

Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer Resource Sheet

The Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer takes place on the first Monday in November – this year on 4 November. In this file are Resources to accompany the suggested Order of Service. More are available on the Day of Prayer website: www.bwawd.org

With thanks to Pat White and Claudette Carr for producing the suggested Order of Service and Resources.



“When we rise up, He shines through SERVICE”



WHY A DAY OF PRAYER?

The Baptist Women’s World Day of Prayer is a beautiful demonstration of the community shared by Baptist women across the world. There are two essential active ingredients to every Day of Prayer experience: praying and giving. As we unite with our Baptist sisters across the world we are committing to uphold and support one another in prayer for we know that great and mighty things come into being because of it. We belong together, and this is one way we can stand together in solidarity.

The offerings during the Day of Prayer are essential because they provide the much needed funds for the connecting ministries of the BWA Women’s Department and Continental Unions, including the Day of Prayer projects. We know that when Baptist women come together in Christ, God creates shalom for everyone because we are encouraging each other to be all that we can be in Christ!



FAITH STORIES

Two stories of faith from Caribbean women

From Addictions to Restoration in Christ Jesus

By Lindley Cedeno, Trinidad

I had a happy childhood growing up with my family in the small village of Moruga in rural Trinidad. We grew up in the Catholic faith and attended mass regularly due to the influence of my devoted mother. Prayer was an integral part of my mother’s life. We would awaken in the wee hours of the morning to the sound of her voice calling on her ‘Papa God’.



At the age of twelve, my mom got sick and died. I was devastated with her loss, experiencing deep pain and grief for many years. After completing primary school I attended a Secretarial College. After three years I had to withdraw from school to find work to provide for myself. My first job as a housekeeper and nanny required me to move, with a heavy heart, to the capital city of Port-of-Spain.

Having an abusive employer, and continuing to grieve the loss of my mom, I found solace from an older friend. She introduced me to parties, clubs, cigarettes and alcohol which I accepted because I wanted to belong. I quit my job, had my daughter at age eighteen, and soon left her with some friends in order to continue the all-consuming party life of marijuana and crack cocaine. I returned home to Moruga to try to get my life back on track, met a man and got married eight months later.

Our marriage only lasted two years as my husband was heavily into extra-marital affairs. I left him and went back into the city of Port-of-Spain doing odd jobs to survive. Again I got involved with the wrong crowd and began a downward spiral. Addicted now to cocaine, alcohol, marijuana and adulterous relationships, I was too ashamed to go to rehab.

Then remembering how my mother used to pray, I began to call upon the Lord every day, asking “Papa God” to deliver me from this bondage of addiction. Thanks be to God, He heard my cry and my life began to turn around. I ended my five year love affair with crack cocaine without going to a drug rehab. Little by little I was delivered from the other addictions. I acquired my Taxi Regulation and Driver’s Permit, acquired a taxi, and purchased my own property, house and land. I started having the urge to go back to church and one Sunday morning God directed me to St. John’s London Baptist Church. Through the pastor, the Lord spoke to me about my rebellious behaviour. I was deeply convicted of my sins and I gave my life to Jesus Christ! Oh what a beautiful day! One month later I got

baptized. My husband and I were re-united one year after I got baptized and he also surrendered his life to Jesus Christ and got baptized. Unfortunately, he died from a stroke in February, 2016.

My walk with the Lord has been great since my change of direction eight years ago. I have dedicated my life to working in the ministry at St. John's. I am a prayer warrior and intercessor and lead the ministry for the needy and socially displaced persons. I thank God for His mercy and grace, keeping me alive to live for Him! My message to you is that there is no addiction, no bondage from which He cannot deliver you. God will restore and give you new beginnings.

Magdalene Mary Haynes, Grenada

I grew up on the spice island of Grenada with my single mom and sisters. I was born with a cleft palate which affected my speech and facial appearance. Although attempts were made to correct the problem, I felt unwanted and displaced in my community due to my 'disability'. At school I was regularly targeted, picked on and teased. I was a lonely, unloved child with low self-esteem who hated the world. I was afraid to speak, play freely, and enjoy my childhood. I saw myself as ugly and wanting to die, while asking the questions "Why me? Why am I here? Why was I born this way? Does God truly love me?"



My mom worked hard and supported me as best as she could. She instilled in me the determination to go for what I wanted in life. I grew up in the Catholic faith and as a teenager, I was very conscious of God and wanted to serve him and gain the acceptance of others through religious activities. I wanted to be a nun, but that dream was dashed because my parents were not married.

I continued my search for love and acceptance while trying to find my purpose. I dutifully read the Bible and continued to visit churches, open-air meetings and crusades. During one of the Grenada Baptist IMPACT crusades I became enlightened to the truth of the Scriptures.

At age seventeen, in a Sunday morning service at the First Grenada Baptist Church, I finally repented and gave my heart to the Lord. The message that day was about God being the Good Shepherd in whom we find shelter and security. I also learned that if we put our trust in Him no one can pluck us out of His hand. Later I realized that I was self-righteous, a sinner in need of God's forgiveness.

Understanding that I was fearfully and wonderfully made, I began to appreciate my uniqueness. Two years after my conversion, I was asked to teach Sunday School. That was a big step for me as I never thought I was able to communicate well. I think that was my first miracle. My sister, who was my constant companion, saw the difference that God made in my life and gave her heart to Jesus. She was my first convert. Then, my immediate family followed. I have served in several leadership positions in my church including children's ministry, evangelism, and administration. Presently I serve as a Deaconess with dignity and loyalty.

My life is fulfilled! The Lord has blessed me with a faithful and loving husband, three beautiful children, caring and compassionate church families and relatives. I am truly blessed!

I have taken Philippians 1:21 as my personal motto. "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain". Thinking that I was lost, unloved and worthless, I am now truly convinced and certain that I am a precious soul for Christ, and am loving life, and serving the world.

My sisters in Christ, I exhort you to walk in your blessing as a handmaid of Christ. He makes the difference in a soul that is surrendered to Him.

I am who I am by the grace of God.



GREETINGS

Recently, I talked to a woman who felt overwhelmed by the constant requests for service by other people. “I feel like I am not living my own life,” she complained. And this is a common problem for women all over the world. It is almost unnecessary to encourage women to serve, as they seem to have perfected that area! But, as I was listening to the woman across from me, one thing hit me. She was not serving anyone, she was slaving away. When I told her, she immediately realised the difference!



The Bible makes this difference between being an heir in the house, and being a slave in several places (see eg. Gal 3:23-4:9 or John 15:14-17). A slave has to serve the master and barely any of her own needs are met or asked about. A daughter of the house is cared for and whatever she does, she does out of her free will to enrich her household and her Father’s business.

God did not create people to be slaves to anyone. When we “slave away”, we do so because we have allowed things and people to become “gods” who make unreasonable demands on us. As slaves we are driven by fear to offend these masters and be punished. Even our own sinful and selfish nature is such a master. When we feel overwhelmed with service, we need to ask the tough question: Why am I doing this? For instance: Why do I clean all the time? Who am I afraid of? What do I want to accomplish with this: do I need people to love me more? We are daughters of the house, but behave like slaves. Like the older son in the story of the Prodigal Son (Lk 15) we are unaware that we cannot earn our acceptance, because all is ours (1Cor 3:21–23)!

On that basis we serve as God’s daughters. We know we belong and do not need to earn anything. We live because we are beloved by God. We spend time at his table, talking to him and getting to know his mind. We love to contribute to our own household when we serve, and get involved in “God’s business” of saving the world with all we have. Quiet times and busy times meld together. Our needs are taken care of by the Father who we belong to as children and heirs. We do not work from guilt or fear to earn our living. We shine, as we serve. The full potential of our Father’s inheritance becomes visible to the world, as we do what we love and were gifted for. True, that too may be consuming and busy, but this service fills our batteries, it does not drain them!

So, dear sisters, let us ask the hard questions as we pray. And then, let us shine in this heart-filling service which changes the world.

Ksenija Magda
BWA Women’s President
2015–2020





REFLECTION/SERMON/BIBLE STUDY

Theme Scripture

Matt. 20: 20–28

“And whoever is chief among you, let him be your servant. Even as the Son of man come not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Introduction

Jesus' earthly life and ministry was to be about His Father's business. His purpose was to “seek and save the lost; to serve and not to be served.” Salome, the mother of James and John, was reminded of this when she asked Jesus for places of prominence and power in the Kingdom for her two sons. Actually, all of the disciples wanted to ensure rewards for following and serving Jesus. But Jesus taught them that His followers do not earn God's favour. It is freely given and flows naturally from a relationship with Him.

Greatness, Jesus said, requires service for the sake of Christ and the benefit of others. Greatness is costly and demands self-denial and cross-bearing.

Jesus' earthly life was characterized by selfless service. He reached out in compassion to the lost multitudes. Those afflicted by physical ailments, social injustice, and spiritual blindness were touched. In serving others, Jesus was obediently doing the will of His Father. Like Jesus, our service should be motivated by love and devotion to God. By serving others, we reflect God's light for all to see. (Matt.5:15)

Called To Serve

It is God who has called us to join Him in His mission through service. As His representatives in the world, we partner with Him in serving by the way we live and act. We are not saved to serve; but we serve because we are saved. Service then becomes a natural response because of the relationship we have with Christ, flowing from a sense of call which then can be lived out joyfully and prayerfully.

In a real sense, we lovingly give ourselves to others by using the gifts with which God has gifted us to give shelter to the homeless, feed the hungry, visit those who are imprisoned, give drink to the thirsty, clothing to the naked and hospitality to the strangers. These self-giving and self- forgetting actions are done without expecting any material rewards in return. Jesus himself said, “In as much as you have done it to the least...you have done it unto me.” (Matt. 25: 40) It is God's Spirit who enables the light of God's presence to shine for Jesus through our service in a “dark world”.

Serving like Jesus

In John 13:1–5 we read a powerful example of service by Jesus that normally would have been done by household servants. Jesus rose from the table, shed His robe, took a towel and washed His disciples' feet. In doing so He taught his disciples some valuable lessons about service. As followers of Christ, we too are called to unselfishly attend to the needs and concerns of others, to do the less admirable tasks that often go unnoticed or overlooked. The washing of Jesus' disciples' feet was an object lesson in humility and servanthood. It was motivated by love and seen as a privilege. We, His disciples, learn that Jesus shines through loving and compassionate service which is not bound by duty or obligation but springs from a heart that is inwardly inspired by love for God and the people we serve. We serve because we are connected to Jesus Christ.

Shining for Jesus by Serving

God has entrusted us with spiritual gifts, natural abilities, time, financial resources and experiences. We can use what we have and be like the Good Samaritan (Luke10:25–37) or Peter and John at Gate Beautiful (Acts 3:1–8). When we serve in Jesus' name, we are not only fulfilling God's purpose for our lives but also living out our Christian faith in whole-life stewardship to Him. Through our simple every day Christ-like acts of kindness and mercy, God's goodness and greatness shine.

Christ-like service is God-centred, God-inspired and transformative. It is loving in action for the good of the community and the glory of God beginning right where we are. All around us are women exploited, marginalized,

bruised and battered by life's circumstances. Many are lost and lonely and yearn to experience meaningful and compassionate relationships that meet the needs in their lives.

Every one of us can become the channel through which women, regardless of their circumstances, can come to hear God's voice, know His heart and do His will.

Our service to others might pull us away from the familiar, the convenient, the comfortable, to what might appear risky. We may be required to ignore our own feelings of inadequacy, insufficiency or social survival and reach beyond ourselves to love and serve those whom the world regards as unlovely and unworthy. This sacrificial service moves us beyond our comfort zone to preach, teach, love and care for others so that all may experience the warmth of the light of Jesus. The light, after all, is most effective in the darkness.

With a new sense of mission, let us then as Baptist Women, wherever we are, rise and shine for Jesus through our service. Let us recommit to using our influence, resources and voices in the market place of God's fields as we serve others so that all will see the light of Jesus reflected through our Christian faith in words and deeds.

Questions to Ponder:

- How effectively am I using my spiritual gifts and abilities to serve?
- What is my motivation for serving?
- Does the light of Jesus shine through my service?



2019 Day of Prayer Projects

Name of Project: BUTT Horticultural & Training Project

Organization: Baptist Union of Trinidad & Tobago

Target Group: single parents, widows, unemployed women

Description of Project:

BUTT Horticultural project is geared towards assisting women in communities to gain self-sufficiency economically by growing ornamental plants for sale and rental, and growing short-term crops (vegetables) for food and sale. The project will provide training in literacy, leadership, entrepreneurial skills, and healthy eating as well as teaching women through Bible studies to love and serve the Lord.

Name of Project: Ice-cream and Local Fruit Processing Training and Employment.

Organization: Grenada Baptist Women Association

Description of Project:

This project's goal is to be an ongoing entrepreneurship, aimed to provide employment to women who are besieged with joblessness within the Grenada Baptist Association. Only selected persons will be employed with the program. These women will be equipped with the skills to start their own home based small businesses.

Name of Project: Originals to the Origin

Organization: Latin America Baptist Women's Union (UFBAL)

Description of Project:

This project is aimed at Latin American Native People, taking them back to their origin, the only and creator God. This project will help the original peoples to improve their lives through helping them with court requirements and medical treatments as well as creating a center where they can develop abilities and professions the communities need. Funds are necessary for staff for training as well as food and medicines.

Where to send your Offering

Please send your offering to:

Hilary Treavis, Baptist Union of Great Britain, Baptist House, PO Box 44, 129 Broadway, Didcot, OX11 8RT.

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 or SAE as this cuts down on administration and postage costs.

All offerings will be collated and sent to the European Baptist Women's Union for onward transmission to the Baptist World Alliance Women's Department.

Faith and Society Team, Baptist Union of Great Britain, Baptist House, PO Box 44, 129 Broadway,
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Tel: 01235 517700 Email: faithandsociety@baptist.org.uk Website: www.baptist.org.uk

The Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB) is changing its legal status from a charitable unincorporated association to a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO). From 1 January 2020, BUGB will operate as a CIO with registered charity number 1181392.

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