

Evening Prayers: Service of the Liberation and Justice

While a candle or candles are lit, the following is said:

One: Our God is an awesome God who breathed into emptiness and created all that is.

Many: With love and care, God shaped the world in all its diversity with mountains and valleys, rivers and deserts, and people of all colors and sizes.

One: And threading through creation are beautiful dreams of justice, compassion, liberation, and peace.

Many: O God, creator of our past, our present, and our future, we thank you for the many blessings you bestow on us each moment.

One: Be with us this evening. Draw near to us as we draw near to you.

Many: Lead us in paths of righteousness. Fill our hearts with compassion and a thirst for justice. Teach us to be co-creators, with You, of a world where all belong and share in the abundance you have given us.

Evening hymn:

Let Justice Flow like Streams

Jane Parker Huber, 1984

1 Let jus - tice flow like streams of spark - ling wa - ter, pure,
2 Let righ - teous - ness roll on as oth - ers' cares we heed,
3 So may God's plumb line, straight, de - fine our mea - sure true,

En - a - bling growth, re - fresh - ing life, a - bun - dant, cleans - ing, sure.
An ev - er - flow - ing stream of faith trans - lat - ed in - to deed.
And jus - tice, right, and peace per - vade this world our whole life through.

This is one of two hymns Jane Parker Huber wrote for special events emphasizing economic justice for women at the time of the reunification of two Presbyterian denominations in 1983. The text's brevity underscores the urgency of Amos' pronouncements against injustice.

Tune: ST. THOMAS S.M.
Aaron Williams' New Universal Psalmist, 1770

Opening Sentences

One: Worker God, whose hands built the earth, molded our bodies, and sowed the stars across the sky,

Many: We gather this evening in your presence with praise and thanksgiving for your mighty deeds.

One: Meet us here, Worker God; strengthen our hearts and our hands to work with you

Many: In the building of a world filled with justice and peace.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 129

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 102

Reading from Scripture: Matthew 5:1-15, 43-48

Song of Mary (All)

**My soul magnifies the Sovereign
And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior;
For God has looked with favor on the lowliness of God's servant.
Surely, from now on, all generations will call me blessed;
For the Mighty One has done great things for me,
The Mighty One whose name is holy.
God's mercy is for those who fear God
From generation to generation.
God has shown great strength;
And has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
God has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
And lifted up the lowly;
God has filled the hungry with good things,
And sent the rich away empty.
God has helped God's servant Israel,
In remembrance of God's mercy,
According to the promise made to our ancestors,
To Abraham and Sarah and to their descendants forever.**

A Responsive Prayer for Justice *by Rebecca Sutton, Program Coordinator of Global Women's Exchange. This prayer was developed for the NY State Labor-Religion Coalition's seventh annual 40-hour fast. It was also part of Prayers for a Just Economy, a prayer service calling for an increase in the federal minimum wage held in Washington, DC, July 24, 2013.*

One: Pray for those who are hungry.

Many: Pray harder for those who will not feed them.

One: Pray for those who struggle each week to pay their bills.

Many: Pray harder for the wealthy who do not care.

One: Pray for those who are homeless.

Many: Pray harder for those who deny them shelter.

One: Pray for the sick and lonely.

Many: Pray harder for those who will not give them comfort.

One: Pray for those who cry out for dignity.

Many: Pray harder for those who will not listen.

One: Pray for those oppressed by unjust wages.

Many: Pray harder for those who exploit them.

One: Pray for those who bear the yoke of prejudice.

Many: Pray harder for those who discriminate against them.

One: Pray for those whose basic needs are denied.

Many: Pray harder for public officials who cater to the greedy and ignore those bound unjustly. Amen.

Prayer of our Savior

Closing Hymn: Take My Gifts (next page)

Blessing (Based on Ephesians 3:17-19)

One: May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith—

Many: That we, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints

One: What is the breadth and length and height and depth,

Many: and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge,

All: That we may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Take My Gifts

Shirley Erena Murray, 1991

1 Take my gifts and let me love you, God who first of all loved me,
2 Take the fruit that I have gathered from the tree your Spirit sowed,
3 Take what-ever I can offer— gifts that I have yet to find,

gave me light and food and shelter, gave me life and set me free,
har-vest of your own com-pas-sion, juice that makes the wine of God,
skills that I am slow to sharpen, tal-ents of the hand and mind,

now be-cause your love has touched me, I have love to give a-way,
spiced with hu-mor, laced with laugh-ter— fla-vor of the Je-sus life,
things made beau-ti-ful for oth-ers in the place where I must be:

now the bread of love is ris-ing, loaves of love to mul-ti-ply!
tang of risk and new ad-ven-ture, taste and zest be-yond be-lief.
take my gifts and let me love you, God who first of all loved me.

Shirley Erena Murray recounted that Colin Gibson composed this tune for her stewardship text "almost instantaneously." Gibson has served as professor at the University of Otago, as well as organist and choir director in nearby Dunedin, New Zealand.

Tune: TALAVERA TERRACE 8.7.8.7.D.
Colin Gibson, 1991
Alternate tune: HOLY MANNA