

DARE TO DANCE
WITH FREEDOM:
HOLY SURPRISE, HOLY DISRUPTION



WORSHIP GUIDE

GENERAL COMMISSION ON THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN
ORGANIZING MEETING
SEPTEMBER 24-27, 2008

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SEPTEMBER 24, 2008

OPENING WORSHIP

“DARE TO DANCE WITH DREAMERS”

WE GATHER

Music to Gather

*“I’m Gonna Sing” (add “dance”)
Rehearse “I Will Take the Cup of Freedom”*

Invitation

[Marcia sings line and speaks as music vamps beneath...]

Let’s walk together for a while...

[“take a look around - these are folks who are on this quadrennial journey with you...”]

Let’s walk together for a while and ask where we begin...

[Yes, I’m sure that’s a question on everyone’s mind!]

... to build a world where love can grow and hope can enter in...

[I’ve had the privilege of working with GCSRW many years and I am thrilled for you that you are here in this place where you are part of a mission where the bottom line is “building a world where love can grow and hope can enter in”]

... to be the hands of healing...

[oh, yes, there is so much healing and growing to be done]

... and to plant the seeds of peace...

[but remember, in order to plant, you have to dig, to uncover, to disrupt the sometimes hard and crusted top of the garden, especially if things haven’t grown there for a while]

Singing welcome, welcome to this place.

You’re invited to come and know God’s grace.

All are welcome the love of God to share

‘cause all of us are welcome here;

all are welcome in this place.

Turn to the people near you and let them know “you are welcome in this place”

*[from the top]
“Welcome” FEB, 7*

Prayer of Invocation

[possibly Bishop from Mozambique in her first language]

Opening Hymn

“Sing For God’s Glory”

Tune: LOBE DEN HERREN UMH 139

**Sing for God’s glory that colors the dawn of creation,
racing across the sky, trailing bright clouds of elation;
sun of delight succeeds the velvet of night,
warming the earth’s exultation.**

**Sing for God’s power that shatters the chains that would hold us,
searing the bleakness of fear and despair that would mold us,
touching our shame with love that will not lay blame,
reaching out gently to find us.**

**Sing for God’s justice disturbing each easy illusion,
tearing down tyrants and putting our pride to confusion;
lifeblood of right, resisting evil and slight,
offering freedom’s transfusion.**

**Sing for God’s saints who have travelled faith’s journey before us,
who in our weariness give us their hope to restore us;
in them we see the new creation to be,
spirit of love made flesh for us.**

WE PROCLAIM

Words

“If we dream alone it remains only a dream.
If we dream together it is the beginning of reality.”

Dom Hilder Camara

“To be free is to be able to do what you think is right.”

Aung San Suu Kyi, Nobel Peace Prize Winner, 1991, for her work for democracy in Burma

A Reading

Isaiah 61

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
God has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor,

and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display God's glory.
They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

“Dare to Dance”
(our “theme song” for this meeting)

[refrain]
Dare to dance with dreamers, sing their song
Dare to dance their stories, sing out strong
Dare to dance with freedom,
your whole life long.
Dare to dance again!

Free the captives, heal the blind,
leave the fear of oppression behind.
Walk on boldly, take a stand,
Let's walk on New Jerusalem.
[refrain]

Break the silence, spread the word
let the voice of liberation be heard.
Walk on boldly, take a stand,
Let's dance on New Jerusalem.
[refrain]

Naming the Dreamers

Noah's wife
on an ark for 40 days and nights with all those animals.
Sarah,
Heart of the Covenant
who conceived laughter in her old age.
Rebekah,
Woman of Ingenuity
achieving her own purposes in a patriarchal world.
Rachel,
who waited seven years and seven days,
waited for love, waited for life.
Mother and sister of Moses and Pharaoh's daughter

whose courage allowed Moses to live and accomplish the Exodus.
Hannah,
witness to the power of prayer and consequences of faith.
Woman of Tekoa
whom men in authority consulted for the wisdom of her words.
Mother of Solomon
who saved her child from the stinging slice of the sword.
Mary, mother of Jesus
common woman of uncommon courage.
Elizabeth,
who proved that one is never too old to have their dreams come true.
Anna,
prophet at prayer in the temple when Jesus was present to God
who from that moment began proclaiming Jesus and salvation to all.
Mary,
mother of Joseph and James who joined Jesus in ministry.
Salome,
who followed Jesus and shared in him ministry.
Mary and Martha of Bethany,
Friends with whom he felt at home and shared his ministry.
Generous widow,
praised by Jesus as one who gave all she had.
Prophetic woman,
who discerned the truth and proclaimed Jesus Messiah by anointing his head with oil.
Priscilla,
church leader and teacher.
Four daughters of Philip
who preached prophetically.
Women of Corinth,
who prayed and prophesied in Church,
unwilling to keep silent.

*Who are the people, the dreamers, whose stories have inspired your own dance of freedom
or who perhaps set you free to dance?*

*(On screen: [Name], who _____.
People are invited to lift up contributions to the whole group.)*

[reprise "Dare to Dance"]

What is your dance? What is your story?

*(On screen: [Name, who _____.
People are invited to share around the table their name and how they would fill in the blank
about themselves.)*

[reprise "Dare to Dance"]

WE RESPOND

Petition and Confession *“Freedom is What You Give”*

Assurance

Be assured that God’s holy surprise is for us.
Grace is ours and freedom is the result.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.
Glory to God! Amen!

The Great Thanksgiving

Sung:

I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God.
I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God.

The Living God be with you
And also with you
Lift up your hearts
We lift them up to God!
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Gracious God, source of steadfast strength,
we delight in giving you praise;
with purpose and compassion you gave of yourself,
created our world, and called it good.
Creating creatures of every size, shape, and color,
you blessed humankind with the gift of your image:
as dreamers and creators.

As you comfort us, so too, you challenge us.
Thanks be to you, Holy One, for rolling waters of justice,
everflowing streams of hope,
and the courage to answer the call to serve You again and again.

And so, with your people on earth
and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy , holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Sung:

**I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God.
I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God.**

In the power of Jesus we gather at this table,
remembering all you have given us.

We remember Jesus' healing touch,
his strong compassion,
his righteous anger,
and his prayerful strength.

We remember how he gathered your people,
stranger and friend alike,
gave thanks to you for them,
offered them the bread of life and the cup of freedom,
and proclaimed a new covenant in your name.

Sung:

**I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God.
I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God.**

Sung by Marcia as bread is raised:

This is the bread given of the earth,
Receive of the fields, it will set you free!
This bread of life, I will take up
and I will call on the name of God!

**I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God.
I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God.**

Sung by Marcia as cup is raised:

This is the cup given of the earth,
Receive of the vine, it will set you free!
This cup of freedom, I will take up
and I will call on the name of God!

**I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God.
I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God.**

Presider:

Remembering the wonder of his life,
the agony of his death,
and the joy of his resurrection,

we unite with all the saints,
proclaiming the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again!

[Liturgist: "You are invited to raise your hands in the ancient Christian posture for prayer"]....

Presider:

Pour out your Spirit upon us, loving God,
and upon this bread and fruit of the vine,
that in eating and drinking together
we might be truly transformed
and strengthened in our commitment to your call:
to do justice, celebrate creation,
and honor the human differences through which your love shines.

[The people are invited to take each other's hands]

Bless our communion with strength and purpose, we pray,
and make us one in love,
through the power of your risen Christ;
in the communion of the Holy Spirit.
All honor and glory are yours, now and forever! **Amen!**

Sung:

**I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God.
I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God.**

The Prayer of Jesus

Breaking the Bread

Communion

WE CONTINUE OUR WORSHIPFUL WORK

A Blessing

“Blessed are the poor in spirit.”

This means that...

Blessed are those who are willing
to let themselves be censured by the word of God,
to re-examine their views,
to believe they haven't yet understood a thing,

to be taken by surprise,
to have their mind changed,
to see their convictions,
their principles,
their tidy systems
and everything they took for granted
swept out from under them,
and to face the fact, once for all,
that there's no such thing as a matter of course
and that God can ask anything.

Song of Celebration
"Freedom is Coming" FWS 2192

WORSHIP NOTES:

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"Great Thanksgiving" adapted from June Christine Goudey, *The Feast of Our Lives*.

"Freedom is Coming" traditional South African from *The Faith We Sing*, 2192.

MORNING PRAYER AND SONG
SEPTEMBER 25, 2008

“DARE TO DANCE AGAIN”

Opening Cry to God
“How Long?”

Reading

O my Comforter in sorrow, my heart is faint within me.
Listen to the cry of my people from a land far away:
"Is the LORD not in Zion? Is her Sovereign no longer there?"
Since my people are crushed, I am crushed; I mourn, and horror grips me.
Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?
Why then is there no healing for the wound of my people?
From Jeremiah 8

Lament

*What are the sorrows of this world that affect our work together?
What are the stumbling blocks along our journey?*

Prayer

For what do we pray? What do we need from God in order bring the dance of freedom to all?

Assurance

The LORD appeared to us, saying:
“See, I will bring them from the land of the north
and gather them from the ends of the earth...
They will come with weeping; they will pray as I bring them back.
I will lead them beside streams of water
on a level path where they will not stumble.
I have loved you with an everlasting love;
I have drawn you with loving-kindness.
I will build you up again and you will be rebuilt, O Israel.
Again you will take up your tambourines
and go out to dance with the joyful.”
From Jeremiah 31

A Visual Word
“Dancing”

WORSHIP NOTES:

“How Long?” words and music by John L. Bell © 1987 Wild Goose Resource Group from *The Upper Room Worshipbook*, 233. OneLicense # E-801370.

“Dancing 2008” from www.wherethehellismatt.com

MORNING PRAYER AND SONG
SEPTEMBER 26, 2008

“CALLED TO BE UN-USUAL”

We Greet the Morning

*“Morning Has Broken” UMH 145
[vs. 1 in sign language]*

“Cherokee Morning Song” FEB 3

A Visual Word

“Stranger”

*You love what is ruined
You choose what is broken
You remember the forgotten...
I just don't understand this kind of love...*

Prayers

Sung Response

“For Everyone Born” FEB, 2

WORSHIP NOTES:

“Cherokee Morning Song” traditional Cherokee, from *For Everyone Born*, 3.

“Stranger” from www.theworkofthepeople.com.

“For Everyone Born” words by Shirley Erena Murray © 1998 Hope Publishing Co. from *For Everyone Born*, 2. OneLicense # E-801370.

GENERAL COMMISSION ON THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN
ORGANIZING MEETING
SEPTEMBER 28, 2008

RITUAL OF BLESSING
&
CLOSING SERVICE OF WORD AND TABLE

“HOLY SURPRISE, HOLY DISRUPTION”

WE GATHER AND BLESS

Song of Commitment
“Dare to Dance with Dreamers”

The Call

[1] Holy God!
[2] Holy Disruption!
[3] Holy Surprise!
Holy-moley!

[1] Breaking in, breaking it up, breaking away, breaking through!
The Holy comes, wreaking havoc on our lives, our schedules, our nice tidy to-do lists,
[2] Calling us again to the work of liberating-freedom-making,
Daring us to dance with the dreamers and do-ers that paved our way,
[3] Showing us the “un-usual” possibilities,
Urging us to stretch and reach and open and live.

[1] I need help.
[2] I need courage.
[3] I need you.

We need help. We need courage. We need each other.

[1,2 & 3 together, repeating]
Come, Holy Spirit, come!

“Spirit, I Have Heard You Calling”

**Spirit, I have heard you calling, like a mem’ry long grown dim,
crying from creation’s moment, seeking voice from deep within.
I have heard you in my longing. I have heard you in my pain.
Now I feel you moving in me, feel you burning like a flame.**

[underscoring continues as the new officers are called forward]

**Now I see you all around me, now I hear you call my name.
Now I speak the words you give me, now I feed creation's flame.
You are speaking through my longing. You are speaking through my pain.
Now I feel you moving in me, and I'll never be the same.**

[accompaniment ends]

Commissioning and Blessing

[words of commissioning TBD]

[music begins to underscore again; Marcia leads the people in movement during the blessing]

[4] Bless these hands that reach out
and into the lives of so many people,
pausing to touch
with tenderness
the hardened heart
where hurt is buried far
beyond all feeling,
where love is a four-letter word
that has no meaning
beyond the now.

[5] Bless these feet that run
through the day
after day
after day
without ceasing,
standing firm
upon principle,
dancing rings around
wanting to quit,
stopping to catch up
with what is important
in the long run,
then and now.

[6] Bless this heart that holds within it
far more than it can carry
of grief
and the disabling
disempowering pain
of multitudes,
yet knows
that You would ask of it
no more than it can bear
and so it bows
in gratitude,
making the most of
amazing grace.

[7] Bless this spirit determined to be
an extension of
Your Spirit,
with a reservoir of compassion
that is conceived
of enough
and more than enough
of serenity
and patience
for all Your cherished children,
even if every replenishing source
by You
were running dry.

[Marcia invites people to repeat]
We are Your disciples, Shaddai...
may we live for...
and love...
one another.

[4] Bless our hands to Your service,
[5] our feet to Your path,
[6] our heart to Your purpose,
[7] our spirit to dwell in the depths of Your Spirit
[4-7] for Your glory now and forever.

[sung]
**Since you moved upon my waters, since you spoke and set me free,
I have yearned for this communion, for your fire inside of me!
Now your love defines my longing. Now your love shines through my pain.
Now we dance in endless union, singing out creation's name!**

WE PROCLAIM

Scripture and Proclamation

Rosetta Ross

WE RESPOND

Invitation and Prayers

"Come to Us" URW 55

**Come to me, come to us, you who are burdened.
Come to the Word, and come to the meal,
Come without question or pressure or price:
Come, be embraced by the body of Christ.**

[music continues to underscore with energy]

Will you open yourselves to the grace of Jesus Christ that is always and already available here at this table? If so, say, “Open us to your grace, Lord.”

“Open us to your grace, Lord.”

Will you open yourselves once again to the call of Jesus Christ? If so, say,

“Open us to your call, Lord.”

“Open us to your call, Lord.”

Will you open yourselves to the possibility of transformation through Jesus Christ?

If so, say,

“Transform us, O Lord.”

“Transform us, O Lord.”

[sung]

**Come to me, come to us, pilgrim or stranger,
looking for change, or challenge, or light.**

**We all are people whose calling is care,
bearers of mercy, nourished in prayer.**

[music continues to underscore, changes mood to reflective]

As we prepare to attend the heavenly feast, we especially pray for those who have no earthly tables, or no place at a table, and so little daily bread. We name people and places now...

[underscoring stops and the people respond]

[a capella]

**Come to me, come to us, broken or building,
come with your children, you choices, your chains.**

**All are invited to friendship and rest,
to share in our struggle, our call, and our quest.**

In silence, let us lift up our prayers of confession...

[music comes back in, building]

Hear this good news!

God has loved you from the very beginning.

The invitation of Christ is never-ending.

The Holy Spirit is transforming you even now!

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven! Glory to God! Amen!

[sung]

Come to me, come to us, you who are burdened.

Come to the Word, and come to the meal,

Come without question or pressure or price:

Come, be embraced by the body of Christ.

The Peace

Indeed, you are invited to embrace each other as the Body of Christ as you pass the peace of Christ with one another.

The Great Thanksgiving

Jesus is with us!

With us now and forever!

So lift up your hearts and voices!

We lift them up to God!

Let's join in thanks and praise!

How right it is to do this together!

Holy Living One,

You transformed a whole lot of nothing into this amazing creation.

You breathed life all around and called it good.

You invited us to the wonder of it all

and when we could not face you, you turned us around.

You keep bringing us around time and again,

offering the chance to join the freedom-dance.

And so we join with the glorious chorus of saints past and present,
singing a never-ending hymn of praise:

“Le lo le lo lay lo”

Global Praise II

Indeed, you are holy!

And blessed is your son Jesus,

Anointed One,

Liberator,

Lover,

Brother,

Friend.

He sat at tables with those who had no place
and offered fulfilling food for bodies and souls.

And on the night when he would give all love for us,

he sat at the table with extended family—

just as he hosts this table here and now with this extended family.

He offered the usual prayers of thanks to you, God, over bread and cup,

and then disrupted the gathering with uncustomary words:

“Take and eat this bread - it is my body given for you.

Whenever you gather around the table together, remember me.”

“Take and drink from this cup, each and every one—it is my blood, sign of a new covenant,
(for business-as-usual is over and done!).

It is poured out for all people.
So whenever you gather around the table together, remember me.”

And so, my friends, we remember. And we believe:

Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again!

Pour out your Spirit upon us now!
Pour out your transforming presence on the gifts of this body and the gifts of bread and wine.
Make these gifts be for us your life and love,
uniting us as one body—Christ’s body—for the sake of loving the world.

All glory to you, Living Presence, Holy One, Holy God,
through Jesus our Christ
and the Holy Spirit our Advocate.
Amen.

[reprise Le lo le lo... (short)]

Breaking the Bread

Communion

WE ARE SENT FORTH

Prayer after Communion

[extemporaneous]

Closing Song

“Jikelele”

Benediction

WORSHIP NOTES:

“Spirit, I Have Heard You Calling” words and music by Thew Elliot © 1998 Thew Elliot, from *Shaping Sanctuary*, 314. Used with permission.

Blessing, “A Psalm of Discipleship” by Miriam Therese Winter, *WomanWord* (Crossroad Publication Co., 1990).

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“Le lo le lo lay lo” by William Loperena, O.P., Puerto Rico © 2000 GBGMusik from *Global Praise 2*, 24. OneLicense # E-801370.

“Jikelele” (“universal” or “everywhere”) traditional Zulu, South Africa from *For Everyone Born*, 1.