

Service of Healing and Renewal for Victims of Violence

Setting Chairs in circle. Table in center with colored cloth and bowls of water.

Greeting

Leader Peace be with you, and to all who enter into the presence of God.

All Amen.

Song

Choose from:

Inclusive Hymns for Liberating Christians

Words of Praise for God's Healing Power

Read by various members of the gathering.

Reader 1 "Restore us, O God! Let your face shine, that we may be saved." (Psalm 80:3)

Reader 2 "In the shadow of your wings I will take refuge, until the destroying storms pass by." (Psalm 57:1b)

Reader 3 "God remembers those who suffer; God does not forget their cry." (Psalm 9:12a)

Acknowledging the Pain

Leader God of strength, the legacy of abuse is always with us. It twists itself around our spirits, choking out any sense of dignity or self-worth. It is an evil that binds our souls so that we are unable to believe that your love or mercy or compassion could be for us. Holy Spirit, sustainer of our lives and of our faith, be present with us by your grace. Empower us with your strength and courage that we may come to know ourselves as beloved of God, created, redeemed, and sanctified by the God who loves us with an everlasting love.

All Amen.



Jane A. Keene

Sharing the Pain

Leader We all share the pain of victimization. Many of us have borne particular hurts alone because soci-

ety has silenced us, conditioning us to feel responsible for the violence inflicted upon us. We have endured abusive relationships and dehumanizing theology because the need to survive

seemed more important than our total well-being. But now we choose to settle for nothing less than God's wish for us: complete physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wholeness. Today, at this moment in this sacred place, we are gathered to share our common stories, as we press forward to God's new reign. You are invited now to name your particular pain.

(Everyone is invited to share stories of pain and hurt.)

Leader We now reaffirm our right to grieve for our losses. As our hurts are gathered up with the hurts of all our sisters and brothers, we will mourn silently for all those who have experienced violence.

(Period of silent mourning.)

New Life Is Possible

Leader As our tears are mingled with God's tears, we somehow sense that new life is possible. We are not alone.

Assurance of God's Presence Reclaiming the Promise

Paraphrase of the Twenty-Third Psalm. Spoken in unison.

The Lord is my friend!

What more could I want?

God sits with me in the quiet times of my days
while exploring with me the meaning of life.

God calls me forth as a whole person.

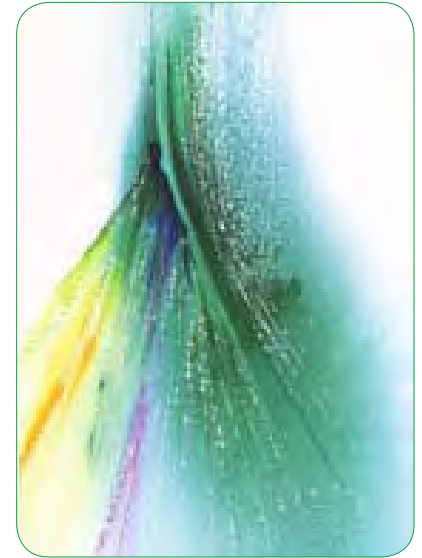
Even though I walk along paths of pain,
prejudice, hatred, depression,

My fears are quieted,

because God is with me.

Through words and thoughts, I am challenged.

Risk by Doris Klein, CSA.



God's spirit causes me to be sensitive to the needs of others. Then lifts up opportunities for serving. Such confidence stretches me. Surely love shall be mine to share throughout my life. And I shall be sustained by God's concern forever.

Jacquie Clingan

Letting Go of Victimization

(Spoken in unison.)

I will no longer allow this experience of violence to dominate my life. I will not let it continue to make me feel bad about myself. I will not let it limit my ability to love and trust others in my life. I will not let my memory of the experience continue to victimize and control me.



Marie Fortune

Ritual of Renewal and Self-Blessing

Group 1 In blessing our foreheads...
(All dip fingers in water and touch foreheads.)

Group 2 ...we claim the powers of reason.

Group 1 In blessing our eyes...
(All dip fingers in water and touch eyes.)

Group 2 ...we claim the power of vision, to see clearly the forces of life and death in our midst.

Group 1 In blessing our lips...
(All dip fingers in water and touch lips.)

Group 2 ...we claim the power to speak the truth about our experiences; we claim the power to name them.

Group 1 In blessing our hands...
(All dip hands in water.)

Group 2 ...we claim our powers as artisans of a new humanity.

Group 1 In blessing our feet...
(All dip fingers in water and touch feet.)

Group 2 ...we claim the power to walk the paths of our courageous foremothers, and when necessary, to forge new paths.
(All join hands.)

All In blessing one another, we claim the power that rests collectively in our shared struggle for justice.
Rosemary Radford Ruether

A Charge of Empowerment for New Life

Reader 1 "We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken, and we have escaped."
(Psalm 124:7)

Reader 2 "You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy."
(Psalm 30:11)

Reader 3 "For it was you who formed

my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well."
(Psalm 139:13-14)

Reader 4 "I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; my soul is like the weaned child that is with me."
(Psalm 131:2)

Reader 5 God "is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?"
(Psalm 27:1a)

Reader 6 "Do not forsake Wisdom, and She will keep you safe; love Her, and She will guard you."
(Proverbs 4:6)

Dismissal Blessing for Dismissal

(Spoken in unison.)

May our Sister God, who held us at our birth, who stands beside us in our joy and our grief, and who gathers us up into her life-giving embrace, be with us, now and always. Amen.

Jane A. Keene

Song

Choose from:
Inclusive Hymns for Liberating Christians.



Integrity by Doris Klein, CSA.

Acknowledgments

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