



Community of Christ

Gathering Suggestions for the President's Challenge

Awaken to God's Invitation!

April 2, 2017

Hymns of Meditation

(Sing two or three hymns to allow the congregation to become fully present in the moment.)

"Come, Holy Spirit, Come" <i>(repeat several times)</i>	CCS 154
"Dios está aquí / God Is Here Today" <i>(repeat several times)</i>	CCS 150
"We Are One in the Spirit"	CCS 359
"Breathe on Me, Breath of God"	CCS 190
"Santo, santo, santo / Holy, Holy, Holy" <i>(repeat several times)</i>	CCS 159

Congregational Prayer

Leader: O living God,

People: whose presence now surrounds us

Leader: and fills our hearts

People: with joy and hope and peace,

Leader: help us to see that in your world around us

People: your Spirit breathes,

Leader: your love will never cease.

People: But weary souls, that love not comprehending,

Leader: still need to know that your love brings release.

People: Creation groans for freedom, liberation;

Leader: grant us, O God, ears well-attuned to hear,

People: for in this moment, God, we are creating the future

Leader: that may bring your kingdom here.

People: Help us, O God, live daily in compassion,

Leader: make choices that will show your reign is near.

People: The peace of Christ be in us and shown through us,

Leader: and fill our world with harmony and peace.

People: The peace of Christ will fill us and renew us,

Leader: and bring us new direction and release.

People: Help us to be responsive, God,

Leader: work through us;

People: your Spirit breathes, your love will never cease!

All: Amen

Harry J. Fielding, ©Community of Christ

Scripture Reading

Print or project these scriptures from President Veazey's article, "Awaken to God's Invitation," Jan/Feb 2017 Herald. Ask different people to read each one. Emphasis is from President Veazey.

...for there is great need of the spiritual awakening that will be engendered by the ministries experienced within its walls. (Doctrine and Covenants 156:3)

Indeed these ministries shall be the means of **great blessing for you...**The **priesthood offices already provided for in my church have always had the potential of supplying these blessings. Some of their functions, however, will be expanded and given additional meaning** as the purposes of Temple ministries are revealed more fully. (Doctrine and Covenants 156:4)

Hymn of Transformation

"Spirit of the Living God"

CCS 567

Look especially to the sacraments to enrich the spiritual life of the body. Seek for greater understanding of my purposes in these sacred rites and **prepare to receive a renewed confirmation of the presence of my Spirit in your experiences of worship.** (Doctrine and Covenants 156:11c)

And it shall be a place in which the **essential meaning of the Restoration as healing and redeeming agent is given new life and understanding, inspired by the life and witness of the Redeemer of the world.** (Doctrine and Covenants 156:5e)

Hymn of Transformation

"Spirit of the Living God"

CCS 567

Be respectful of tradition. **Do not fail to listen attentively to the telling of the sacred story,** for the story of scripture and faith empowers and illuminates. (Doctrine and Covenants 161:5)

The Temple shall be dedicated to the **pursuit of peace.** It shall be for **reconciliation** and for **healing of the spirit.** It shall also be for a **strengthening of faith** and **preparation for witness.** By its ministries an attitude of **wholeness of body, mind, and spirit** as a **desirable end** toward which to strive will be fostered. (Doctrine and Covenants 156:5a-c)

Hymn of Transformation

"Spirit of the Living God"

CCS 567

View President's Challenge: Awaken to God's Invitation!

View Live Questions and Answers

Time of Discernment

Facilitate sharing thoughts, questions, and reflections on President Veazey's challenge. Use some of the following questions and statements to initiate the discussion.

1. What questions came to mind as you listened to President Veazey?
2. How do you, individually or as part of a group or congregation, feel called to respond to God's invitation?
3. How do we experience God's invitation through the Sacraments?
4. Spiritual awakening allows one to be open and invites God to enter. How have you experienced spiritual awakening?
5. Who is God calling us to be?
6. Where is God calling you?
7. How do you envision hope being revived?
8. How are your biases limiting your experiences with God?
9. When have you found yourself in a "valley of dry bones" situation?
10. What opportunities for your congregation came to mind this evening as you listened to the challenges presented?
11. Discuss your understanding of the questions and answers that followed President Veazey's challenge.

Congregational Prayer

Invite the congregation to offer their own one-sentence prayers in response to the challenges presented to them this evening.

Closing Hymn

"Bwana Awabariki/May God Grant You a Blessing"

CCS 660

OR "I Have Called You by Your Name"

CCS 636

OR "Shalom chaverim"

CCS 653

OR "Lord, Who Views All People Precious"

CCS 637

Benediction