



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Prepared by the WDP of Slovenia

March 1st, 2019

“Come – Everything Is Ready”

Worship Service

PREPARATION

A table covered with a white tablecloth, just like in a farm house. Welcoming us to the table are:

- ✓ *bread (belokranjska pogača – different shapes can be formed when slitting the dough; you should first make a cross; the bread can be placed in a straw basket)*
- ✓ *wine in a majolica, a ceramic jug, as Slovenia is wine-producing country*
- ✓ *water*
- ✓ *salt (salt is produced on the Slovenian coast, in the Piran salt-pans)*
- ✓ *ceramic bowl*

You can invite the readers to sit around the table – as an image of physical togetherness. It is recommended that the readers represent the diversity of the community and be intergenerational.

A vase containing carnations and rosemary, because this is a celebration, a banquet. If no red carnations are available, use red paper carnations made from crepe paper, which can later be distributed during the offering.

Permission Note: *The songs composed by Barbara Wohinz and Diana Novak were done for WDP Program. Music sheet and words in Slovene are available. Aine Pedersen Lee composed for WDP Program adapting slovene folk song. Music sheet and words in English are available.*

They have given permission to all WDP National Committees to translate, play, sing, print and reproduce those songs for WDP activities. For any other use, permission should be requested. The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended is in the public domain. Please, acknowledge the composers name.

WORSHIP SERVICE

Song: Celebration. Let's all go to the Banquet! (Words and folk song adaptation by Aine Pedersen Lee. Slovene folk song: Furmani pripel jejo vino)

ENTRANCE and GREETING

Leader: DOBER DAN! (*Doh-ber dan*) (literally Good Day, use for morning or afternoon as suits) DOBER VEČER! (*Doh-ber veh-cher*).

Warmest greetings from the women of Slovenia, one of the smallest and youngest countries in Europe. God in his goodness endowed us with natural beauty, from the Pannonian Plains to hills to green forests, and high mountains, from the mysterious Karst underworld to the coast of the Adriatic Sea.

Dear Sisters, "Come - Everything is ready!" Let us praise God together.

Song: Celebration. Let's all go to the Banquet!

THE CALL TO PRAYER

Reader: God of history, for eleven centuries people in Slovenia have known you. As Christians, we have affirmed your love so to You be the glory, honor and praise.

All: We praise you with the sound of waterfalls and of the waves of the sea, for our fruitful vineyards and fields, green forests and snow-capped peaks.

Reader: Jesus Christ, son of God, whose word works wonders among us, you inspire us to loving action.

All: We praise you in nature, in the villages and cities, in birds singing and wild game calling, with the sound of the organ, accordion, guitars and zither.

Reader: O Holy Spirit, with your gifts you bring us together in unity despite our differences.

All: We thank you for the relationships which you build in us and among us, in your hands we place the future of young people, the hopes of families and the acceptance of our elders.

Reader: Welcoming God, in your love you have prepared a table for all and you inspire us to open our hearts and our homes to offer a place to the ones who are not at the table yet.

All: We praise and thank You and proclaim the Kingdom of love in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Song: Moj psalm. (Words: Barbara Wohinz, Music: Diana Novak. © Diana Novak)

WOMEN'S VOICES

Leader: Let us listen to the experiences of some Slovenian women. With them, let us reflect and pray. First listen to Marjeta who was born at the end of the Second World War when her country was a part of Yugoslavia, a marxist socialist republic.

Marjeta: My name is Marjeta (*Mar-yeta*). My mother, who had just been widowed, and my grandmother both taught me how to pray as they shared their faith with me. At that time, our country was a socialist-communist state, religious people were considered second-class citizens and when I finished secondary school, I could not get a student grant and had no other sources of funding to allow me to study. I went abroad, as did many other workers from the former Yugoslavia. In Switzerland I found a job, but I certainly felt strongly how foreign workers were looked upon. After retiring, my husband and I returned home. I am very happy that we were accepted in the community of my native parish and I try to share my happiness by volunteering in the parish, and also by participating in the World Day of Prayer.

Reader: We Slovenes have experienced what it means to be a refugee and a migrant worker. At the end of the Second World War, many had to leave their country, either because of their opposition to Communism or to find work abroad, so that their families could survive. We have to confess that now we tend to forget this experience when it comes to our attitudes

towards people who have had to leave their own ruined homes in search of peace and a better life.

All: Merciful God, forgive us when we silence ourselves in face of injustices.

Song: Le mi. (Words: Barbara Wohinz, Music: Diana Novak. © Diana Novak)

Leader: Let us listen to Mojca, a young woman, who grew up in the newly established state of Slovenia after independence in 1991.

Mojca: My name is Mojca (*Moy-tsa*). I am thirty-four years old. I was able to study, since in Slovenia third level education is free of charge. When I was twenty-one years old, I fell in love and got pregnant, but my boyfriend left me. It was very difficult to continue the studies, but I received support from my family. I was among the best students in my class. I raised my child, and had a second one with my husband, who accepted my first son as his own. I am a researcher in a scientific institute. I wish, however, that the balance between family care and work would be more favorable to families and less restrictive to women in their working place. In spite of the full legal equality, women still have to bear a double burden.

Reader: We give thanks for all those women who overcame the barriers to raise their children in the midst of adversity. We thank you, God, for the communities that surround women and children with love.

All: Thank you, loving God.

Song: Le mi.

Leader: Let us listen to Marija, an eighty-year-old lady, living in the countryside.

Marija: My name is Marija (*Maria*). I'm already over eighty years old and I live with my son's family. My son and my daughter-in-law are unemployed. My modest pension from my work in a factory is what sustains my family. We produce the food for our consumption on our small farm. On the other hand, my neighbour lives alone in a big house, with a farm which she can no longer maintain and work. Her children moved to the city to find jobs.

Reader: We recognize that in many places aging parents and the elderly people are not receiving the care and attention they deserve. They feel isolated and in need of mutual encouragement and togetherness. We should develop initiatives for intergenerational cooperation. We are grateful for our grandmothers and grandfathers who have helped us to keep our Christian faith alive.

All: Thank you, caring Creator.

Song: Le mi.

Leader: Let us listen to a forty-year old mother of two children, whose life has been strongly affected by alcoholism.

Ema: My name is Ema. I was born into a family where there was a lot of alcohol abuse, my father was often drunk and violent and my mother also drank. I swore that my children should never suffer like that, and that's why I never drink alcohol. I got married and with my husband we built a house. We have two children, who are now in school. Then my husband lost his job

because his company had gone bankrupt, and he began to drink. He became violent with me and the children. I didn't know what to do. I didn't like to bring my children home to see a drunken father, even if he was very affectionate to them when he was sober. Then he would promise me almost anything, but he wouldn't agree to go and get help. I pray to God that he would face his addiction with the confidence that our lives will improve.

Reader: We have neglected to recognize the disruptive effects of alcohol in our personal lives. Sometimes, it causes children and women to become victims of violence. We pray for the young people who, like the adults, are using alcohol to enjoy themselves or to cope with distress. Lord, we pray to you for all the families who face alcoholism and alcohol abuse. May all hear and joyfully accept the invitation to your banquet.

All: God, open our hearts, make us more compassionate and understanding.

Song: Le mi.

Leader: Let us listen to Natasha, a member of the Roma ethnic minority group:

Natasha: My name is Natasha, I am forty-six years old, married, with two children. I am Romani. I spent my childhood with a loving and caring family in a Roma village. Both of my parents had jobs, so they could ensure the appropriate environment where we could grow up carefree and get a good education. Our Roma village was accepted by the large community around us. I almost never experienced rejection because of my ethnicity. However, my family's experience does not fully reflect the social and economic situation of the Roma people in Slovenia or Europe. Many of them live in impossible living conditions, without running water or electricity in their houses. The access to school is limited and Roma children are often mocked and excluded at school. They are not able to obtain a good education, and that impacts their possibility of a job that can take their family out of poverty.

Reader: We confess, O God, that social exclusion is current in our society. We find it hard to accept otherness, we believe our way of life is the measure for how everyone should live and we are very quick to exclude.

All: Lord, have mercy on us.

Reader: Thank you, God, for those who learned with Jesus to be respectful and open-minded and do not tire of embracing ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities and asylum seekers, and enabling them to develop their self-esteem.

All: Loving Father, stand beside us in our efforts.

Song: Le mi.

CONFESSION AND PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

Reader: We confess our faults, merciful God. We have so many of them that we cannot even count them.

Reader: God, we are your beloved children, see our tears and the repentance in our hearts! Because of your forgiveness, we dare to hope for a new day, in which we will build relations based on justice, peace and love.

Song: Zahvala. (Words: Barbara Wohinz, Music: Diana Novak. © Diana Novak)

WORD OF GOD

Leader: While reflecting on one hand our relationship with God and on the other hand our relationships in our community, let us read Jesus' parable from Luke's Gospel chapter 14 verses 15-24 (NSRV, 1989, Division of Christian Education of NCCC in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved):

One of the dinner guests, on hearing this, said to him, "Blessed is anyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!" Then Jesus said to him, "Someone gave a great dinner and invited many. At the time for the dinner he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for everything is ready now.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land, and I must go out and see it; please accept my regrets.' Another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please accept my regrets.' Another said, 'I have just been married, and therefore I cannot come.' So the slave returned and reported this to his master.

Then the owner of the house became angry and said to his slave, 'Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.' And the slave said, 'Sir, what you ordered has been done, and there is still room.' Then the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those who were invited will taste my dinner.'"

Song: Come along, the feast is ready. (Words and folk song adaptation by Aine Pedersen Lee. Slovene folk song: Kaj boš, Janko, jutri delal?)

PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS

This activity can take place in various forms like preaching or conversation in small groups. We suggest that you connect the art work by Rezka Arnuš to the conversation. The painting reflects the invitation to the people living in the margins of society. To understand the painting read the artist's explanation and biography. The focus theme of the worship service is the invitation to 'Come – Everything is Ready'. No matter the excuses, the table to form community is ready and is open even to the ones who were not invited in the first place. God's house is to be filled with joy and presence, to smell like food, to be occupied with conversation. The door of God's house is open to the streets. Just come, there is a place for you. Let's build and strengthen the communities around God's table. We suggest a few questions for reflection, from which you can choose according to your situation. You may reflect in silence, and then share with the person next to you.

Can you imagine how the host felt when all of the guests stated that they had more urgent or important business to attend to than the invitation to the great dinner?

Have you ever experienced the rejection of a previously accepted invitation? How did you feel?

Have you ever rejected an invitation? How did you feel?

Now, imagine that you were one of the two or three original guests who had not refused the invitation. When you come into the house, it is full of strangers. Who are they in your context? Would you still come in and enjoy the unexpected company? Jesus preached the Good News of the Kingdom of God by sharing meals with people. In Jewish society - and in many places today – sharing a meal with someone means to "be one with them."

How would you place a table, and invite 'Come – Everything is Ready'. Who are the ones on the street that you are hospitable to?

How would you prepare a feast for the 'poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame' (Lk 14:13), knowing that they are a beloved child of God.

Song: Pridi. (Words: Barbara Wohinz, Music: Diana Novak. © Diana Novak)

OFFERING

The World Day of Prayer is a worldwide ecumenical women led movement. Each year, we admire the strength of the communities who participate, we empathize with their cares and we are encouraged by their faith.

Our vision is a world in which all women can make decisions about their lives. On the way there, we need signs of solidarity. One such sign is our offering with which we use to strengthen communities around the world through programs that enable women and children to live a better life.

(During the offering song, distribute the red carnations.)

Song: Daritev (Chorus). (Words and music by Barbara Wohinz)

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING

Reader (woman): O God, we thank you for the Slovenian people who have overcome many difficulties throughout their history and still stand strong. Let them be open to others and welcome those who come to them in need.

Song: Daritev (Chorus).

Reader (young woman): O God, we thank you for the countries that are building democratic societies. That it be done across communities, homes and nations. Help us to build solidarity around the world .

Song: Daritev (Chorus).

Reader: O God, we thank you for instilling in us the attitude of sharing so all can have enough to eat, access to health care, and social security. Help us to be more attentive to the spiritual needs of those around us and to be supportive to those in difficult situations.

Song: Daritev (Chorus).

Reader (student): O God, we thank you for free education and the possibility of studying abroad. We call for the leaders of our countries to secure that universal right to each child and to every one who has to leave one's home in search for education. May that education be translated into jobs to enable the peaceful future of our countries and families.

Song: Daritev (Chorus).

Reader (girl): O God, we thank you for the grandparents who support the young families by taking care of the grandchildren and sharing their faith with them. Help us to look after the elderly in our communities, to be good to them in our nursing homes and our neighborhoods.

Song: Daritev (Chorus).

Reader: O God, we thank you for the voice and witness of minority communities. That the call for justice and inclusion may be heard in parliaments. Sustain the refugees and migrants among us. Help us to walk with the “poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.” May we always hear their cry!

Song: Daritev (Chorus).

Reader (young woman): O God, we thank you for helping us to increase ecumenical relationships and interfaith cooperation, to learn to respect our differences and recognize how we have been enriched by these relationships.

Song: Daritev (Chorus).

Reader: O God, we praise you for your standing invitation to your banquet. We thank Jesus for being at the center of our communion and community around the globe. We thank you also for the World Day of Prayer movement, with whom today we find strength to go out sharing the cares, hopes and joys of the women of Slovenia.

Song: Daritev (Chorus).

LORD’S PRAYER

All: O God, you are the one who invite us, you bring us to the same table and lead us in the path of life and hope. We are important in your eyes, you have called us by name, and so as your beloved children we dare to pray the **Lord’s prayer:** *Our Father ...*

DISMISSAL AND BLESSING

Good God, help us
To respect human life
And to accept it in its uniqueness,
Help us to respect the wonders of our nature
And to protect them with all our power,
To mutually support one another
On the path of freedom, justice and peace
As equal members of your family.
May we be blessed in this endeavor by
God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Song: The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended. (Author: John Ellert, 1870. Tune: Clement C. Scholefield, 1874. Public domain)

This material is part of the worship service
and educational resources for the 2019 WDP annual celebration.
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