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INTRODUCTION

Dear worship leader,

Thank you in advance for the important ministry you are offering. We realize that each reunion uses these resources in the way that makes sense for them and our hope is that this worship guide will be meaningful and flexible for the needs of your community. Feel free to adapt as necessary for your context.

PREPARING A SPACE

Consider creating a simple worship center for each service that includes a candle or other symbols to draw the congregation's attention to the theme of the day. As the worship leader, it is important to prepare a space within yourself as well to be the grounding, nonanxious presence for the community as you enter this sacred time together.

CREATING INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY

We are blessed to have the opportunity to share in intergenerational community and we know that also brings its specific challenges. These services were designed in that sacred tension; of providing depth and substance to mature disciples while also creating room for new disciples who are just beginning to learn and grow. We invite you into that sacred tension with us as a worship leader. Be mindful of every opportunity to encourage children and youth to participate, letting them know that their voice matters to the community. Many of the practices and elements were designed to engage different ages, but the openness of the community and the willingness of adults to intentionally invite the voices of children will be most impactful in creating genuine intergenerational community.

We often think that to engage in spiritual practice, we need to have complete silence. With many ages present, this is an unrealistic expectation! We are invited to seek an "interior silence" where our minds and hearts are open and receptive to the Spirit even if our external circumstances contain a few giggles or shrieks. This is a practice in discovering God in *all* things and seeking the Spirit

in the midst of the holiest of distractions! Whenever there is an opportunity, gently remind the community of this invitation.

ENGAGING IN SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Even "mature" disciples may struggle with spiritual practice from time to time. Moments of silence or invitations for vulnerability may be uncomfortable or unfamiliar. As a spiritual leader, it is important to hold open safe and loving community for all spiritual types. Invitations to practice should be gentle and respectful of persons all along the journey of faith. Using "invitational" rather than "instructional" language can be helpful in creating this space of freedom and may reduce natural resistances that could arise. For example, "I invite you to find a comfortable position for prayer" allows more flexibility than "Now, everyone close your eyes."

May we be open to all the ways the Spirit may seek relationship with this community!

A FEW NOTES

- These services all follow a similar flow. In each worship we remember our intention for gathering and covenant together to create safe, relational space for sharing. We end each worship by paying attention to where the Spirit was at work and discerning God's invitation for the day ahead. This intentional, repetitive beginning and ending is a model for forming spiritual community and is a communal spiritual practice. The hope is that we grow in awareness of the quality of our time together and become more attentive to the Spirit at work among us.
- Let the community know that these services are designed to create spaciousness for sharing with one another. In small- and large-group formats, the sharing will be the primary focus of the worship. Invite the congregation to gather in diverse groups, especially mindful of those who may be on the margins, and inclusive of all ages.
- It will be especially meaningful to include children and youth in the sharing as much as possible. You will see alternative questions

throughout this resource that indicate something has been worded for inclusion of younger voices.

- Each day, there are questions for small- and large-group reflections. It will be helpful to print out copies of these questions or project them while people are sharing.
- Throughout the worships, there are scripted notes for the worship leader. Please feel free to adapt these notes to your own most natural speaking style while maintaining the essence needed to invite people into the practices and sharing.
- Time for sharing can be dependent on what is stirring in the community! Please be sensitive to timing and aware of natural beginnings and

endings for the benefit of the gathered community.

- Sometimes when people are sharing, spaces of silence emerge. We are tempted to fill the silence quickly, but we invite you to consider holding open space in case other voices need to emerge. It may take a few moments for a person to gather the courage to share what is in their heart. It is appropriate to ask after a few moments, “Is there anyone else who would like to share?”
- Trust that the Spirit is present, working in each person, and may show up in surprising ways! “Be vulnerable to divine grace.” (Doctrine and Covenants Section 163:10b)

CALLED INTO THE FUTURE

WHERE IS THE SPIRIT LEADING?

MATERIALS

Handout

PRELUDE

GATHERING SONGS

“Holy Spirit, Come with Power”

CCS 46

“Listen in the Silence”

CCS 153

HOW SHALL WE GATHER?

This is a sample covenant for sharing in sacred community. You are welcome to use this or create one that is similar for your community. Each day we will begin by reminding one another of our intention to gather and create safe, relational space where deep sharing in loving community can occur. You may have a different voice read each statement. Consider having a large poster board or banner with the six words from the covenant as a constant reminder.

- **Worth:** Every person is of sacred worth and value, no exceptions.
- **Attention:** Listen for the Spirit speaking anew through your own experience and the stories of others.
- **Curiosity:** Practice holy curiosity. There is always more to every person than what we think we know or see. When you feel the impulse to fix, advise, or interrupt when others are sharing, turn instead to humility and wonder.
- **Vulnerability:** Dare to be vulnerable. We create the quality of sacred community we yearn for by our willingness to show up with one another and be who we truly are.
- **Presence:** God is already among us. We slow down to notice where divine presence already dwells, and to be sanctuaries of divine presence for one another.
- **Discernment:** What is God’s invitation today? Is there a new awareness, action, or way of being that is summoning me in response to this time of sacred community and spiritual encounter?

BLESSING FOR OUR GATHERING

Invite a different participant each day to share a prayer of blessing over our time together.

OPENING TO THE SPIRIT (COMMUNAL SPIRITUAL PRACTICE)

DWELLING IN THE WORD

Doctrine and Covenants Section 164:9a-b. Let the community know that we will be hearing a paraphrase that was written for children and youth.

Dwelling in the Word is a form of praying with scripture. You are invited to listen within as you hear these words, noticing how the Spirit is moving in you. As you listen for the first time to the scripture and the paraphrase, notice what word, phrase, or image captures your attention. As you listen for the second time, pay attention to the Spirit's invitation to you through these words.

Adult Reader: 9 a. Beloved children of the Restoration, your continuing faith adventure with God has been divinely led, eventful, challenging, and sometimes surprising to you. By the grace of God, you are poised to fulfill God's ultimate vision for the church. b. When your willingness to live in sacred community as Christ's new creation exceeds your natural fear of spiritual and relational transformation, you will become who you are called to be.

Pause for Silence

Youth or Child Reader: When we feel God's love it changes the way we see ourselves and others. We see just how much God loves everyone! When we see everyone this way we want to be with one another and help one another. This is why sometimes we choose to live outside of God's love. We are not sure we want things to change. God is calling us to a new way of loving one another in community. This is who we are called to be in the world. (Paraphrased Version for Children and Youth written by Ron Harmon.)

Pause for Silence

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Pause for Silence

SHARING TOGETHER

Small Groups (five-six people maximum)

- What words, phrases, or images captured your attention?
- What is God's invitation to you in this text?
- What are the implications of following the Spirit in your life? Are there moments when you resist spiritual or relational transformation? Are there moments when you have embraced transformation?
- **Alternative Questions:** What did you like most about the scripture? What do you think it means in your life?

If time allows, you may bring the small groups back together by inviting responses from the large group to the questions.

SONG

“Teach Me, God, to Wonder”

CCS 176

LISTENING TO THE SPIRIT

Reflections on what was moving in our time together.

- Where have you been most aware of the Spirit’s presence in our gathering today?
- How is God “at work” in you as you have listened to the stories and experiences of others in the community?
- Alternative question: What did you hear or learn in our worship today?

DISCERNMENT

What is God’s invitation to me today?

Spend one minute in silence. Use a chime or singing bowl to indicate the beginning and ending of the time of silence. Remind the community that in intergenerational community, there may not be perfect silence, but that they are invited to enter an interior silence as they listen for God’s invitation in the day ahead.

Invite one-word or brief phrase responses from the community.

CLOSING SONG

“Now in This Moment”

CCS 96

CLOSING PRAYER

POSTLUDE

EMBRACING NEW LIFE

WHAT IS FORMING IN US?

MATERIALS

Pens, sticky notes, four large posters with the Romans 8 text and prayer station numbers (we recommend using tri-fold foam board), Play-Doh and/or clay, wipes for the clay, candles, lighters (or electric tealight candles), handout (at the back of this resource).

PRELUDE

GATHERING SONGS

“I Will Sing, I Will Sing”	CCS II2
or “Amen!”	CCS II3
“O Holy Dove of God Descending”	CCS 44

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- **Discernment:** What is God’s invitation today? Is there a new awareness, action, or way of being that is summoning me in response to this time of sacred community and spiritual encounter?

BLESSING FOR OUR GATHERING

Invite a different participant each day to share a prayer of blessing over your time together, or use the blessing below.

Sacred mystery,

Something unknown, unnamed,
that I cannot yet perceive
Is coming to life in me.

Sometimes it is restlessness,
Sometimes resistance.

Sometimes it is longing,
Sometimes fresh vision.

I strain to understand what will be.
Sometimes the straining feels like
Distance, doubt, infidelity
To what I've always known and believed.

And beneath the fear lies love—
An impulse to nurture
What is forming within—
Space to thrive in the soul—
A quiet trust in a sacred process.

Your life always finds a way.

What will I become
When it forms to fullness?
Will I be willing to risk
Embracing the new life
You, O God,
Are creating in me?

You are always creating.
Bless me with courage
And wisdom
In the waiting
In the forming
In what I cannot know
In what I cannot see.
Prepare me for the
Eternal birth of your love
And peace through me,
Through us all.

Amen.

OPENING TO THE SPIRIT (COMMUNAL SPIRITUAL PRACTICE)

LECTIO DIVINA STATIONS

Play meditative music in the background as people move through four stations. Provide a handout for participants as they move among the stations (at the back of this resource).

Read the text once and then invite people to move through the 4 stations to continue reflecting on the scripture as meditative music plays.

Romans 8

Meanwhile, the joyful anticipation deepens. ...That is why waiting does not diminish us, any more than waiting diminishes a pregnant mother. We are enlarged in the waiting. We, of course, don't see what is enlarging us. But the longer we wait, the larger we become, and the more joyful our expectancy.

Meanwhile, the moment we get tired in the waiting, God's Spirit is right alongside helping us along. If we don't know how or what to pray, it doesn't matter. [The Spirit] does our praying in and for us, making prayer out of our wordless sighs, our aching groans. [The Spirit] knows us far

better than we know ourselves, knows our pregnant condition, and keeps us present before God. That's why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good.

—The Message

Station 1: What word or phrase captured your attention in this text?

Write down the word or phrase on a sticky note and place them around the scripture.

Station 2: When you prayerfully imagine this text, what image is evoked?

Use the Play-Doh or clay to create the image. Leave your image on the table by the scripture.

Station 3: What is God's invitation to you in this text?

Using a sticky note, write down a word or phrase that describes how this text summons you to a new action or awareness.

Station 4: How is God present for you in this text?

Light a candle and rest into God's presence. Trust that God's presence is with you through these sacred words and images.

SONG OF RESPONSE

"Bless the Lord, My Soul"

CCS 575

SHARING TOGETHER

Small Group Reflections (five to six people, maximum)

- What was your experience with the scripture from Romans 8? Which prayer station were you most drawn to? Alternative question: What was your favorite station? What did you create or learn?
- How does the metaphor for pregnancy relate to our spiritual journeys? Has there ever been a time in your life that you felt something was forming that you couldn't yet see?
- Alternative question: Have you ever had to wait for something that you were really excited about? How did it feel to wait?
- What might be forming in you, or in the community, now? Alternative question: Who does God want us to be?

If time allows, you may bring the small groups back together by inviting responses from the large group to the questions.

SONG

"Womb of Life and Source of Being"

CCS 62

LISTENING TO THE SPIRIT

Large Group Reflections

- Where have you been most aware of the Spirit's presence in our gathering today?
- How is God "at work" in you as you have listened to the stories and experiences of others in the community?
- Alternative question: What did you hear or learn in our worship today?

DISCERNMENT

What is God's invitation to me today?

Spend one minute in silence. Use a chime or singing bowl to indicate the beginning and ending of the time of silence. Remind the community that in intergenerational community, there may not be perfect silence, but that they are invited to enter an interior silence as they listen for God's invitation in the day ahead.

Invite one-word or brief phrase responses from the community.

CLOSING PRAYER

POSTLUDE

COMPANIONS ON A JOURNEY

HOW DO WE NURTURE WHAT IS EMERGING?

MATERIALS

Tealight candles

PRELUDE

GATHERING SONGS

“Uyai Mose”

CCS 84

“Gather Your Children”

CCS 77

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- **Discernment:** What is God’s invitation today? Is there a new awareness, action, or way of being that is summoning me in response to this time of sacred community and spiritual encounter?

BLESSING FOR OUR GATHERING

Invite a different participant each day to share a prayer of blessing over your time together.

SONG

“In the Quiet of This Day”

CCS 161

OPENING TO THE SPIRIT (COMMUNAL SPIRITUAL PRACTICE)

HOLDING IN THE LIGHT

Each person will receive a tealight candle (electric or flame–flame is more effective for the practice if it works in your context).

Today we will practice holding one another in the light as we companion one another along the spiritual journey. Take a few moments to reflect on your life. Notice if there is anything weighing on your heart that you want to bring to the community for this time of prayer. We will spend a few moments together briefly naming those prayer concerns that need to be brought into the loving embrace of the community.

Invite responses.

We hold these prayer concerns in the light of God. We will spend a few moments holding our candles and prayerfully imagining the light of God encompassing those who shared concerns this morning. Invite other people and situations into your awareness as you focus on the light of God and hold one another in prayer.

Silent prayer with candles.

Next, I want to invite you to consider what might be growing or coming to life in you. Is there an invitation of the Spirit or a calling to a new awareness or way of being that is emerging in your life? You are invited to briefly express where you sense growth might be occurring in your life as you are held in love and support by this community.

Invite responses.

We hold these sacred expressions of growth in the light of God. We will spend a few moments holding our candles and prayerfully imagine the light of God encompassing those who shared. Invite other people and situations into your awareness as you focus on the light of God and hold one another in prayer.

Silent prayer with candles.

SONG OR MINISTRY OF MUSIC

“We Are Pilgrims on a Journey”

CCS 550

SHARING TOGETHER

Small Group (five to six people, maximum)

Take your candles with you into your small group.

- What does it mean to hold space for people to express what is most important in their lives? When have you felt truly heard in your own life? Alternative question: When do you feel like people really listen to you? What does that feel like?

- What does it look like to companion and nurture what is coming to life in one another?
Alternative question: How can we be good friends to one another?
- Is there anything you didn't express in the large group that you would like to share in this group?

Close the small group sharing by inviting everyone to spend a few moments gazing into their candles and holding every person in their small group in the light and love of God.

If time allows, you may bring the small groups back together by inviting responses from the large group to the questions.

SONG

“Come and Fill” (Sing several times, prayerfully.)

CCS 235

LISTENING TO THE SPIRIT

Large-group reflections

- Where have you been most aware of the Spirit's presence in our gathering today?
- How is God at work in you as you have listened to the stories and experiences of others in the community?
- Alternative question: What did you hear or learn in our worship today?

DISCERNMENT

What is God's invitation to me today?

Spend one minute in silence. Use a chime or singing bowl to indicate the beginning and ending of the time of silence. Remind the community that in intergenerational community, there might not be perfect silence, but that those participating are invited to enter an interior silence as they listen for God's invitation in the day ahead.

Invite one-word or brief phrase responses from the community.

CLOSING BLESSING

POSTLUDE

GROWING DEEPER

HOW CAN WE FREE OUR FULL CAPACITY?

MATERIALS NEEDED

Handout, Image, Pens

PRELUDE

GATHERING SONGS

“Humble Yourself”

CCS 211

“God Within, God Around” (sing several times, prayerfully)

CCS 20)

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BLESSING FOR OUR GATHERING

Invite a different participant each day to share a prayer of blessing over our time together.

SONG: GOD

“We Gather as Your People”

CCS 274

OPENING TO THE SPIRIT (COMMUNAL SPIRITUAL PRACTICE)

VISIO DIVINA

As we grow deeper in the Spirit, we experience the pain, loss, and joy of transformation. Our practice for today invites us to consider what the process of spiritual growth feels like for us as individuals and for us as a faith community. Consider this reflection:

“For a seed to achieve its greatest expression, it must come completely undone. The shell cracks, its insides come out and everything changes. To someone who doesn’t understand growth, it would look like complete destruction.”

—Cynthia Ocelli

There might be moments along the journey of deepening in God, individually and collectively, that feel like complete destruction. As we grow, we shed parts of ourselves that were once essential to who we are. But as the journey continues, we become who we are created and called to be.

Sometimes we resist transformation because we are afraid of what we are losing and can’t yet understand who we will become. There are other times along the journey that we can feel ourselves thriving, bursting into fullest life. We encounter these cycles of growth in God over and over again throughout our lives. Today’s *visio divina* invites you to consider where you and your community might be in this cycle.

Visio divina is Latin for divine seeing. As you prayerfully gaze at this image, notice what you are drawn to. Observe the details that capture your attention. Then, consider where you are in this image. Is there a part of this image that speaks into your life? What is God’s invitation to you in this image?

Worship leader: Use the handout in the back of this resource or project this image with the questions above.

Image: <https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/plant-seeding-growing-step-with-sunlight-with-vintage-tone-filter-gm912882270-251303347> or
<https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/plant-seeding-growing-step-with-sunlight-agriculture-concept-in-farm-gm912882738-251303653>

SHARING TOGETHER

Small Group (5-6 people maximum)

- What captured your attention in this image?
- What is God’s invitation to you, or to your congregation, in this image?
- Where do you find yourself in the process of growing in the Spirit? How do you relate to the image?
- **Alternative Questions:** What do you like about this picture? What does it mean to grow with God?

If time allows, you may bring the small groups back together by inviting responses from the large group to the questions.

SONG

“Bless the Lord” (Sing several times, prayerfully)

CCS 575

LISTENING TO THE SPIRIT

Large Group Reflections

- Where have you been most aware of the Spirit’s presence in our gathering today?
- How is God “at work” in you as you have listened to the stories and experiences of others in the community?
- **Alternative Question:** What did you hear or learn in our worship today?

SONG

“In My Life, Lord”

CCS 602

DISCERNMENT

What is God’s invitation to me today?

Spend 1 minute in silence. Use a chime or singing bowl to indicate the beginning and ending of the time of silence. Remind the community that in intergenerational community, there may not be perfect silence, but that they are invited to enter an interior silence as they listen for God’s invitation in the day ahead.

Invite brief one word or phrase responses from the community.

CLOSING SONG

“Let Us Pray For One Another”

CCS 186

Or “Kanisa Litajengwa”

CCS 338

CLOSING BLESSING

POSTLUDE

BECOMING BLESSING

WHAT ARE THE NEXT FAITHFUL STEPS?

MATERIALS

Handout, Pens, Small Compasses (https://www.amazon.com/Fun-Express-Compass-Clip-1-Pack/dp/B005DS7ZZC/ref=pd_day0_hl_21_3/143-3672957-5027266?_encoding=UTF8&pd_rd_i=B005DS7ZZC&pd_rd_r=631f15a4-18cb-11e9-b65f-8df44b2d4dcf&pd_rd_w=ZbuGt&pd_rd_wg=n4Px4&pf_rd_p=ad07871c-e646-4161-82c7-5ed0d4c85b07&pf_rd_r=EON1JFYK02EHKCWZSMSK&pvc=1&refRID=EON1JFYK02EHKCWZSMSK)

PRELUDE

GATHERING SONGS

“Takwaba Uwabanga Yesu!”	CCS 12I
or “I’m Gonna Live So God Can Use Me”	CCS 58I
“Praise the Lord Together”	CCS 642

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BLESSING FOR OUR GATHERING

Invite a different participant each day to share a prayer of blessing over our time together.

MINISTRY OF MUSIC OR CONGREGATIONAL SONG

“The Path for Our Walking” CCS 177

OPENING TO THE SPIRIT (COMMUNAL SPIRITUAL PRACTICE)

SCRIPTURE READING

(Have several voices in different locations around the room, encompassing the community as these words are read aloud multiple times.)

“Collectively and individually, you are loved with an everlasting love that delights in each faithful step taken.”

–Doctrine and Covenants Section 163:10a

NAVIGATING THE WAY: A COMPASS BLESSING

(inspired by *The Discerning Heart* by Wilkie Au and Norene Canon Au)

Hand out small compasses and invite the congregation to hold them and stand (or turn) facing in the 4 directions as the following prayer is offered. It may be helpful for sharing to provide a copy of this prayer to participants (see handout in the back of this resource), or to have the words projected for them to reference later on. Consider using a chime or singing bowl between movement of the prayer.

We turn East toward the rising sun. Prayerfully, we consider what new life is dawning in us. Where are fresh beginnings, understandings, or ways of being emerging? What is rising and gradually bringing fresh vision and light? We give thanks for the gifts of new beginnings that are always arriving.

Brief Silent Pause and Chime.

We turn West toward the setting sun. Prayerfully, we consider natural endings and closings in our lives, like the dark of dusk at the end of the day. We watch until the light is almost gone and stand in the darkness of what needs to be released. With courage and hope, we begin to see what we must let go. We give thanks for the night that brings growth and transformation.

Brief Silent Pause and Chime.

We turn North toward the North star, a guiding light. Prayerfully, we dare to ask again, what matters most? When life seems uncertain, what does integrity come to say? What deep values are sustaining and stabilizing us? We give thanks for all that remains steadfast and will guide us, even as we feel unsettled.

Brief Silent Pause and Chime.

We turn South toward light exposed and pouring forth. Prayerfully, we listen within to what is yearning for expression in us. We notice our longings and the creativity of the Spirit that is stirring hope and possibility. We give thanks for the love and grace of God constantly pouring forth.

Brief Silent Pause and Chime.

Finally, we turn our attention to our own center. Prayerfully, we imagine our lives in response to the Spirit's deep call and invitation. We give thanks as we remember that God dwells within us and all creation.

Brief Silent Pause and Chime.

SHARING TOGETHER

Small Group Sharing

- Where was your attention drawn in this prayer? **Alternative Question:** What did you like in this prayer?
- How does standing in each direction bring awareness of the Spirit's movement in your life? What direction are you currently facing? **Alternative Question:** Which direction did you like best and why?
- In your life, what are the next faithful steps? Where might the Spirit be leading in your life as you prepare to return home? **Alternative Question:** What do you think God wants you to do when you get home?

If time allows, you may bring the small groups back together by inviting responses from the large group to the questions.

SONG OF RESPONSE

"Thuma Mina" (Sing 3-4 times)

CCS 66I

LISTENING TO THE SPIRIT

Large Group Reflections

- Where have you been most aware of the Spirit's presence in our gathering today?
- How is God "at work" in you as you have listened to the stories and experiences of others in the community?
- **Alternative Question:** What did you hear or learn in our worship today?

SONG

"Now in This Moment"

CCS96

DISCERNMENT

What is God's invitation to me today?

Spend 1 minute in silence. Use a chime or singing bowl to indicate the beginning and ending of the time of silence. Remind the community that in intergenerational community, there may not be perfect silence, but that they are invited to enter an interior silence as they listen for God's invitation in the day ahead.

Invite brief one word or phrase responses from the community.

CLOSING BLESSING

POSTLUDE

DWELLING IN THE WORD: DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS

SECTION 164:9A-B

9 a. Beloved children of the Restoration, your continuing faith adventure with God has been divinely led, eventful, challenging, and sometimes surprising to you. By the grace of God, you are poised to fulfill God's ultimate vision for the church. b. When your willingness to live in sacred community as Christ's new creation exceeds your natural fear of spiritual and relational transformation, you will become who you are called to be.

When we feel God's love it changes the way we see ourselves and others. We see just how much God loves everyone! When we see everyone this way we want to be with each other and help each other. This is why sometimes we choose to live outside of God's love. We are not sure we want things to change. God is calling us to a new way of loving each other in community. This is who we are called to be in the world.

(Paraphrased Version for Children and Youth written by Ron Harmon.)

What word, phrase, or image captures your attention?

What is God's invitation to you in this text?

What are the implications of following the Spirit in your life? Are there moments when you resist spiritual or relational transformation? Are there moments when you have embraced transformation?

Alternative Questions: What did you like most about the scripture? What do you think it means in your life?

LECTIO DIVINA: DIVINE READING

Romans 8:21-28, The Message

INVITATION TO PRACTICE

Take this scripture with you and read it prayerfully at each station, inviting silence and spaciousness between the readings. You can use this handout to write reflections as you move through the prayer. Follow the questions and prompts below. When you have finished, return to your seat, continuing to listen into the meaning of this scripture for your life today.

Meanwhile, the joyful anticipation deepens. ...That is why waiting does not diminish us, any more than waiting diminishes a pregnant mother. We are enlarged in the waiting. We, of course, don't see what is enlarging us. But the longer we wait, the larger we become, and the more joyful our expectancy.

Meanwhile, the moment we get tired in the waiting, God's Spirit is right alongside helping us along. If we don't know how or what to pray, it doesn't matter. [The Spirit] does our praying in and for us, making prayer out of our wordless sighs, our aching groans. [The Spirit] knows us far better than we know ourselves, knows our pregnant condition, and keeps us present before God. That's why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good.

Station 1: What word or phrase captured your attention in this text?

Write down the word or phrase on a post-it note. Notice the words and phrases that captured the attention of others in the community.

Station 2: When you prayerfully imagine this text, what image is evoked for you?

With the materials at this station, create the image that was evoked for you. Leave your image on the table and notice the images that were created by others.

Station 3: What is God's invitation to you in this text?

Using a sticky note, write down a word or phrase that describes how this text summons you to a new action or awareness. As you leave your note, notice the other invitations stirring in the community.

Station 4: How is God present for you in this text?

Light a candle and rest into God's presence. Trust that God's presence is with you through these sacred words and images. Hold the community in prayer as they continue to encounter this scripture.

VISIO DIVINA: GROWING DEEPER

“For a seed to achieve its greatest expression, it must come completely undone. The shell cracks, its insides come out and everything changes. To someone who doesn't understand growth, it would look like complete destruction.”

—Cynthia Ocelli

“What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed.”

—I Corinthians 15:36-37



What captures your attention in this image?

Where do you see yourself in this image?

What is God's invitation to you in this image?

NAVIGATING THE WAY: A COMPASS BLESSING

We turn east toward the rising sun. Prayerfully, we consider the new life that is dawning in us. Where are fresh beginnings, understandings, or ways of being emerging? What is rising and gradually bringing fresh vision and light? We give thanks for the gifts of new beginnings that are always arriving.

We turn west toward the setting sun. Prayerfully, we consider natural endings and closings in our lives, like the dark of dusk at the end of the day. We watch until the light is almost gone and stand in the darkness of what needs to be released. With courage and hope, we begin to see what we must let go. We give thanks for the night that brings growth and transformation.

We turn north toward the north star, a guiding light. Prayerfully, we dare to ask again, *what matters most?* When life seems uncertain, what does integrity come to say? What deep values are sustaining and stabilizing us? We give thanks for all that remains steadfast and will guide us, even as we feel unsettled.

We turn south toward light exposed and pouring forth. Prayerfully, we listen to what is yearning for expression within. We notice our longings and the creativity of the Spirit that is stirring hope and possibility. We give thanks for the love and grace of God pouring forth.

Finally, we turn our attention to our own center. Prayerfully, we imagine our lives in response to the Spirit's deep call and invitation. We give thanks as we remember that God dwells within us and all creation.

—Inspired by *The Discerning Heart* by Wilkie Au and Noreen Cannon Au