



**A Liturgy to Celebrate! Being a Senior Adult  
Week Six of 2016 Christian Education Season  
September 11, 2016  
Jack Ryan (extras-Elinor Brown)**

**Preparation for the Sunday:**

- *Locate a copy of the song "Celebration" by Kool and the Gang to play as a gathering song for worship each Sunday of the CE Season. You may not want to play the entire song since it is about four minutes long and repeats.*
- *Ask your worship committee or a creative bunch of folks to decorate the worship area with items that represent your senior adults. Ask the Senior Adults of your church to bring items, possibly something from their childhood like an old doll or a butter churn or something that represents what they enjoy doing now such gardening tools. Encourage them to express themselves creatively, then have someone meaningfully arrange the items on the altar.*
- *Well before this Sunday, ask a member to take pictures of your Senior Adults and display them throughout the sanctuary. If you want to do some extra work, ask a member to interview the Senior Adults while another person records it on video. Ask them to recall a memory of a time when they have felt especially close to God. The stories can be funny or somber, but meaningful to them.*
- *Look through the Additional Activities at the end of this liturgy and decide which of these you will do. Make plans to do them and gather materials as needed. You will also need to publicize and recruit people to help you with them so leave plenty of time to do so.*

### **Call to Worship**

Leader: One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek:

**People: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life.**

Leader: To gaze on the beauty of the LORD

**People: And to seek God in the holy temple.**

### **Call to Confession**

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father: Jesus Christ, the righteous one. Let us draw near with a humble and penitent heart, and confess our sins to God.

### **Prayer of Confession (unison)**

**O God, you have set us in families in which we early learned to sing your praises;  
and you have given us the Church where we have found fellowship  
that strengthens us and enables us to serve your kingdom.**

**Where would we be without you and without one another?**

**Yet, Lord, we confess that we are tempted to ‘go it alone,’  
to deny our need of you, and isolate ourselves from one another.**

**We separate ourselves from our greatest source of your grace.**

**In pride we lose fellowship with you and our sacred community.**

**Forgive us, Lord.**

**Help us to recognize that there is a blessedness**

**wrapped up in our relationship with you and one another.**

**Help us to be the kind of faith community that encourages growth and trust. Amen.**

### **Assurance of Pardon**

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

*(Ephesians 4:32-5:2)*

### **Children’s Message**

*Read the book Faith the Cow by Susan Bame Hoover. If you do not own this book, this is a great opportunity to buy it for yourself or for your church’s nursery or library. After reading it, you may want to make the following points:*

- Today the scripture is talking about remembering our past history, which can help us to make things better in the future. We are also celebrating Senior Adults—those people who are older than us and smarter than us and have some great ideas. This story is about one of those Senior Adults who had a good idea.
- In this story, Dan West travels to Spain and gives away food and supplies to those who don’t have any. That was a great thing for him to do, but there were so many people who needed help that Dan couldn’t give them enough. He remembered that when he was growing up, his family had enough to eat because they had animals that provided food and milk.

- Dan West came up with an idea: If those families who don't have enough to eat could get a milk cow, they could help other families by giving them milk. They could also sell the milk to buy food. He asked his friends and they gave him Faith the cow—and then another cow and another cow. Dan's idea became a business called Heifer International. They give away all kinds of animals now, not just cows. Dan West could have just sat around being sad because he couldn't do enough to help, but he didn't. Because he took action, Dan made a difference.
- Sometimes people think that they can't do anything to help others. They might think they are too young to make a difference. Or too old to make a difference. But God uses all kinds of people of all ages and races, girls and boys and men and women. We can be glad about that because everyone has to help to make the world a better place to live. That is what God wants from us and for us.
- Then pray something like this: God, we thank you so much for people like Dan West who want to serve other people and work hard to do so. We thank you that no matter what age we are, we can serve you and serve others. Amen.

### **Prayer for Illumination**

Open my eyes, that I may see glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;  
 Place in my hand the wonderful key that shall un-clasp and set me free.  
 Silently now I wait for Thee, ready my God, Thy will to see;  
 Open my eyes—illumine me, Spirit divine!

—“*Open My Eyes, That I May See,*” Clara H. Scott, Public Domain

### **Scripture Possibilities for the Sermon**

- 1 Timothy 1:12-17—Paul tells about his history as a sinner and Jesus' mercy available to all people.

This scripture provide an opportunity for the pastor to talk about our pasts and the need for Jesus' mercy in our lives and how we pass that lesson to our families and friends.

This day is a time for all of the church to celebrate those who are Senior Adults, expressing that they have much yet to do for the church rather than that they have already finished their work for God. Many times, Senior Adults are well equipped with more money, time and energy at this stage in their lives than ever before. Be sure to take advantage of this time.

### **Prayers of the People**

Most Gracious God,  
 Honor and praise be given to you for all your mercy and loving kindness shown to us your people. We bless you for the goodness that freely designed our glory before time began. We thank you for creating us in your own image,  
 for redeeming us, when we were lost, with the precious blood of Christ,  
 for sanctifying us by your Spirit in the revelation and knowledge of your word,

for your help and assistance in our needs, your comfort in our tribulations for saving us from dangers of body and soul, and giving us so large a time of repentance.

These benefits, O most merciful God, we acknowledge to have received by your goodness alone. And so we pray for your grace to continually increase our thankfulness toward you inspiring our hearts with pure and ardent love. Prevent us from receiving your word in vain. Graciously assist us always, in heart, word, and deed, to sanctify and worship your holy name through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*If you intend to commission some of the service activities, (see additional activities below), you may want to do it here.*

### **Invitation to the Offering**

“On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income.”

*(1 Corinthians 16:2, TNIV)*

Let us give our tithes and offerings to the Lord.

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

O Lord our God, you have taught us through your word that to everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked. Grant that we, whose fortune is cast in this Christian heritage, may strive more earnestly, by our prayers and tithes, by sympathy and study, to build your Church in the midst of a dying world, so that as we have entered into the work of others, so others may enter into ours, to your honor and glory. In Christ’s name. Amen.

### **Charge and Benediction**

Go forth now as God’s servants.

Remember God’s presence often.

Draw strength from the knowledge that the one who calls and sends also sustains.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **Additional Activities**

**Senior Adult Gatherings and Beyond**—Here are some ideas that can be for both one time programs and ongoing service activities for your church:

- Contact your state’s Department of Aging or Human Services. Arrange to have someone speak to your group about the services the state provides for older adults.
- Ask a lawyer to talk with your group about wills, powers of attorney, protecting your finances, etc.
- Learn about fraud and scams. The local police or an advocacy group would be glad to share information with your group.

- Invite a school choir, ensemble, budding musician, and so forth to perform for your group. Chances are they would welcome the opportunity to use their skills. This might also provide an opportunity to forge a relationship with other groups in your community.
- Become involved in a service project. Rather than having someone give to your group, give to others.
- Take a tour of a historic site or a new manufacturing facility.
- Have someone teach basic self-defense techniques that the people in your group could use.
- Go to see a play or hear a musical performance at a local college or community center.
- Learn exercises that people can do at any level of mobility.
- Invite a representative from the Chamber of Commerce to talk with your group about things planned for the community.
- Start a mentoring program for children and teens.
- Have members of the group share their hobbies. Or, if you learn about someone in the community who has an unusual hobby, invite him or her to share with your group.
- Volunteer at a community food bank or clothes closet.
- Bring snacks and enjoy playing games.
- Attend a seminar that's being offered through a community college or other local group.
- Arrange to have someone bring an audio/video recording device so that members of the group can record some of their favorite memories, history of the church, funny stories, etc. Plan another time for sharing these recordings with the congregation.
- Learn about social media. A teenager or young adult in your congregation would be a good resource person.
- Have a class about basic use of a computer or other electronic devices.
- Invite someone to share budgeting tips for senior adults.
- Have a volunteer who can help with income tax preparation.
- Ask a mechanic or a home maintenance professional to share information about caring for your vehicle or home, how to perform simple repairs, and when to call a professional.