

**A Liturgy for Human Trafficking Awareness Day
January 7, 2018 (actual day January 11)
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Reflection before Worship

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter... The ultimate tragedy is not the oppression and cruelty by the bad people but the silence over that by the good people... In the End, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

Call to Worship

Leader: God's spirit is upon us.

People: God chooses us to preach the good news to the poor.

Leader: God sends us forth to announce freedom to all who are prisoners,

People: Recovery of sight to the blind,

Leader: To set the burdened and battered free.

**All: Let us go out into the uncomfortable neighborhoods to connect with our neighbors
and share God's love and mercy with all.**

—based on Luke 4:18

Call to Confession

There are 21-30 million people around the world who are victims of human trafficking in a \$150 billion industry: 68% in forced labor, 26 % are children and 55% are female. Let us together ask for God's forgiveness for the times we have not sought justice and defended the oppressed.

Prayer of Confession (unison)

Lord, we confess that oppression and injustice sometimes overwhelm us.

We are guilty of not seeing those who are trapped in sex trafficking industries.

It is easy to believe we cannot make a difference.

Often victims of forced labor make the products we buy.

**Forgive us our sins of lack of awareness of those who suffer
and for the times we let our fears lead us into silence.**

**Help us to build safe communities that prevent and protect as well as promote justice
for those who are in bondage. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

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 for Illumination

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

Scripture Possibilities for the Sermon

- Isaiah 42:1-9
- Exodus 3:7-12
- Psalm 9
- Psalm 10
- Psalm 140
- Isaiah 42:22-23
- Isaiah 61:1-3

Prayers of the People

Rescue me, Lord, from evildoers; protect me from the violent.

Rise up, O Lord; lift up your hand; do not forget the oppressed.

All they do is think up new ways to do evil and stir up war every day.

Rise up, O Lord; lift up your hand; do not forget the oppressed.

Keep me safe, Lord, from the hands of the wicked; protect me from the violent.

Rise up, O Lord; lift up your hand; do not forget the oppressed.

Don't let the wicked have their way, God; don't give them an inch.

Rise up, O Lord; lift up your hand; do not forget the oppressed.

I know that you, God, are on the side of the victims that you care for the right of the poor.

Rise up, O Lord; lift up your hand; do not forget the oppressed.

Surely the righteous will praise your name, and the upright will live in your presence.

Rise up, O Lord; lift up your hand; do not forget the oppressed.

—based on Psalm 10:12

Invitation to the Offering

Let us return to God the offerings of our life and the gifts of the earth.

—Book of Common Worship

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Every good thing is a gift from God — the food we eat, the things we have, the time we spend, our whole lives. We give our lives back to God as a way of saying thank you — sharing money with those who are in need, giving food to those who are hungry, and spending our time to help others. Amen.

—Book of Common Worship

Charge and Benediction

Go out into the world and ask, “Who is my neighbor?”

By connecting with our neighbors, go and uphold the cause of the oppressed.
Break the chains of injustice.
Get rid of exploitation in the workplace.
Share your food with the hungry.
Invite the homeless and poor into your home.
Put clothes on the shivering.
May the God of love and grace give you peace. Amen.

—based on Isaiah 58:6-7