

## Resources for Celebrating GCSRW's 50<sup>th</sup> Year

*<sup>3</sup> They are like trees  
planted by streams of water,  
which yield their fruit in its season,  
and their leaves do not wither.  
In all that they do, they prosper.*

Psalm 1:3 NRSV

### The Angel Oak Tree in South Carolina



**THE ANGEL OAK TREE** in Charleston, South Carolina, is thought to be one of the oldest living oak trees east of the Mississippi River. It stands 65 feet (20 meters) tall and measures 28 feet in circumference. An area of 17,000 square feet is shaded by its tentacular crown. The largest branch reaches 187 feet. Estimated to be between 400 and 500 years old, this southern live oak has survived a number of hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes, and continues to grow.



## **50<sup>th</sup> Celebration Liturgy**

### ***Imagine 50 Years Forward***

#### **Call to Worship**

LEADER: Lord; may we feel like a tall oak tree whose branches have been refreshed after a storm, when the wind is still and all is quiet. Like a tree that has survived many storms and yet stands tall in your presence.

PEOPLE: May we know both your peace and strength. Receive our praise and our thanksgiving for preserving us for many years.

ALL: We have come to this holy place to worship God of our weary years, God of our silent tears. God, we thank you for keeping us as the journey continues.

#### **Scripture Reading**

Psalm 1:1-3

#### **The Hymn**

“My Tribute, To God Be The Glory”

UMH #99

#### **Epistle Reading**

John 15:5-8

#### **The Message**

#### **Planting Prayer**

Gracious and Eternal Mother God, thank you for the beautiful description of someone who is like a tree planted by streams of water, which bring forth a fruitful harvest in season. We have become like that Angel Oak Tree, whose roots run deep into the earth, and its leaves never wither. We are thankful that you made us like that strong tree that has prospered for many years through your daily provision. Help us to continue to live our lives as a reflection of your grace to being committed to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with you, oh God. Let this tree (or plant) we place into the earth grow as a symbol of life, wisdom, strength, and growth. We thank you for entrusting us with this great mission of the church. Amen.

**Closing Prayer**

God who is loving and kind, thank you for this time we shared together in your presence celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. We thank you for the great work this agency has done to support the full inclusion and participation of women in the church. We thank you for the witness of justice, mercy, and love this agency has shown. And we thank you for the journey of another 50 years of service to others for your glory.

**Sending Forth**

As you leave this place, remember to be like the oak tree that stands tall in the midst of this changing world. Be the love that binds us to one another. And go in peace, to love and serve God. Amen.