

**Worship Ideas/Prayers for a Focus on
Human Trafficking
Human Trafficking Awareness Day - January 11**

Call to Worship (responsive)

God's Spirit is upon us.

He chooses us to preach good news to the poor.

He sends us forth to announce freedom to all who are prisoners,

Recovery of sight to the blind,

To set the burdened and battered free.

Let us worship God and pray for a hopeful tomorrow.

Call to Confession

Scripture tells us to say no to wrong, learn to do good, work for justice, help the down-and-out, stand up for the homeless, go to bat for the defenseless. Let us together ask for God's forgiveness for the times we have not listened to his voice.

Prayer of Confession (unison)

Lord, we confess that oppression and injustice sometimes overwhelm us. It is easy to believe we cannot make a difference. We do not always hear the cries of those who are vulnerable. Often our choices and the things we buy contribute to the destruction of life. Forgive us for the times we allow our fears to lead us to silence and inaction. Strengthen us so that we may be the voice for those who have no voice. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Hear the good news of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God. Thanks be to God.

Prayer of Illumination

Open our ears, eyes, and hearts, O God, so that we can hear clearly your words of justice and love. Give us courage to bring justice, healing and hope to a broken world.

Prayers of the People

O God, we cry out against all forms and manner of human trafficking and pray for an end to it.

We pray for a hopeful tomorrow.

Jesus Christ, you are the Suffering Servant. You know violence, humiliation and rejection. Comfort those who suffer, are afraid and alone.

We pray for a hopeful tomorrow.

Holy Spirit, be with us when we fast for those who are chained by injustice and abuse, those who are exploited in the workplace and those who live fearfully in the shadows of darkness.

We pray for a hopeful tomorrow.

We pray for all traffickers around the world and those who profit from their works of evil. Open their hearts and minds to the cruelty and abuse they cause every day. Make your presence known to them.

We pray for a hopeful tomorrow.

We pray that when we find ourselves on the ‘road from Jerusalem to Jericho’ that, like the Good Samaritan, we will see those enslaved by human trafficking as our neighbor, bind up their wounds and treat them with kindness.

We pray for a hopeful tomorrow.

Amen.

Benediction

Go out into the world and uphold the cause of the oppressed, give food to the hungry, set the prisoners free. Proclaim the good news that the Lord gives sight to the blind and lifts up those who are bowed down. May the God of all love and grace give you peace. Amen.

Reverend Sheila O’Mara has been a Cumberland Presbyterian minister for 31 years and is a member of Presbytery del Cristo. She served as a Navy chaplain for 30 years in assignments both in the U.S. and around the world. Shelia is married to Duncan O’Mara, a retired Naval officer who teaches at the Naval Academy. They live in the Annapolis MD area. Shelia presently works for the Veterans Affairs (VA) Mental Health and Chaplaincy program and is a consultant on a joint VA and Department of Defense (DOD) project that involves chaplaincy and mental health.