

General Commission on the Status and Role of Women

Sample Worship



Morning Devotion

(In Observance of Thursdays in Black Campaign)

Gathering Music

Moment of Silence

Call to Worship

Leader: In the midst of hunger and war,

People: *We celebrate the promise of plenty and peace.*

Leader: In the midst of oppression and tyranny,

People: *We celebrate the promise of service and freedom.*

Leader: In the midst of doubt and despair,

People: *We celebrate the promise of faith and hope.*

Leader: In the midst of fear and betrayal,

People: *We celebrate the promise of joy and loyalty.*

Leader: In the midst of hatred and death,

People: *We celebrate the promise of love and life.*

Leader: In the midst of sin and decay,

People: *We celebrate the promise of salvation and renewal.*

Leader: In the midst of death on every side,

All: *We celebrate the promise of the living Christ!*

Song of Praise

“We Are One In The Spirit”

Invocation (in unison)

Our God, who are among us, many are your names.

*Our recognition come, Your spirit as one,
Within us as it is around us.*

We must share this day our daily bread.

And empower one another,

As we are empowered by you.

You do not walk with us into temptation.

*But you journey with us from our deliverance
from evil,*

For you are the justice,

And the passion,

And the very life within us. Amen.

What is the Thursdays In Black Campaign by Shelby Ruch-Teegarden

Reading with Libation* (pouring of water)

(Each paragraph can be read by a different person)

On today, I bring the tears of *African women*, of those who survived, and those, who never made it. Our tears as victims of war and internal conflicts. Our tears as women whose story was never told. Our tears as women, struggling to survive.

I bring the tears of *Asian women*; our tears as victims of female sexual slavery and trafficking. Our tears, as those young girls who had no choice.

I bring the tears of *Caribbean women*; our tears from our homes as beaten wives, the tears of those of us, whose bruises were ignored by the pastor in our church.

I bring the tears of *European women*; our tears as our talents have been stifled and dreams suffocated because the system is built on the power of dominant groups.

I bring the tears of *Latin American Women*; the tears as women who have experienced diverse forms of violence in the spheres of work, family and in the public square, but also in the privacy of our own bodies.

I bring the tears of the *women of the Middle East*; our tears as we cry for our children, lost in the war, lost in the fight for liberty.

I bring the tears of *Native American women*; our tears as our theological voices are undermined, and the divisions between that keep us powerless.

I bring the tears of the *women of the Pacific Islands*; our tears as we watch our Islands being destroyed by nuclear testing and colonization.

I bring the tears of all *young women and girls* from all the continents because the problems each one of us names, is common to every one of us around the world.

In our tears we recognize each other, from continent to continent, from country to country, through our tears we look at each other, because of our tears, we stay together, we bond, we will move forward as God gives us grace.

Prayer for Thursdays in Black

Creating God, Mother of us all, We are your beloved, formed in your image and nurtured in the depth of your dark womb. You breathed life into our flesh and sent us to do your work in the world, to care for each other and for all of creation as we would care for you: our life and our breath.

Wherever we are in your world there are survivors, victims, bystanders, and perpetrators of gender-based violence.

This violence is destroying your sacred creation, breaking and mutilating bodies, crushing spirits, stealing dignity, abusing trust, seizing power, and violating your beloved.

As long as violence exists among your people, anywhere, we will not be whole. Until your creation is healed, we will wear black in solidarity with people around the world to honor the courage and resilience of the victims and survivors of gender-based violence while committing to work toward an end to such violence.

May black remind us of the unimaginable deep love you have for us and the cavernous well of tears shed by communities broken by violence.

And may black remind us of the hope for transformation that you have planted within the dark belly of the earth. A hope that grows stronger every time a cycle of violence is broken and nurtured by each action against violence and rape.

Creating God, as long as we have breath, may we work with perseverance toward restoring your creation. Amen.

Closing Song:

Closing Prayer (*in unison*)

There is a line of women, extending back to Eve

Whose role in shaping history, God only could conceive.

**And though, through endless ages, their witness was repressed,
God valued and encouraged them, through whom the world was
blessed.**

∞ Depart in Peace ∞

This campaign is simple but profound. **Wear Black on Thursdays.** Wear a pin to declare you are a part of this global movement resisting attitudes and practices that permit rape and violence. Show your respect for women who are resilient in the face of injustice and violence. Encourage others to join you. We note, oftentimes, *black* has been used with negative racial connotations. In this campaign, **Black** is used as a color of resistance and resilience.

*Adapted from Thursdays In Black, World Council of Churches