

Coastal Delmarva VOTF
Opening Prayer November 11, 2014

The Ministry of Reconciliation

Invitation to Prayer: **Leader:** _____

Leader will introduce the prayer and say:

Leader: Let us begin, now, here in this place
 with a moment of silence
 to reflect, to focus, to be attentive to ourselves,
 to one another, and to the presence of Christ,
 who calls us to service and love.

(There will be a brief pause and then Leader will play the Meditation Song.)

Meditation Song: “There is Wideness in God’s Mercy” by Kate Higgins from CD “The Solid Rock”

Opening Prayer: **Leader:** _____

(When the music ends, observe a brief silence then Leader says ...)

Leader: Our hope is in God, who comes with strength and gentleness to order things aright;
 in Jesus the Christ, who is appointed to judge all things;
 and in the Spirit, who shows us the way to health and wholeness.

All: Amen.

Leader: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All: And also with you.

Leader:
Holy God, you challenge the powers that rule this world through the needy,
the compassionate, and those who are filled with longing. Make us hunger and thirst
to see right prevail and single-minded in seeking peace; that we may see your face
and be satisfied in you, through Jesus, the Christ.

All: Amen.

Brief Silence

Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:11-21 **Reader:** _____

(After a brief silence, Reader begins the Scripture Reading.)

Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. If we are “out of our mind,” as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

New International Version

Brief Silence:

(After the period of silence, Reader invites all to share their thoughts on the reading.)

Shared Reflection:

- What do you hear Christ saying to us in his word?

Closing Prayer: **Leader:** _____

(As sharing draws to a close, Leader judges that people are finished speaking and concludes the prayer saying ...)

Leader: In closing we pray. . .

O God of perfect love, you surprise us with new life by offering us the possibility of a world restored to wholeness. Where we have fractured one another, forgive us. Where we have forgotten one another, remind us. Where we have feared one another, free us. Bring us to the abundance of life, the fullness of justice, and the richness of peace you promise through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

All:

Let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever flowing stream. Amen.

Notes

Opening and Closing Prayers were adapted from *A Justice That Heals and Restores: A Resource on Restorative Justice* produced by the Church Council on Justice and Corrections and the Anglican Diocese of Toronto's Working Group on Restorative Justice in collaboration with the EcoJustice Committee of the Anglican Church of Canada.

"There is a Wideness in God's Mercy" by Kate Higgins is available on iTunes.

Scripture translation is from the *New International Version*.