiveness.

Do mission like Pete. Pete came to church every Sunday. He liked all the people at church. They were friendly and they really liked him. Most of the time church school was interesting. Since he liked church, Pete invited his friend Marsha to come to church with him. She did. Then Marsha brought her brother and sister. They all got to know Jesus as a friend.

What's next? Jesus said: "Go, go out, go tell, go do.

And, by the way, I will be with you and will help, that's a promise."

Hymn:

755 "Go ye, go ye into the world" OR

761 "Who's goin' to tell the story"

Prayer for Illumination:

God of presence and promise, we come as Easter people, expecting to be comforted, surprised and confronted by your living Word. Grant us the assurance of your presence, your love and your renewing power. Through your Word and Spirit, reveal to us your purpose in our lives. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Scripture Readings:

Acts 3: 12–19
Psalm 4
1 John 3: 1–7
Luke 24: 36b–48

Sermon: Take the Message Out

Hymn:

663 “God, whose giving knows no ending”

Offering:

At this time we offer God our due thanks. Present to God your gifts of money, your gift of service. Bring glory to God’s name.

Prayer of Dedication:

God of blessing, we worship you this day, with thanksgiving in our hearts and with joy in our minds, for we are celebrating anew the most wonderful news; the good news of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We bring these gifts as a sign of our love for you and our commitment to be your people. Take these offerings and through your transforming power, turn them into dynamic mission. Accept us and use us to fulfill your life-giving purposes. May we be empowered by your Spirit to witness and serve with boldness and passion in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayers of the People:

One: God calls us to Life! God calls each of us to move among the creations of this world and bring joy and renewing love. God calls us this day.

Many: God calls me this day! God calls us this day!

One: God calls us to Love, to plunge ourselves into the hurts and the horrors, to give ourselves fully to those who are in need. God calls us to be present to those who are without love. God calls us this day.

Many: God calls me this day! God calls us this day!

One: God calls us to dance, to move out our joy and sadness, shedding our self-consciousness and clothing ourselves with peace. We are builders of the Body of Christ. God calls us this day!

Many: God calls me this day! God calls us this day!

One: In God we live, move, and have our being.

Many: Thanks be to God.

(Adapted from Bread for the Journey, edited by Ruth C. Duck)

(The prayer continues with intercession. Write prayers relevant to your congregation and the happenings in and around your world)

Commissioning and Benediction:

Let us go rejoicing in the forgiving love of God. Let us go resolved to continue as servants of the risen Christ. Let us go strengthened by the blessing of God the creator who formed us, by Jesus Christ who calls us into his Church and by the Holy Spirit who equips us. Power be upon us all.

Alternate Hymns from The Book of Praise, 1972 edition

467 "Ye that know the Lord is gracious"

412 "Come, let us sing"

489 "Lord of light"

456 "Forth in Thy name, O Lord, I go"

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