

WORSHIP RESOURCES FOR THE END OF THE STUDY



Figure 1: Heart shape made from woven stars. Photo Mark Yettica-Paulson 2012

WORSHIP TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE *(From the World Council of Churches)*

This short liturgy can be used as part of a group study, or in any way you find meaningful. You will need: some candles; a basket of stones; and some products of the area where you are, as signs of the generosity of creation in every time and place.

CALL TO WORSHIP

In the beginning the Spirit God danced over the void.

It was a dance of creation, of joy, of freedom of wholeness, of power. . .

And God, knowing that all that is good is shared,

held the Earth tenderly and yearned for relationship.

And humanity was born in the yearning of God.

We are born to share the earth.

adapted from: Blessing the Earth, Carter Heyward, USA

LIGHTING THE CANDLE

God bringing light and banishing fear,
we light this candle as a sign of our willingness
to be your light in the world.

We remember before you our own communities;
the places where we live and work;
the people whose lives are connected to ours.
We bring before you all the people
whose stories we have witnessed in this study
and all those whose stories have shaped our lives.

In Jesus, you show us how to confront violence
and how to transform it into peace and justice.
Fill us with your peace, that we may be peacemakers.
Fill us with your truth, that we may speak truth to power.
Fill us with your courage,
that we may bring hope to those who live in fear.
Fill us with joy, that we may be your beacons in the world.

We ask it in the name of Jesus, our brother and our friend,
Amen

Invite participants to take a stone from the basket to hold as the Gospel is read.

GOSPEL READING

JOHN 8:2-10

Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, they said to him, 'Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?' They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened

up and said to them, 'Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.' And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus straightened up and said to her, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' She said, 'No one, sir.' And Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.'

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND LAYING DOWN OF STONES

After each prayer a stone is laid down, at the end of the formal confession everyone is invited to come forward and lay down a stone in a communal act of confession.

God of heaven and earth before you we confess our sin

God of transformation hear our prayer

We confess the terrible physical and sexual violence that so many women and girls across the globe are subjected to.

God of transformation hear our prayer

We confess how even into our own time scripture has been used to justify violence against women and their exclusion from a full role in society.

God of transformation hear our prayer

We confess a violent culture which turns women's bodies into sexualised commodities and sees women as part of the spoils of war and commerce.

God of transformation hear our prayer

We confess the structural violence of our institutions including the church which too often exclude women from decision-making, power or authority.

God of transformation hear our prayer

please move forward to lay down your stones

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS AND TRANSFORMATION

Let us stand to listen to words we can trust,
words which help us and our societies
to stand up straight, be transformed
and walk humbly in God's paths.
(please rise)

“Behold,” says God, “I am making all things new.
I will wipe every tear from their eyes.” (Rev. 21:5, 4)

For the mountains may depart
and the hills be removed,
but my steadfast love shall not depart from you,
and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,
says the Lord, who has compassion on you. (Isaiah 54:10)
In the name of Christ we are forgiven,
Alleluia, amen!

PRAYERS

2

Great God we give you thanks that you call us out of silence
to name hidden and domestic violence.

Today we pray for women who despite suffering from violence,
continue to care for family and children, to grow and prepare
food, carry water, earn a living and offer support to others.

We pray for women who are trafficked as domestic or sex
workers; for women who are raped and do not know how to
find words to name their pain or a way into the future.

We pray for transformation of our societies which often
find it easier to judge the victims of violence than to solve
the problems of injustice

We pray that women's voices may be heard and taken into
account in all peace and reconciliation work.

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We pray for a transformation in the violent way many men act towards and think about women.

We pray for right and just relations between women and men that together we may transform and overcome violence in all its forms and learn to celebrate our diversity and interdependence

We look forward to the age of peace, when violence is banished, both women and men are able to love and to be loved, and the work and wealth of our world is justly shared.

Benediction

May the God of Eve teach you to dance.

May the God of Hagar bring you comfort in the desert.

May the God of Miriam bring companions to you when you struggle.

May the God of Deborah teach you courage for your battles.

May the Christ who knew Mary and Martha show you the way of balance.

May the Christ who healed the bent-over woman heal your pain.

May the Christ of Mary Magdala send you out to proclaim your story. In the name of Christ who is the memory, hope and authority of the future.

*Adapted from a worship created by Jane Stranz for the World
Council of Churches*

NAMING THE SILENCE: A LITANY FOR THE CLOSE OF THE STUDIES

(adapted from a litany written by the Rev'd Canon Dr Marian Free)

In the name of Christ I name the silences known to me.

In the quiet that follows, perhaps you would like to name the silences known to you.

I name the silence of all the young children molested or raped by their fathers, or by men whose first duty should have been love and protection.

I name the silence of any who have been sexually or physically assaulted – young or old, male or female.

I name the silence of all those hurt by those in whom they trusted.

I name the silence of all whose dreams of a happy marriage have been shattered by emotional or physical violence.

I name the silence of all whose hopes of having children have gradually disappeared. Those who are seen as selfish by a society which does not name infertility.

I name the silence of all those who have no home – refugees imprisoned when they seek freedom, wrenched from their past and deprived of a future.

I name the silence of those locked behind the doors of mental illness, those who cannot give or receive love or participate in 'normal' human relationships.

I name the silence of being over 30 and single, or married and childless.

I name the silence of all who do not fit within our narrow definition of "normal", I claim for them the right to be loved and valued for who they are – not for who we want them to be.

I name the silence ...

Allow a time of silence for those present to "name the silence", and conclude with silent reflection.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Evensong for Domestic Violence Prevention Month

Sunday 30 May, at 6pm

St John's Cathedral

Preacher: The Rev'd Suzanne Grimmett, Priest in charge of
St Andrew's Anglican Parish of Indooroopilly

Joint Churches Domestic Violence Prevention Project

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