



A Day to Remember Those with Mental Illness

Worship Resources

January 29, 2017

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

(Can be adapted for use on another Sunday as desired by local communities)

Introduction

Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, mourners, the meek, those who hunger for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers. In baptism, we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving. On this day, we celebrate God's mercy and inclusion of all people, including those living with mental illness.

Call to Worship

God calls us to love our neighbor as ourselves;
the one who is weak and the one who is strong,

the one who is happy and the one who is sad,
the one who is enjoying mental wellness today

and the one who is struggling with mental illness today,
the one whom we understand and the one we don't,

the one who is embraced and the one who is shunned,
the one who is like us and the one who is different.

Come, let us worship together!
We come, trusting God's abundant love!

*(From The United Church of Christ Mental Health Network
<http://mhn-ucc.blogspot.ca/p/mental-health-sunday.html>)*

Gathering Song possibilities

All are welcome - ELW 641

Here in this place (Gather us In) - ELW 532

Prayer of the Day

Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

First Reading: Micah 6:1-8

With the mountains and the foundations of the earth as the jury, God brings a lawsuit against Israel. God has "wearied" Israel with a long history of saving acts. God does not want or expect lavish sacrifices to attempt to earn divine favor. Rather God empowers the people to do justice, to love loyalty to God, and to walk shrewdly in God's service.

¹Hear what the LORD says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.

²Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the LORD,
and you enduring foundations of the earth;
for the LORD has a controversy with his people,
and he will contend with Israel.

³"O my people, what have I done to you?
In what have I wearied you? Answer me!

⁴For I brought you up from the land of Egypt,
and redeemed you from the house of slavery;
and I sent before you Moses,
Aaron, and Miriam.

⁵O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised,
what Balaam son of Beor answered him,
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,
that you may know the saving acts of the LORD."

⁶"With what shall I come before the LORD,
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?

⁷Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

⁸He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

Psalm: Psalm 15

LORD, who may abide upon your holy hill?

¹LORD, who may dwell in your | tabernacle?
Who may abide upon your | holy hill?

²**Those who lead a blameless life and do | what is right,
who speak the truth | from their heart; R**

³they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil | to their friends;
they do not cast discredit up- | on a neighbor.

⁴**In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who | fear the LORD.
They have sworn upon their health and do not take | back their word.**

⁵They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes a- | gainst the innocent.
Those who do these things shall never be | overthrown. R

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

According to the world's standards of power and might, the message of the cross seems stupid and offensive. Yet this word reveals the paradoxical way God has chosen to work power and salvation through weakness, rejection, and suffering. Hence the message of the cross becomes true wisdom and power for believers.

¹⁸The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

²⁶Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose what is

foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no one might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Gospel Verse

He came down - ELW 253

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

Jesus opens the Sermon on the Mount by naming those who are blessed in the reign of God.

¹When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

³"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

⁸"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹"Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Short Dramatic Reading to Introduce the sermon “Blessed are the Mentally Ill”

Four readers stand before the congregation with masking tape across their mouths. Readers remove the tape one by one before speaking.

Reader One: We’ve been silent too long.

Reader Two: We’ve pretended that this isn’t our problem,

Reader Three: but this is a reality that affects each one of us.

Reader Four: If we’re not ill ourselves,

Reader One: we may be a family member

Reader Two: or a friend.

Reader Three: It’s time to stop pretending.

All Readers: Let’s talk!

Sermon – Rev. Marty Tuer (see file)

Hymn of the Day suggestions

Beauty for brokenness W&P 17

Blest are they ELW 728

Will you let me be your servant ELW 659

Intercessory Prayer (Bidding Prayer)

Called to be a light to the nations, we pray for God’s justice, peace, and healing.

Let us pray for God’s people throughout the world, in this place, and for all who minister in Christ’s name.

Silence

Holy God, by your spirit, you gather your people together into one body, the church.
Make your church a place of safety, honesty, and welcome.
Open the doors and hearts of your people
to individuals and families who live with mental illness. God of mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Let us pray for the nations of the earth, for our own country, and for those in authority.

Silence

Mighty God, give wisdom and courage to leaders
so that they may work for justice and peace leading us to care for creation,
honour one another, and serve the common good. God of mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Let us pray for an end to the stigma of mental illness.

Silence

Reconciling God, increase our knowledge and overcome our fears;
break down the barriers that divide us from one another.
We give you thanks for those who provide care and support
for individuals and families dealing with mental illness. God of mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Let us pray for those who are in pain or sadness, hopelessness or anxiety.

Silence

Compassionate God, you suffer with all who long for health and wholeness.
Where there is discouragement and despair, bring your comfort.
Where there is confusion and chaos, bring your peace.
Heal all who are sick in body, mind, or spirit, especially we name before you . . . God of mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Let us remember those who have died.

Silence

Comforting God, we remember with thanksgiving those who have died in Christ,
and those whose faith is known to you alone.
Heal the pain of those who grieve; let your loving-kindness be upon them. God of mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Eternal God, accept our prayers and give us all that you see we need, though Jesus Christ our
Lord.

Amen.

Communion Hymn options

We come to you for healing, Lord - ELW 617

You are Mine - ELW 581

Now we remain - ELW 500

Sending Hymn

Christ, be our light ELW 715

Alternate Resources

Additional Music

Lutheran Resources

A new commandment - WOV 664
Be thou my vision - ELW 793
Calm to the waves - ELW 794
Come by here (Kumbaya) - TFF 43
I, the Lord of sea and sky (Here I am, Lord) - ELW 594
Jesus, remember me - ELW 616
Lord of all hopefulness - ELW 765
Make me a channel of your peace - W&P 95
Now the green blade rises - ELW 379
O Lord, hear my prayer - ELW 751
O love that will not let me go - LBW 324
Precious Lord, take my hand - ELW 773
Take, O take me as I am - ELW 814

Taize Music

By night we hasten in darkness
Lord Jesus Christ your light shines within us
Within our darkest night

Iona Music

Christ be beside me
Christ's is the world in which we move (A Touching Place)
God to enfold you
Love is the welcome
Take this moment, sign and space

Other Music

Be still for the presence of the Lord – *Lift Up Your Hearts* 532
Be still and know that I am God – *Lift Up Your Hearts* 907

Worship Art

Eyekons – digital files of artwork available for purchase to use as bulletin covers and PowerPoint images. Here are some examples that may suit this day's focus.

Assuaging of the Waters

http://www.eyekons.com/church_image_banks/details/347

Saved

http://www.eyekons.com/church_image_banks/details/698

Embrace of Friends

http://www.eyekons.com/church_image_banks/details/20

Pastoral Prayers

God of love, we celebrate that today you are still speaking a word of acceptance, wholeness, and inclusion of all your differently-abled people. We give thanks for this church and the ways we seek to live out Jesus' commandment to love You, and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

On this Mental Health Sunday, we pray for people who live with untreated mental illness and who are unable to find help and cannot afford medical care.

We pray for an end to the stigma of mental illness.

We pray for families torn apart by mental health diseases, and for families that hold-on-to one another during difficult times of illness.

We pray for those who have lost a loved one to suicide.

We pray for mental health caregivers, for scientific researchers, and for professionals who seek to bring compassion, treatment and healing to those who suffer from brain diseases.

We pray for children, teens, and young adults learning how to live with newly diagnosed brain diseases.

We pray for people burdened by labels and stereotypes.

We pray for people who are victims of bullying and discrimination because of their disability.

Help our society to be more compassionate of differently-abled people.

We give thanks for the many gifts that people with mental health disease bring into the world and celebrate the creative genius of artists, scientists, authors, scholars, business leaders, actors, musicians, inventors, and presidents who live with mental illness.

Still speaking God, as the mysteries of the human brain unfold, we remain in awe of the intricate ways in which we are created in your image.

May we be reflections of your love in this world. Amen.

By the Rev. Sarah Lund, The United Church of Christ Mental Health Network

<http://mhn-ucc.blogspot.ca/p/mental-health-sunday.html>

Prayers of the People for Mental Health

Let us pray to the Father of Mercies: Father, we pray for the unity and mission of the holy Church of God; that it may welcome and serve those who live with a mental illness. *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Guide us, the citizens and leaders of this land, this state and this city ... that we may unite to provide for and protect the poor, the homeless and those who suffer in mind, body and spirit. *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Forgive us when we knowingly or unknowingly ridicule, look in disgust, neglect or discriminate against those who are mentally ill. *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Comfort and relieve those who are troubled in mind and spirit. Bring them hope, peace and the consolation of a loving community. *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Grant patience and courage to the families and friends of those who are ill. Increase their perseverance as they face challenges to recovery for their loved one. *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Protect and defend those living with mental illness from exploitation, addictions and abuse. *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Walk with the homeless and missing persons, those who are destitute and have no one to care. Forgive us for our indifference. *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

We commend to your mercy and defense all who are contemplating suicide today, right now. Bring someone or something to intervene. *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

For the families who have lost a loved one to mental illness, bring them comfort in trusting that your grace accepts their ill loved one, despite the final desperate act that brought them into your loving arms. *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Empower us to speak up for those who do not have a voice; save us from making peace with the injustices in the social systems that have failed them. *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Guide those who do research for the prevention and treatment of mental illnesses; uphold them with your compassion and diligence. *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

For those who are in recovery and for treatments that enable them to return to full and rewarding lives, we give you thanks. *Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Heavenly Father, Giver of life and health, we trust that in your time and way, you will dispel all darkness with your light, all confusion with your order, all fear with your peace. Through Jesus Christ, who intercedes for us and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Adapted from and patterned after Prayers of the People from the Book of Common Prayer.

From National Mental Health Ministries website http://www.mentalhealthministries.net/resources/worship_resources.html