

**God of the women who answered your call,
trusting your promises, giving their all;
women like Sarah and Hannah and Ruth,
give us their courage to live in your truth.**

**God of the women who walked Jesus' way
giving their resources, learning to pray;
Mary, Joanna, Susanna and more,
may we give freely as they did before.**

**God of the women, long put to the test,
left out of stories, forgotten, oppressed;
quietly asking 'who smiled at my birth?'
in Jesus' dying, you show us our worth.**

**God of the women who ran from the tomb,
prayed with the others in that upper room;
then felt your Spirit on Pentecost day,
may we so gladly proclaim you today.**

**O God of Phoebe and ministers all,
may we be joyful in answering your call;
give us the strength of your Spirit so near,
that we may share in your ministry here.**

Copyright ©1998 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

A LITURGY PRAYING FOR THE END TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ

As your Bishop I am offering this Liturgy, compiled by the Bishop's Office, as a resource that may be used this or any other Sunday in September or at a special Service outside the Sunday Services. The Liturgy is designed to stand alone or to be incorporated into the main Sunday Service. If you choose a stand-alone Service you are free to add Scripture Readings and appropriate hymns. The Liturgy is currently being translated into isiXhosa and Afrikaans and in the new week will be sent to each Parish. I also make an urgent plea that the issue of gender-based violence be put on your Parish Council Agenda and discussed with utmost seriousness, in the hope that every parish will come up with a set of plans, resolutions and strategies to counteract this scourge devastating all our Communities.

INVOCATION

L: Come women and girls! Come men and boys! Let us proclaim that
C: **we have been made in the beautiful image of God!**
L: Come women and girls! Come men and boys! Let us proclaim that
C: **we have been created as equal beings with inalienable rights!**
L: Come women and girls! Come men and boys! Let us proclaim that
C: **we have dignity, self-worth and beauty.**

Friends, we meet to offer support, prayers and to lift to God our concerns for the continuing violence, abuse and disrespect shown to women and young girls every single day in our Communities and all over the world.

We meet in the Name of the Lord Jesus, who taught that women have equal worth; that women have a God-given right to be treated with respect and dignity.

We meet to encourage men and boys to let go of violence – violence against other men, violence against women, violence against children.

We meet to reflect on holy Scripture and to pray especially for women and girls who constantly are the 'punching bags' for male aggression and abuse of whatever kind.

We meet in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to remind men responsible for such heinous acts of abuse and violence "not in my name!" and to

encourage them to come to true repentance and to walk in the way of forgiveness, peace and respect.

Sisters and Brothers, the Lord is here

And may God's Spirit rest and remain on us.

A hymn may be sung [suggestion] "Make me a channel of your peace..."

A READING FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE

Galatians 3: 26 – 29 *[try and read it from an inclusive language bible]*

[Other suggestions for Scripture Readings: Luke 1: 46 – 55 / Judges 19: 22 – 26 or any other appropriate Scripture Reading]

THE PRAYERS & SHARING OF THE LIGHT

[Light a candle as each Intention is offered to the Lord]

For women everywhere who are victims of abuse, rape, violence, disrespect. For women who are abducted, sold into slavery, human-trafficking, whose rights are trampled on and whose voices are silenced.

Let us pray to the Lord...

Lord, hear our prayer

For women who hold down multiple jobs, whose wages are not equal to men in the same sectors, who are denied opportunities because of their gender, whose bodies are claimed as prizes for gangsters and easy targets for intimate Partners.

Let us pray to the Lord...

Lord, hear our prayer

For young Girl-Learners and women Students who live with fear everyday while walking to and from school and tertiary institutions. Lord, help us create safe spaces, safe communities and a spirit of genuine care for women who report crimes perpetrated against them.

Let us pray to the Lord...

Lord, hear our prayer

For men and boys, that they may come to understand the sin of their actions, for our criminal justice system to take seriously the reports of abuse against women, and for all who offer relief, counselling and aid for women who are traumatised.

Let us pray to the Lord...

Lord, hear our prayer

For women who have died at the hands of men, for the children and families whom they leave behind who grieve their Passing. May the rest securely in the peace of Christ's love.

Let us pray to the Lord...

Lord hear our prayer

Now let us all offer our prayers quietly to God who has full understanding of the human struggle and human condition, and let us proclaim that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female, but all one equal People drinking from the well of God's eternal love.

Let us pray to the Lord...

Lord, hear our prayer

[After all have prayed then say...]

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BLESSING & HYMN

Go out into the world in peace

strive for justice everywhere

treat everyone with tenderness and respect

protect the weak

heal the sick

comfort the dying

and build communities of trust and friendship.

And the blessing of God Almighty - holy Creator, holy Redeemer and holy Sustainer be upon you now and always.

Amen

A hymn may be sung [suggestion] "Tell out my soul" / "God of the women" words overleaf to the tune 'Be thou my vision...'