

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE WEEK
November 12th to 19th, 2006

Creative Partnerships, Collaborative Action

SERVICE SUGGESTIONS

We invite you to prepare yourselves for worship with the following silent prayer:

*We are like trees, firmly planted in God's good soil. We touch the earth and feel the ground that supports and holds us. As we grow, God waters and nourishes us. We feel God's life-giving love. We reach for the stars; we reach out to God; we feel God's blessing. We reach out to one another and feel the blessing that comes from connection to all of life.*¹

WE COME TOGETHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Call to Worship:

One: You call us to a generous way of being, O God.

All: *When our praise and prayer come from the heart, you cheer us on.*

One: You call us to a generous form of friendship, O God.

All: *When we listen carefully and encourage with sensitivity, your presence is felt.*

One: You call us to a generous spirit as we work, O God.

All: *When we help out carefully, and share our rewards sacrificially, your word is heeded.*

One: You call us to look at the generosity of Jesus, O God.

All: *As we look up at the cross, we know how far generosity can go. Amen.*²

Hymn Suggestion: Be Thou My Vision

Prayer of Approach:

*Gracious God, we ask what we must do to be citizens of your realm, and your answer shakes us. In our secular life we live by established social law, but in Christ we are subject to and called to live by your spiritual law, a law where justice is determined not by labour or power, influence or worthiness, but by mercy and compassion. In Jesus, you have shown us that it is not by what we or others earn or deserve that forgiveness and favour are poured upon us, but by your grace alone. We come in our need for your mercy this day, and pray to be so cleansed and filled with your Spirit that we are channels of your love and witnesses to your divine mercy in our life in the world.*³

¹ Excerpted from Whole People of God, 2000-2001 (Wood Lake Books) www.logosproductions.com

² David Sparks, from Prayers to Share, Year A (Wood Lake Books, 2004)
Excerpted from Aha! 14.4 July-September 2005

³ Excerpted from Lectern Resource 30.3 www.logosproductions.com

Prayer of Confession

God, we observe and ask as the friend to Job, “Upon whom does his light not arise?” (Job 25:3). We see your goodness and your grace toward all: prodigal and priest, sinner and saint, and we often feel like the elder brother: confused, resentful, even angry. We confess that we readily join the world in deciding what and who is worthy of reward or censure, for that way we can know where we stand. But with you, the world’s rules do not apply! We want to cry “injustice”, but are constrained by your love, and we feel ashamed. Forgive us for our graceless, judging attitudes, our selfish, unloving ways. And forgive us for doubting that your grace can extend even to us.⁴

Words of Assurance

God loved us enough to ensure our salvation in Christ Jesus. By pardoning our sins, God makes us a new people, a people saved by grace, a people transformed by the power of love. Glory be to God!⁵

LISTENING FOR GOD’S PRESENCE

Children’s Story:

From: The Velveteen Rabbit⁶ (See attached)

Hymn Suggestion: Let There Be Light (For other possibilities please see the list www.csc-scc.gc.ca/text/prgrm/chap/faith/christian/5_e.shtml)

Old Testament Reading:
Exodus 20:1-17

Gospel Reading:
Matthew 20:1-16

Hymn Suggestion: Open My Eyes That I May See

Sermon/Homily:
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OFFERING OURSELVES IN SERVICE

Offering:

⁴ Excerpted from *Lectern Resource 27.3* www.logosproductions.com

⁵ Excerpted from *Lectern Resource 29.3* www.logosproductions.com

⁶ Williams, Margery, *The Velveteen Rabbit*, (Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group Inc., New York: 1922 & 1991)

Offertory Response:

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures high and low;
Give thanks to God in love made known;
Creator, Word and Spirit, One.*

Prayer of Dedication of Gifts and Self:

*O God of all creation and all creatures, place us within the array of your created order and remind us that we are stewards of your holy mysteries. Help us to be creative in our giving and gracious in our receiving. Create in our lives places of generosity so that we might share your abundance. Amen.*⁷

Prayers of the People:

For ourselves, we pray;

- *That we receive the message Jesus teaches through reversals of what we expect, through surprising caring for surprising people;*
- *That our living, giving, loving, and serving not be for reward or the delusion that we can make ourselves worthier in your sight;*
- *For the humility that knows others are also called to your service, and will be recompensed according to your compassion, not our judgment;*

We also pray;

- *For those who demand justice on their own terms, for themselves and others;*
- *For those who begrudge your kindness shown where they consider it undeserved;*
- *For those who mistakenly feel they have no need for your grace.*⁸

Pastoral Prayer:

Today, Lord, is a day that we feast on your amazing grace. Like the Hebrews of old, we too wander in the wilderness of our own making. Sometimes we seem to make life more complicated than it needs to be. Our priorities are out of kilter and we need to ground ourselves in the holiness that you have shown us. In our congregation and community, there are many people who are lonely, hungry, and alienated from life and loved ones.

⁷ Excerpted from The Minister's Annual Manual – 1999-2000 www.logosproductions.com

⁸ Excerpted from Lectern Resource 30.3 www.logosproductions.com

*Where we can be conduits of your mercy, help us gain the vision and discernment necessary to carry the life-changing power of the gospel to these. As we worship this day, may you provide for us a new vision of your kingdom and give us the courage to be your people. In the name of the Crucified One, we pray. Amen.*⁹

The Lord's Prayer

Announcements/Life and Work of the Church

Hymn Suggestion: Lord Speak to Me

Commissioning and Benediction:

*Let us go into the world trusting that whatever we offer of work or witness, time or talent is received, valued, blessed, and multiplied by God's grace.*¹⁰

And now, let us go in peace, knowing that the God of peace goes with each and every one of us. Amen

This Order of Service was prepared under contract for the Correctional Service of Canada by the Church Council on Justice and Corrections. Additional faith community resources on Restorative Justice are available on the web site of both Correctional Services Canada (www.csc-scc.gc.ca) and the Church Council on Justice and Corrections (www.ccjc.ca).

⁹ Excerpted from The Minister's Annual Manual – 1999-2000 www.logosproductions.com

¹⁰ Excerpted from Lectern Resource 30.3 www.logosproductions.com