

Sample Worship Service for 2009 World AIDS Day

Prepared by the General Board of Church & Society

(Each year, World AIDS Day is observed on December 1. It is a time for special programs on HIV & AIDS to focus on healing prayer, hope in God, and love and compassion in the midst of the HIV & AIDS outbreak. The World AIDS Day theme for 2009 is "Universal Access and Human Rights." The key slogans adopted for this year's World AIDS Day stress the importance of human rights for persons living with HIV & AIDS. Among the key slogans adopted in the 2009 World AIDS Day resources is the following:

I am accepted.

I am safe.

I am getting treatment.

I am well.

I am living my rights.

Everyone deserves to live their rights.

Right to live.

Right to health

Access for all to HIV prevention, treatment, care, and support is a critical part of human rights.

(Taken from New World Outlook, General Board of Global Ministries, Nov/Dec 2009 issue)

Opening Meditation in Silence

It doesn't interest me if there is one God or many Gods

I want to know if you belong or feel abandoned.

If you know despair or can see it in others.

I want to know if you are prepared to live in the world with its harsh need to change you.

If you can look back with firm eyes saying this is where I stand.

*I want to know if you know how to melt into that fierce heat of living falling
toward the center of your longing.*

I want to know if you are willing to live, day by day,

with the consequence of love and the bitter unwanted passion of your sure defeat.

I have been told, in that fierce embrace, even the gods speak of God. ("Self Portrait" by David Whyte)

Morning Prayer in Unison

Lord Jesus Christ,

You are the sun that always rises but never sets.

You are the source of all life,

creating and sustaining every living thing.

You are the source of all food, material and spiritual,

nourishing us in both body and soul.

You are the light that dispels the clouds of error and doubt,

and goes before us every hour of the day,

guiding our thoughts and actions.

May we walk in your light,

be sustained in your mercy,

and be warmed by your love. Amen

Suggested Scriptures: Psalm 121, Joshua 1:9, Isaiah 43:1-2, 4, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

Hymns: *Here I Am, Lord* (p.593 UMH), *Jesu, Jesu* (p. 432, UMH), *The Voice of God is Calling* (p. 436 UMH), *There is a Balm in Gilead* (p. 375 UMH)

Reading:

“Good Friday God”

Good Friday God
Let us tell you the story of HIV/AIDS
It's a story about poverty
The sick one lies on the floor
A ripple under the blanket
Mouth too dry to ask
“Where is food?”
“Where is medicine?”
Jesus cries out on the Cross
The disciples cry out
We cry out
You are on our side
And still
You call us to be on yours

Care volunteers visit their neighbors with HIV/AIDS
You can hear them singing in the lanes
“We are going forward, we are not going backwards”
The sick one hears them coming
And knows
Here comes love
I haven't been forgotten.

Good Friday God
Cruel thorns, terrible nails
Pierce your great shout of love
And still
You astonish us with hope
Vigorous hope that makes new things happen
New love, new faith
Transfigured words, bodies moving
Into action
Bread and medicine
Care and company
For the forgotten ones

At the Cross
The dreadful “No” of HIV/AIDS
Meets the mighty “Yes”
“We are going forward.

We are not going backwards.”

(Terrie Robinson, Maidenhead, England, published in *Lifting Women’s Voices, Prayers to Change the World*)

Closing Prayer

We are the people of God! We are the sign of a new world, a new creation. We are sisters and brothers of Jesus Christ.

We believe in God. We believe in the goodness of God, in the presence of God in human history, in the nearness of God’s love.

We believe in Jesus Christ, God incarnate. We believe that this incarnation and revelation are present in the midst of human life. We believe that God was revealed to us and continues to reveal himself in humanity, that out of human suffering may come rescue and healing; and out of death, new life.

We believe in the Holy Spirit which moves among us and makes us a people of God. We believe that by the power of the Holy Spirit the world can change and a community of peace, love, and justice can become a reality among us.

We are the people of God! We are the sign of a new world, a new creation. We are sisters and brothers of Jesus Christ. AMEN.

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