

Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer 6 November 2017

The Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer takes place on the first Monday in November – this year on 6 November. In this file are a Suggested Order of Service, together with other Resources to help you celebrate the Day of Prayer alongside Baptist sisters and brothers all over the world.

With thanks to the Revd Rosa Hunt for producing the suggested Order of Service.

An accompanying file has suggestions for prayer.



Suggested Order of Service

“When We Arise Communities are TRANSFORMED”

PREPARATION

This year's theme is community transformation. You may therefore want to hold your service in a part of your community which is crying out for transformation, perhaps a place where your church is already at work? If, for instance, you have been doing work in a local council estate you may seek to hold this service there. Even if you hold it in a church, it is important to prepare the worship space. One idea may be to have a transformation display as the focal point of the service. This display could include several things, or pictures of people or places, which have been transformed; a kind of before/after idea. Ideas may include: wheat and bread, caterpillar and butterfly, a local space which has been restored, photos of a community using waste food, photos of local charity shops or recycling sites, compost!!, something made up of recycled materials ... use your imagination, and try to ground it locally in your own community. Print in large print the Verse for the Day of Prayer 2017: Romans 12:2 (large enough to be covered by several post-its! - see below) and have it placed on exhibition for easy reading.



You could have the meeting area decorated with balloons or streamers representing the seven colours of the continental unions:

Africa – purple Asia – light blue Caribbean – green Europe – dark blue
Latin America – yellow North America – orange

Have a table set with a Bible in the centre. It too can have a royal purple table cloth to represent Africa, or have Africa's colour displayed in another creative way. Place enough post-its and pens for the congregation around the Bible.

You will need someone to lead the service, and to deliver the sermon/reflection/Bible study; it is good to involve other participants in the prayers and stories. Each participant will need a copy of the prayer guide unless intercessions are led from the front. One option for intercessory prayer needs tea-lights and spills/matches/tapers.

You may wish to print off/copy information about the projects for people to take away.

Two alternative songs/hymns are offered at each point in the service.

WELCOME

The welcome is important in helping everyone to feel welcomed and valued. If you choose to include any of the more interactive/creative elements in the service, words along the lines of, “you are invited to join in as much or as little as feels comfortable for you” may help people to feel at ease.

It is important in the welcome to remind participants that Baptist women all round the world are sharing services and events exploring the same theme and based on the same resources. It is also important to remind everyone that this year's resources have been prepared by the Baptist Women's Union of Africa.

CALL TO WORSHIP

The Prophet Isaiah says, "Arise, shine for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you."

Jesus said, "I AM the light of the world."

He also said, "You are the light of the world – like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden"

And Paul wrote to the Romans:

"I appeal to you therefore, sisters and brothers, by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind."

We gather in the name of Christ to worship God, to listen for God's voice in scripture and song, and to pray with and for Baptist women around the world.

ROLL CALL

Have the leader stand at the front and summon each continent by name, eg: "I call upon the women of Africa to arise, shine, be transformed and transform." When she calls the name of a continent, a woman should come forward with an appropriately coloured balloon/streamer and place it on the table, representing that continent. Leave Europe to last. When the leader calls the name of Europe: "I call upon the women of Europe to arise, shine, be transformed and transform", then the whole congregation should rise. This may need prior explanation!

SONG

I the Lord of Sea and Sky (SoF 830) or

Will you come and follow me? (SoF 1120, BPW 363)

PRAYER OF APPROACH

(extempore, or as follows)

Loving God, you made us in your image, male and female you created us. You sent us forth to love and tend the world which you created, commanding us to bear fruit and multiply so that your world might be transformed from glory to glory. We come before you today conscious that we have allowed your image within us to become tarnished and dull. Send your Holy Spirit upon us as we meet together today, and remake us, transform us anew, as we pray and listen and sing and consider your word, in your loving and merciful presence.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Use whatever version is familiar. If your congregation includes those whose first language is not English, you could invite everyone to pray in their own first language - the sound is beautiful and it is a powerful symbol of our unity in diversity.

GREETINGS FROM AFRICAN PRESIDENT

Ask a woman to read this inspiring address, which is available in the Resources below.

SONG

As a response, consider playing the Arise and Shine theme song (available as MP3 from the website: www.bwawd.org/day-of-prayer). Alternatively, you may wish to sing a song such as “Let there be love shared among us” (SoF 329, BPW 484) (Consider singing ‘sisterly’ or, better still, ‘agapé’ rather than ‘brotherly love’)

BIBLE READING

John 4: 39-42 (the Samaritan woman returns to her community)

SERMON/ REFLECTION/ BIBLE STUDY/ TALK

There are some suggestions on the Baptist Women’s World Day of prayer website (www.bwawd.org/day-of-prayer) but you may need to adapt them to your local context. You may particularly like to consider using “Some Concrete Ways to Shine for Christ” (available in the Resources attached here), in order to give some practical suggestions on how we are to arise, shine and live a transformed life.

SONG

*Beauty for Brokenness (SoF 664) or
God of Justice (We Must Go)*

STORIES FROM AFRICA

Ask two women to read these two powerful stories by Esther Sandra Grant and Gazani Thipe. The stories are in the Resources section below.

INTERCESSIONS

An extensive prayer guide is available with several areas identified by each continent and it would not be feasible to pray everything intelligently during the service. Some possible options are suggested:

- One person leads spoken prayer with a short, summary petition for each continent, and may invite participants to join in a simple response such as
Lord in your mercy
Hear our prayer
- Invite people to form (seven) small groups, and allocate or choose a continent(s) to pray for, using information from the prayer guide
- Invite people to spend five minutes praying silently with the prayer guide as a source of information. If you wish, this could include the opportunity to light a tea-light for the chosen continent, placed by the appropriate silhouette or candle on the table, if used.

SONG

Repeat the song used earlier, and sing seated...

*Arise and Shine theme song (available as MP3 from the website) OR “Let there be love shared among us”
If using ‘Let there be love’ consider singing ‘sisterly’ or, better still, ‘agapé’ rather than ‘brotherly’*

RESPONSE

Offer those present a chance to respond. If they feel that they are being challenged to arise and shine in some way, or to be transformed, or to help bring about transformation somewhere, here is a chance for them to make a commitment. Have a pile of post-its and pens on the table, and invite those who wish to come forward and take a post-it, and write their commitment on it. They can then be invited to stick the post-it on the large copy of the verse from Romans.

OFFERING

A collection should be taken up at this point. It would be good to explain that this offering supports the unity of Baptist women by supporting the national, continental and global ministries and projects. Explain that 50% of the offering worldwide will go to the special projects (of which more in a minute). The other 50% helps Continental Union officers form new organizations of Baptist Women Special programs: evangelism, young women's conferences, Continental Union Day of Prayer projects, and other special meetings to help meet the needs of the women, and helps to finance the cost of the Union.

You may now want to introduce each of this year's projects (see Resources section for details): educating girls in Liberia, preventing child labour in Malawi, social work in South Africa, and establishing a fellowship for women in Bhutan. You could ask four different women to take the offering, and then come up to the front after the offering has been taken and say:

Lord, take this money, and help us to use it to arise, shine and transform lives for young girls in Liberia.

Lord, take this money, and help us to use it to arise, shine and transform lives for children in Malawi.

Lord, take this money, and help us to use it to arise, shine and transform lives for people in South Africa.

Lord, take this money, and help us to use it to arise, shine and transform lives for women in Bhutan.

After this, please encourage women to join FaceBook or Twitter to follow up on the development projects and to become friends with Baptist women around the world.

HYMN

*Go forth and tell, O church of God awake (SoF 738/BPW 570) or
Lord for the years (SoF 892/BPW 535)*

CLOSING RESPONSES

Creator God, you who made women and men in your image,
remake your image within us today

Lord Jesus Christ, you who died that we may live,
Raise us up to a new transformed life today

Holy Spirit, you who bring life and hope,
Send us out now to transform our churches and communities
Amen

BLESSING

Let us go out now in the power of the Spirit, to proclaim that the kingdom of heaven has come near.
May the Lord bless us, keep us and strengthen us as we seek to share the hope and life that we have. ***Amen.***

Resources

GREETINGS FROM AFRICAN PRESIDENT



Shalom and greetings to all my dearly beloved Baptist women of the Lord! It is indeed an honour and wonderful privilege to be involved in prayer and intercession for the world as children of God. I hope and pray we are all going to experience the presence of the Lord as we humbly seek his face. God's call is for women to stand in the gap and cry to the Lord of the harvest who has answers for all challenges the world is facing today.

The 2017 Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer program was prepared by the Baptist Women's Union of Africa (BWUA). The main thrust for this year's prayer will be on the women's call to service so we can witness transformation of lives by the Holy Spirit, and as a result of receiving the Lord Jesus as personal Saviour. Jesus came to serve, illuminate, and transform the lives of people but also of whole communities. The same responsibility is the core business today of all children of God regardless of their personal backgrounds. It may not be emphasized, but the Bible calls all Christians to "... not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:1). Also, in Luke's Gospel 19:10, the Lord Jesus Christ plainly highlights his mission on earth which in turn becomes our core business and responsibility in the communities in which we live from day to day when he says: "...for the Son of Man has come to seek and to serve that which was lost".

According to the dictionary, the word transformation means "a complete or major change." People who pray to receive Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour are regenerated or born again by God's Spirit as they become a child of God. These people are reborn with the divine life of God from within. The Spirit in them yearns to transform Christians into the image of Christ for the purposes of God.

To remain in the transformed state, one has to feed daily on the Word of God and be brave enough to stand up and do what the Spirit urges one to do and to change according to the image of His Son. The transformation that thus happens does not only end with one transformed individual. We are witnesses that when women are brave enough to listen to God's Spirit of transformation, families change and whole communities are transformed to better reflect God's life. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of true and deep change that is so much needed in our world. Therefore, sisters, let us arise, because, when we arise, God shines through us and transforms communities.

*Your sister in Christ,
Jolina Dhlula,
President of the BWUA*

SOME CONCRETE WAYS TO SHINE FOR CHRIST

Since you have been saved from the patterns of the world and renewed by the Word of Christ, you shine by living in such a way that people can see your new way of life, come to Christ, and be transformed too. ARISE and SHINE by living this TRANSFORMED LIFE in the following ways:

- Testify about the goodness of the Lord. Be Christ's witness (Romans 10:14-17). Tell of His great love, gift of salvation and goodness towards you. Show the world that Jesus Christ is real and sweet in your life.
- Respond positively to life's challenges. Face life's challenges with courage and confidence (Romans 8:26-28; Philippians 4:4-7). Do not settle for being a victim. Trust God and take action.
- Abide in the Lord through prayers. Pray without ceasing. Prayer unlocks anointing, grace and power to rise and shine in a depraved and perverse world (Colossians 4:2-4).
- Nurture others in the pattern of Christ. Set proper and good examples (Romans 2:21-24).
- Sacrifice your pleasures for the salvation of others. Make good use of every opportunity (Colossians 4:5-6).
- Forgive those who hurt or offend you and stay faithful to God (Colossians 3:13).
- Obey your Master, Jesus Christ, in every small detail (Colossians 3:22-25).
- Respond to the needs of others. Love others sincerely without measure like your Saviour.
- Accept people for who they are (Romans 5:8; Colossians 3:23-25).
- Mentor others (1 Timothy 4:12).
- Evangelize and encourage believers to be better (Romans 10:14-17).
- Discipline yourself and disciple others. Obey the Lord completely (2 Corinthians 10:6).
- Love God and serve him wholeheartedly (Deuteronomy 6:5-9; Romans 6:16-18).
- Increase in your faith and knowledge of God. Study the Word of God daily to understand his standard. Meditate on it day and night (Colossians 3:16).
- Fight the good fight of faith. Live to please God daily (Philippians 1:21).
- Empathize with others (Hebrews 13:1-3).

STORIES FROM AFRICA

I Prayed That My Faith Would Not Fail in Face of Trouble

I, Esther Sandra Grant of Umodzi Wa Amayi Central East Region Baptist in Malawi, would like to share my testimony with my fellow Baptist Women to never ever lose your faith when troubled.

My story is about me becoming a widow. I lost my husband who died from a heart attack on the 11th October 2007. I thought that was the end of my world. Having five children, four of which were still in school in the USA, and a Company with a staff of 105 people to run, I prayed to my God, the Most High, my Saviour, that that my faith will not fail me in all this.

My late husband Stuart M. Grant was English and also a Malawi resident. Both of us knew that he had a heart problem. The doctor told us that Stuart needed an urgent surgery and that could only be performed in South Africa. The surgery expenses were enormous. Stuart told our doctor that he was not prepared to spend a lot of money on the surgery because of his age – he had already turned 70 years old. It was sad and painful for me and my family to see that my husband sacrificed his life on earth, so his children could finish their education. After that discussion the doctor told Stuart that he had three weeks to live. As a man who had faith, Stuart was not afraid of death. He organized all important issues and put the documentation in place. On 11th October, 2007 in the early hours, Stuart died in my arms after blessing me as his wife, and telling me that his life was over on earth. At the time I also thought that it was the end of my world. But then, God's grace reached out to me.

The first thing I did was to pray thanking God that he gave me Stuart as a husband in the first place, and if he decided to take him to heaven now, my faith will not die. There were many people who came to the funeral, not all of them genuine mourners. Some came to celebrate that my privileged life was over. But they did not know that I had faith in God. One of our friends gave a talk, where he said that Stuart's demise was the end of an era. Fortunately, another one confirmed that it was not just an end of an era but the beginning of a new era. That correction was God's word to me and it restored my faith immediately and made it stronger. I was determined to create an era where God's love would shine through.

Today my faith is stronger than ever. Also, God has placed me in these positions to encourage and help women: I am the Executive member in Umodzi Wa Amayi National Committee, treasurer of the Central East Region Umodzi Wa Amayi, a national executive Committee member of Women's Day of Prayer, a national executive member of Women In Faith, a peace building network, Public Affairs Committee, PAC. I have helped my fellow widows to be strong, my women's ministry is doing very well. I have a full primary school in the Mackenzie Village that is doing very well.

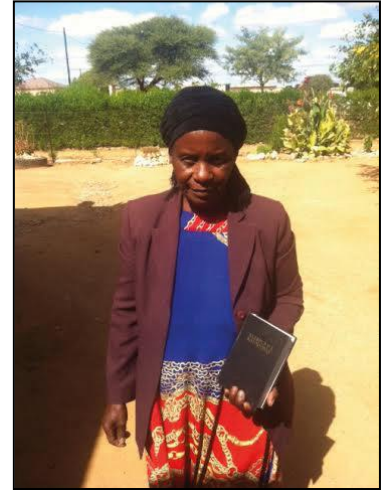
I have kept my faith and I have even succeeded in business. My two sons, both graduates from business schools, have taken over the business and that is doing well. By the grace of God my four children are university graduates and my youngest has graduated this year with a degree in engineering.

My fellow Baptist Women, I urge you to pray the same: that your faith may not fail when you encounter trouble. Rather, step out in faith and believe that God take care of you and use you in his kingdom.
(Luke 22:24-32)

Transforming Through Those Faithful in Small Things

My name is Gazani Thipe, and I am from Sebina, in Botswana. I was born again in 2001. There was a Crusade by the Tent of Hope Ministry, which is a Brazilian Mission. During the day, the missionaries went around the village inviting people to the crusade. A young lady called Othilia came to my house and invited me to the crusade. That evening I went to the evening service. The preacher was Pastor Sejour. The sermon touched my heart, I was moved by the proclaimed good news. I felt peace within me and I was thirsty for the word of God.

During the day the Tent of Hope missionaries also offered skills such as needle work and cooking, in addition to the Bible studies. I started going there every day, but I always chose to learn from the Word of God. When the Baptist Church was started in Sebina, I was one of the first Church members there. I was baptized in 2002. The church used to rent a room at the Village Development Committee Houses. After a while, when we were unable to pay the rent, we were told to leave. Most church members left the church when this happened. There were just a few of us who stayed. At times we would be just 3 ladies who came together for worship. So I decided to offer my home for the church services. I led the church as there was no pastor. In 2004 the Brazilian Mission built a church for Sebina. By that time, I had two committed boys who assisted me in pastoring our church: Goitseone and Logan. They were students and could only help during the school holidays.



Logan grew up to become a preacher. I am thankful and praise God, Logan is ordained a pastor for Sebina Baptist Church since June 25, 2016. The church too has grown to more than 50 members. It has been my prayer that Logan would be ordained as pastor in our church and I thank God I was able to hold on to my faith and see it happen. I will continue to support him as much as I can.

God is faithful and uses women to grow and support his church. Be encouraged to stay faithful in what looks like an impossible task. Praise God, he is faithful.



PROJECTS

1 Help Our Rural Girls Learn (Liberia)

The project aims at helping girls in the Western Region of Liberia (Bomi and Rural Montserrado) to stay in school past the early teen years to help them alleviate poverty, ignorance and poor health in their future life. We help rural women through basic skills in homecare, agriculture and small industries; we foster education, development, unity, and love through fellowship--regardless of creed and ethnic background.

Recent surveys indicate that 68% of female students dropped out of school supported by their parents for initiation into the Sande Society (Female Genital Mutilation - FGM). When initiates are relieved from the Sande, they lag behind the schoolmates and then leave school altogether.

Many parents send their girls into Sande to prepare them for motherhood. The girls are then lured into early marriage often because their parents prefer having grandchildren to their girls having an education.

The work is two-fold:

1. Involvement in discussions regarding FGM so that girls included in Sande would not also miss school.
2. Care for girls by providing tuition, clothes and books, and by counselling so they can continue school:
 - if they escaped from FGM and left home
 - If they were forced to FGM but want to continue school
 - If they want to continue school after reaching the highest level of education available in their community
 - If parents are unable to pay for their daughter's school
 - If teenage mothers express the wish to continue their training

2 Against Child Labour (Malawi)

One in six children in Malawi is a victim of violence, abuse, exploitation, or neglect and is at risk of contracting HIV and AIDS. The situation is dire for many Malawian children in the Katonga district, situated 45 Kilometres from the border of Tanzania and 90 Kilometres from the border of Zambia. The district is along the lakeshore where the fishing business is growing. This results in significant problems in child welfare: primarily child labour, but also early marriages and child trafficking.

Tisule Foundation as a Baptist organization is concerned with the wellbeing of vulnerable children. We believe that children are the future leaders of the country and helping them helps our country. If not seriously addressed, child labour will eventually lead to an increase in poverty, high population rates, and school dropout rates, preventing thus our country from having a future.

3 Alabaster Jars (South Africa)

Alabaster Jars is currently working with unemployed, disadvantaged and homeless men and women who attend our Tuesday morning programme. It also cares for a group of commercial sex workers whom we visit at a local park.

They join us in the church bus and we spend time talking with them.

Our main focus for both groups is sharing the Gospel and giving all the opportunity to hear God's Word. They also receive a sandwich and tea or juice and may make an appointment to speak with our social worker, if they so choose.

We assist with grocery items, food parcels, I.D., books and clothing, which are "earned" on a points system. We are currently working through "The Word of God is like..." with them and encourage everyone who can to read the Bible.

4 Setting up Bhutanese Baptist Women's Fellowship (Bhutan)

The project is set up to help a first time attempt to organise a Bhutanese Baptist Women's Fellowship. The conference planned will provide one training and equipping module to help the women see why and how Baptist women need to come together and how they can connect to women around the world.

Please send offerings to Hilary Treavis at Baptist House (address below). Please make cheques payable to 'The Baptist Union of Great Britain'.

Or you can pay by bank transfer using these details:-

Baptist Union of GB Home Mission Fund

Sort Code: 40-19-35

Account: 41083635

Please use reference: BWWDP

If you would like an acknowledgement of your offering, please indicate this, and provide an email address where possible as this cuts down on administration and postage costs.

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