

A Global Table:

Sharing in God's Abundant Life

a sermon series



Produced in collaboration with Global Ministries and the Proclamation Project



INTRODUCTION

This sermon series is designed to introduce your congregation to the core values of Global Ministries, which is the common witness of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ.


Our two denominations have a formal partnership through which the United Church of Christ and Disciples Overseas Ministries share common staff, budget, programs/projects, and governance in our work with approximately 250 partners in almost 90 countries. With partner churches, nonprofit organizations, and ecumenical bodies throughout the world, we share life, resources, support, and faith. This often includes advocacy work, opportunities for mutual exchange and learning, sharing of mission personnel, sharing of financial and material resources, and being in prayer for and with international partners.

The values explored within this series are not only quintessential to the work of Disciples Overseas Ministries/Global Ministries, but to the work of the Church. We hope that taking the time to engage with the themes and scriptures throughout this series will be meaningful and expansive for your congregation.

These materials are designed to be flexible enough to adapt to your congregation's context.

The scriptural reflections and discussion will be helpful to preachers in sermon preparation. The sermon starters will prompt preachers to apply the text to their own setting as well as connect to Global Ministries work beyond the local church. Liturgy resources, including prayers, calls to worship, and interactive worship ideas, will help worship planners engage the text and theme.





As you plan for this sermon series, you may also wish to include songs that include a variety of languages and cultural backgrounds. If you are using the Chalice Hymnal, you can find a list of multi-cultural hymns available at globalministries.org/global_hymns.

Contributors

These materials were created as a collaboration between Disciples Overseas Ministries and the Proclamation Project. Phyllis Byrd and Paul Chimhungwe, two mission co-workers serving in the Africa region, were the primary contributors. Global Ministries homebased staff provided additional editing and support.

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To learn more about Global Ministries, please visit www.globalministries.org, where you will find more stories, prayers, news articles, and other resources to use as entry points to the work of mission-coworkers and global partners.



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Week One: Community

Focus Scripture:
Philemon 1:4-7 (NIV)

I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, because I hear about your love for all his holy people and your faith in the Lord Jesus. I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ. Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the Lord's people.

Something to Think About

Philemon is one of the shortest epistles written by the Apostle Paul. It addresses Philemon, a wealthy Christian and a leader in the Colossian church. Paul writes this letter from prison, appealing on behalf of Onesimus, a runaway slave who has since become a Christian. The letter serves not only as a personal appeal for reconciliation between Philemon and Onesimus but also as a profound illustration of Christian forgiveness, love, and the transformative power of the Gospel. Philemon 4-7 sits within the broader appeal Paul makes to Philemon, highlighting the themes of faith, love, and Christian fellowship.




In verse 6, Paul speaks of Philemon’s “partnership” in the faith, using the Greek word *koinonia*, which denotes a deep fellowship and sharing among believers. Paul’s prayer is that Philemon’s active faith would be effective, implying that it should have a powerful and tangible impact, particularly in recognizing “every good thing” that Christians share in Christ. This underscores the notion that true faith is not passive but actively contributes to the growth and understanding of Christian virtues.

Paul’s focus on effectiveness suggests that Philemon’s faith should manifest in practical, godly actions, especially in the context of his relationship with Onesimus. The word *koinonia* also implies mutual benefit and sharing, pointing to the Christian calling to support one another in love and generosity. Paul thus urges Philemon to see Onesimus not just as a former slave but as a brother in Christ, calling for a radical rethinking of societal norms as a result of the Gospel.

In verse 7, Paul commends Philemon for his love, which has brought “great joy and encouragement” to Paul and “refreshed the hearts of the Lord’s people.” This statement highlights Philemon’s character as someone who lives out his faith in practical ways, making his home and resources available for the benefit of others.

Paul’s commendation serves as both an encouragement and a subtle prompt for Philemon to continue demonstrating this love, particularly in how he responds to Onesimus. By refreshing others, Philemon exemplifies Christ’s love, setting a standard for Christian fellowship that transcends social and cultural barriers.

A community is based on the enduring fellowship of members of the Trinity—the three work harmoniously to meet our physical and spiritual needs—refreshing our lives daily. Paul requests Philemon to “refresh his heart” (v. 20) through forgiving and reconciling with Onesimus, who has transformed into the image of Christ by accepting the gospel. When Christians forgive each other, we refresh our hearts because reconciliation is vertical (between God and human beings) and horizontal (between fellow human beings). How many hearts are we refreshing? Think of some Christians worshipping at the



same congregation but not greeting each other. Some even change directions because their supposed “enemy” is coming. Can we refresh each other’s hearts by forgiving and reconciling because God reconciled us through Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit?

CONSIDER THIS

What does *koinonia* mean to you?

How does the Philemon text enrich your own understanding of how the Christian community can lift each other up?

DISCIPLES AT WORK

Mission co-workers who serve with Global Ministries practice the value of community. At Kgolagano College in Gaborone, Botswana, mission co-worker Paul Chimhungwe works to equip inmates with Christian leadership skills as they prepare to leave prison. This is part of the reintegration program that involves prison officials, the police, traditional leadership in the village, and faith-based organizations. The initiative is based on the African adage, “It takes a village to raise a child.” The entire community is involved in reintegrating and rehabilitating people who have served time in prison. Read a story of an inmate who was a part of this program in this article:

<https://www.globalministries.org/leader-formation-at-kgolagano-college/>

IN YOUR OWN CONTEXT

What does nurturing community look like in your ministry setting? Why does it matter?

How can you encourage *koinonia* in your congregation, neighborhood, town, nation, or the world? What practices might you develop to encourage deeper *koinonia*?

FOR ALL AGES & ABILITIES

Explain the process of “sistering” as explained by Glennon Doyle in the blog post and video found here: <https://www.saltproject.org/progressive-christian-blog/2016/1/8/the-best-part-of-life-by-glennon-doyle-melton>

Then, provide building stations where folks can build structures using sistering techniques to make a stronger structure. Celebrate the strength in community and “sistering” each other.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We come as a community to give you glory because you invite us into relationship.

All: God, we celebrate our relationship with you and each other.

Leader: We came as a community because you transform us into your image.

All: We accept that transformation is a divine gift from you.

Leader: Refresh our hearts, O Lord.

All: May we encourage one another.

PRAYER

My dear living God, I praise you for giving us a community of siblings in faith. Holy One, we share in gratitude for our community. For our community known and unknown. For your children known and unknown. Regardless of where folks may live, how folks may worship, or what languages folks may speak, we recognize that we are one community through you. We celebrate that you invite us into a spirit of ubuntu, recognizing our interdependence with one another. Help us to honor this spirit. Help us to embrace your full community. Help us to embody koinonia. In your loving and holy name we pray, Amen





Week Two: Mutuality

Focus Scripture:

1 Corinthians 12:12-27 (NIV)

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable




*are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, **but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.** If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.*

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

Something to Think About

The inhabitants of Corinth, its violent history, the location of the city, and the values of the society are some of the things which shaped the issues that were part of the early church. Corinth was initially inhabited by the Phoenicians, who self-identified as Canaanites. Their land and culture was Canaan. The Greeks renamed the city Corinth when they controlled the land. Corinth had many natural resources, arable land, harbors and it was positioned between two seas. This made Corinth an attractive city because of its accessibility for trade; people came from all over to the markets in Corinth.



The infant church we read about in 1 Corinthians was established in a city that had a brutal history. The Roman conquest was taking place throughout Europe and North Africa. In 146 BCE, Romans invaded Mesopotamia (ancient Greece). The Romans took control of Corinth and totally destroyed the infrastructure. One cannot fathom the level of brute force not only on the physical city but also its inhabitants. The Romans committed genocide by killing all the men and enslaving the women and the children. Could this have possibly been the first genocide in history?

The decimated population needed people to rebuild, and many of those who rebuilt Corinth came from either outside Corinth, or the outer sections mostly comprising of farming communities. In this time, we see the emerging of divisions. Communities lived separated from each other and had no relationships with anyone other than those who were like them. They lived in the same city, but they had no effect on each other.

The early church converts were from a diverse community that lived in Corinth. The community included, converted slaves, converted slave owners, converts from various Pagan traditions, and converts from the Jewish synagogues.

The composition of the early church was diverse on many different levels. The gulf between the rich and the poor was visible within the society. This divided community can be seen even in the early church and its leadership. The Romans and the Greeks prided themselves on rhetoric, the able to speak with eloquence. The leaders that mastered this skill, alongside mastery of the dominant languages, were preferred opposed to others.

The Apostle Paul's letter to the infant church brings the very essence of their new faith to their attention. The centrality of their faith is the call to mutuality, with Christ being the head, and the church as the body of Christ. Is this possible with such vast differences? It's not easy to give up privileges and unroot the toxicity of "othering" - to reevaluate what society has taught them regarding those who are more important vs those who are least important in society. But through the Spirit of God working in us, transformation is possible. This is what brings collaboration, understanding, mutuality and celebration of the different parts of the Body of Christ. 13

CONSIDER THIS

What are some of the parallels in the community of Corinth with your community?

What are the issues that prevent mutuality in your context?

DISCIPLES AT WORK

Global Ministries is committed to practicing mutuality and celebrating the body of Christ with its many different parts. Mutuality of the body of Christ, as Paul writes in this passage, gives us the sight to see the world in a different way. It gives us ears to hear, and it opens our hearts to each other. Mutuality recognizes that there is strength in coming together to transform the world.

Global Ministries partners regularly show us the meaning and beauty of mutuality. For example, there have been instances in which Palestinian partners have heard about a school shooting or senseless gun violence in the USA, and planted a tree in Palestine in memory of each person who lost their life in an act of solidarity. This act of planting a tree for those who lost their lives is deeply rooted in their theological, cultural, and spiritual understandings and the understanding that we all connected to each other. The loss of a person due to gun violence is not just an American loss, a communal loss, or a familial loss. It is a loss for the world. The planting of a tree is to perpetuate the person's life. The individual might not be with us, but their tree contributes to the whole world.

IN YOUR OWN CONTEXT

How has your congregation lived out what it means to be the body of Christ in your community, your state/province, or the world?

FOR ALL AGES & ABILITIES

With children or the full congregation, sing "Dem Bones" and touch the different parts of the body as you mention them in the song. Use this as an example of how the parts of the body are connected, just as members of the body of Christ are connected to each other with Christ as our head.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Note: be intentional about inviting those who speak different languages and/or in different accents to help lead in this call to worship.

Leader: We come this morning as the body of Christ, with Christ being the head.

#1 We are the neck. (Said in a different language)

All: We are all members of Christ's body.

#2: We are the shoulders. (Different language)

All: We are all members of Christ's body.

#3: We are the arms. (In English with an accent)

All: We are all members of Christ's body.

#4: We are the thumb. (Said in the language the church uses to communicate)

All: We are all members of Christ's body.

Leader: As members of God's body, with many different tongues, gifts, functions, ways of thinking and being in this world, let us worship God.

PRAYER

Creator God, you are the architect of the human body. Your redeeming love is the connective tissues that binds the body of Christ together. We sometimes forget that we are one body, and we revert to the ways of the world – celebrating sinful division instead of holy inclusion. Help us to remember that we belong to you and each other. In Christ's holy name, Amen.






Week Three: Justice

Focus Scripture:
Isaiah 10:1-2 (NIV)

*Woe to those who make unjust laws,
to those who issue oppressive decrees,
to deprive the poor of their rights
and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people,
making widows their prey
and robbing the fatherless.*

Something to Think About

At the heart of justice is love. Love gives life in full. Love smiles at abundance and is uncomfortable with fractions. John 10:10 (NIV) states, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." Similarly, Psalm 37:27-29 (NIV) reminds us, "Turn from evil and do good; then you will dwell in the land forever. For the Lord loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones. Wrongdoers will be completely destroyed; the offspring of the wicked will perish. The righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever."



At the heart of injustice are deception and indifference. Indifference makes the perpetrator of injustice feel nothing because all that matters is their selfish interest. Deception is a tactic used to make one content with an inferior alternative. It is a strategy of robbery, one that kills—even if softly. Deception denies wholeness and abundance. This passage from Isaiah warns us of the dangers of injustice.

God is just, and God's justice manifests in the fullness of life. Psalm 146:7-9 echoes Isaiah: "He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets prisoners free, the Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless (parentless) and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked." Because God brings abundance, God simultaneously dispels deception. Delivering life in full takes a continuous exorcism of deceit.

Christians then become agents of God's justice. This role has often been misconstrued as militant, which aligns with certain personality types in the justice space. This faulty perception has weakened the opportunity and capacity for justice, making it seem like a risky practice because it involves confrontation. This has led some to believe that justice is a calling only for some instead of all.

But while justice may require confrontation, it demands compassion first. Every compassionate person gravitates toward the realm of justice. Establishing, sowing, and restoring justice is the responsibility of every Christian. It ranks right alongside prayer, giving, worship, and other key practices. While many practices are shared, liberating others is not always listed as a standard Christian practice. Communities will experience increasing abundance when every Christian embraces their liberator responsibility.

CONSIDER THIS

Why does justice matter? What does it mean for Christians to be agents of justice?

Is there a difference between God's justice and the way "justice" is popularly understood in our culture?

DISCIPLES AT WORK

In Bogota, Columbia, Global Ministries is at work alongside the Christian Centre for Justice, Peace and Nonviolent Acton (JUSTAPAZ). In Colombia, one significant problem facing young adults is the lack of opportunity after finishing high school. The aftermath is devastating - many young people who finish high school are left vulnerable to armed actors and illegal informal economies. The population is also affected by the high costs of basic goods, the lack of local production in the gardens and in the raising of animals, and insufficient access to healthcare and education. JUSTAPAZ seeks to respond to all of this.

We invite you to read more about the justice work of the church in Columbia through JUSTAPAZ, as described by mission co-workers Alex Maldonado-Lizardi and Xiomara Cintron-Garcia:

<https://www.globalministries.org/repairing-gaps-repopulating-destroyed-places/>

IN YOUR OWN CONTEXT

What justice needs and concerns are present in your community?

What global justice concerns matter to your congregation?

How can you seek to be partners in God's justice by acting locally and globally?

FOR ALL AGES & ABILITIES

Print out the "[Declaration of Recommitment to Justice](#)" document for people to sign and display somewhere at home or work for them to see often. Have a member of the congregation act as a judge to "certify" the signed declarations and/or even have a wax seal or stamp of approval that people can add to their declarations after the service.

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We have gathered not as spectators or bystanders.

All: We come today, as co-conspirators with God. As actors for justice.

One: We hear God's call to be the liberative body of Christ in this world.

All: May God's peace and justice be known throughout the world.

PRAYER

God, we thank you for your call to justice and acknowledge that we have often fallen short of responding to that call. We know that justice often requires discomfort, and we prefer to be comfortable. Help us to become friends with discomfort in the name of justice. Help us to stretch ourselves and find new ways of being better neighbors and allies. Help us to pray with our actions for your kingdom come. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.





Week Four: Peace

Focus Scripture:
Matthew 5:9 (3-10) (NIV)

*Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.*

*Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.*

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.*

*Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.*

*Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.*

***Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.***

*Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*


Something to Think About

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.” Matthew 5:9 is, of course, in the heart of the Beatitudes, preached by Jesus as part of the Sermon on the Mount. The statements were revolutionary for its time and continue to be revolutionary. The “blessed are” statements are often as the opposite of who society says are “blessed.” But Jesus shares God’s vision of who is blessed and peacemakers are among them.

Peace can be defined in several different ways. Sometimes peace is understood to be the presence of harmony and the absence of conflict like a calm pool with no ripples of disturbance. Peace work can also be active: strategically working to resolve conflict and work for peace. The work of peacebuilding, as exemplified by many Global Ministries partners working in areas of conflict around the world, is to actively work to build relationship across lines of difference, work to resolve injustice in nonviolent ways and to seek to address unjust structures and systems that lead to conflict and violence.

To be a peacemaker is to be one who contributes to these kinds of peace. In even simpler terms, it is acting in ways that enable God’s people and creation to live a life free from violence in any form.

At Global Ministries, we name that the peace we are seeking is “just peace.” The term has come to identify the concept that true peace is more than simply the absence of conflict. To seek a just peace means we must also seek wholeness and reconciliation, as conveyed in the biblical concept of shalom. Whether called salaam, shanti or paz, a just peace means we must address issues of human security as well as global security, of powerlessness, marginalization, and desperate want as much as national interest or private wealth.



Former Global Ministries Mission Co-worker in the Africa Region, Bosela Eale, shares, “In a world that is ugly with violence and hate, Jesus sends us as peacemakers. We aren’t given the choice of whether or not we would like to be peacemakers, and we certainly aren’t given the choice of what kind of world we would like to live in. As bad as things maybe, this is the only world we have and if we are going to be true to our Christ, we must be peacemakers.”

CONSIDER THIS

How is peace different from justice? How are they similar? How are they related?

What does the term “just peace” mean to you? Can you think of an example of peace that is not just?

Where might peacemaking be vital in our world today?

DISCIPLES AT WORK

There are many causes of poverty, but in many cases, there are injustices in the distribution of resources. A vibrant church works to advocate for peace and sharing justice with those who do not have access to fairness without violence.

Mission co-workers Nishan and Maria Bakalian serve in Lebanon, a country that has experienced violence and many obstacles to peace. Global Ministries partners in Lebanon, including Haigazian University, have found active and creative ways to work for peace and call for an end to violence. Learn more about this holy peacebuilding work:

<https://www.globalministries.org/for-the-world-so-loved/>

IN YOUR OWN CONTEXT

How is your community actively being peacemakers in the world? How might you expand your peacemaking activities?

Who in your community, nation, or world might be experiencing violence?

What are concrete ways that you might contribute to peacemaking with them?

FOR ALL AGES & ABILITIES

Create two spaces in the sanctuary where people can write on post it notes and stick them to a wall. For one wall, ask folks to name individuals, communities, nations, etc. who may be experiencing violence or conflict. For the other wall, ask folks to share actions that can help to foster peace in the home, neighborhood, community, state/province, nation, and world. Encourage folks to look at both walls as physical representations of the need for peacemaking.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We pray for peace between all your children, O God, regardless of race, nationality, sexuality, language, age, gender expression, ability, or political affiliation.

All: God give us peace and help us to accept each other as God's creation.

Leader: God, help us see your image in each person we meet, and in those we may never meet.

All: Your children all deserve to live a life free of violence. Help us to be your peacemakers, sharing your vision for justice and peace for your creation.

PRAYER

O God, we know that there are so many desperate for peace. We also know that we have not always lived up to our role as your peacemakers. We have sometimes fallen short of living in your call to cultivate peace. Help us to strengthen our commitment to peace and peacemaking. Help us to better understand our siblings in need of peace, and to be open to ways to come alongside in peacemaking processes. We are so grateful that you continue to call your world to peace and that you continue to accompany us in peacemaking. Help us to remember that we are not alone in this work and that you are with us in each phase of our journey. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.





Week Five: Presence

Focus Scripture:
Romans 12:9-18 (NIV)

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

Something to Think About

What do we owe each other?


This is a big question that whole books have been written about – namely “What We Owe To Each Other” by TM Scanlon. You may recognize this philosopher and his concept of “contractualism” from the wonderful, thought-provoking show, “The Good Place.” However, this short passage from the Apostle Paul in the book of Romans can also offer us some answers.

In the passage, Paul says, “Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor.” You’ll notice that the word “love” is in there twice – but in the original Greek text, Paul used three different terms for love. He includes the word for unconditional/self-sacrificing love, another word for familial love, and another word for neighborly love. So, love, in almost all of its forms, is central to what Paul is saying. What do we owe each other? First and foremost, unconditional, self-sacrificing, familial, neighborly love.

Further on in the passage, Paul continues, “Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be arrogant, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.”

So, what do we owe each other? From what Paul shares, we owe each other love, hospitality, community, empathy, humility, honor, and peace.

While Paul wrote this to the church in Rome, he didn’t write solely with the Roman church in mind. As David J. Bosch states in his incredible book “Transforming Mission,” Paul understood, “A concern (for others) has to be extended far beyond the borders of the local community for, although



‘ekklesia’ (church) in Paul usually refers to the local congregation, the wider fellowship is always presupposed. Hospitality, therefore, has to be offered to people from other regions.”

To be clear, Paul’s words here are... a pretty tall order. It’s unlikely that many read this scripture passage and channel their inner Elle Woods saying, “What, like it’s hard?” No. It is difficult. But it is possible. Through our daily actions and working together, we can embody the life that Paul describes. We must be willing to be present with one another in body and spirit, regardless of geographical divisions. We must be willing to work alongside each other, celebrating joys, and mourning sorrows together. We must show up for one another.

CONSIDER THIS

Going through Paul's words, what actions are you embodying? What could you change to better embody Paul's words?

What do you think we owe each other? What other scriptures guide your thinking on this question?

DISCIPLES AT WORK

Presence is a core value cherished by Global Ministries and practiced by its mission co-workers as they strive daily to live as God's servants, sharing the Good News. Mission co-workers are present with global partners and their communities through moments of joy, success, and challenge. One example of this is mission co-worker, Elena Huegel, who has worked in a variety of settings throughout Latin America and the Caribbean on trauma healing work. Read a story of gratitude shared by participants in these trauma healing workshops: <https://www.globalministries.org/a-time-for-gratitude/>

IN YOUR OWN CONTEXT

How does your congregation currently engage in ministries of presence? In your congregation, community, state/province, and world?

How can your congregation engage more deeply in ministries of presence?

FOR ALL AGES & ABILITIES

For a children's moment, focus on verse 15: Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Have kids act out this verse by splitting them into two groups. The first group will act joyful and then the second group will watch them and also act joyful. Then, the first group will act sad and the second group will watch them and act sad, too. Explain that this verse basically means that we should be there for one another. Help kids and the congregation to memorize this verse.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: God, your presence is awesome in our lives, and we give you glory.

All: God, may you continue living in us and reminding us that we are your children.

Leader: God, your presence assures us that you are there for us in joy and difficulties.

All: Knowing you are there for us in every situation is refreshing.

Leader: God, help us be present with our siblings around the world, as you are present with us.

All: May we rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep.

PRAYER

Holy one, we pray that you continue manifesting your presence in our lives. May we trust that you weep and celebrate with us. Give us the courage to step out boldly in faith and be present with our neighbors known and unknown, near and far. Remind us that ministries of presence are valuable and holy. Remind us that our presence is enough and we do not always need to get caught up in “doing.” Gather us together as your children, that we may love and support one another. In Christ’s name we pray, Amen.



For more information about the work of Global Ministries,
visit www.globalministries.org.

For more information about the Proclamation Project, including other sermon
series resources like this one, visit www.disciples.org/preaching.

