

Liturgical elements

“To retrieve one’s own power and dignity”

Introduction

In this presentation you will get to know a few liturgical elements designed to assist people in retrieving their sense of power and dignity that might have been robbed from them as a result of violence and abuse. The liturgies are based on symbolic acts and can be put together and adjusted to fit different liturgical settings.

The liturgies are developed at The Church Resource center Against Violence and Sexual Abuse in Norway, in an ongoing process involving abuse survivors and professionals.

L: Liturgist

C: Congregation

R: Reader

Liturgical elements

Words of entry

L: In God, our Creator’s, Holy name – a room is prepared for us.

Symbolic act - Kyrie

1. Tree of Hope / Broken glass

R: So much is broken, so much is destroyed.

People have done damage.

L: Here are pieces of broken glass, symbol of what is destroyed in life.

Help yourself to pieces of broken glass.

C: Let not what is broken be destroyed any more.

Let us grow and live.

R: God – so many have trampled on and not respected borders.

People have done wrong.

L: Here are small bushes of chaos made by wire, symbol of what gets chaotic in life, when borders are not respected.

Help yourself to wire from the bushes of chaos.

C: Let not what is broken be destroyed any more.

Let us grow and live.

R: What was broken and destroyed was not recognized.

People have failed.

P: Here is a tree – a tree of life, a tree for growth and possibilities, a tree of hope.

If we want, we may put pieces of broken glass and wire from the bushes of chaos together. We may fasten it to the tree of hope, as a wish for life and growth also for what is broken and destroyed.

C: Let not what is broken be destroyed any more.
Let us grow and live.

Music during the symbolic act

2. Cry

R: Why?

How could anyone put out all the stars on my heaven?

Nobody.

No one left.

No one who saw.

No one who watched.

No words.

No meaning.

No God?

With all of me

I am

surrounded by all I can't understand.

Can I name evil?

Can I endure?

Can I hope?

God, I do not let go of you.

C: Kyrie eleison, kyrie eleison.

Kyrie eleison, have compassion

R: God, listen to my voice when I complain!

Protect my life against what frightens me! (Psalms 64:2)

My sighs is my only food,
my groans pour out like water.

Whatever I fear comes true.

Whatever I dread befalls me.

For me, there is no calm, no peace. (Job 3:24-26)

C: Kyrie eleison, kyrie eleison.

Kyrie eleison, have compassion.

R: Wake up God! Why do you sleep?
Wake up! Why do you hide your face?
Rise up and come to our help.
In your faithfulness, deliver us. (Psalms 44:24-27)

Before you bless us, we do not let go of you, God.

C: Kyrie eleison, kyrie eleison.
Kyrie eleison, have compassion.

Creed

L: Our lives belong to Gods history. Everything that happens touches God.
Let us therefore share our faith.

C: I believe in a God who comes to people.

I believe in Jesus who shares our conditions.

I believe in the Holy Spirit who protects the hope in us.

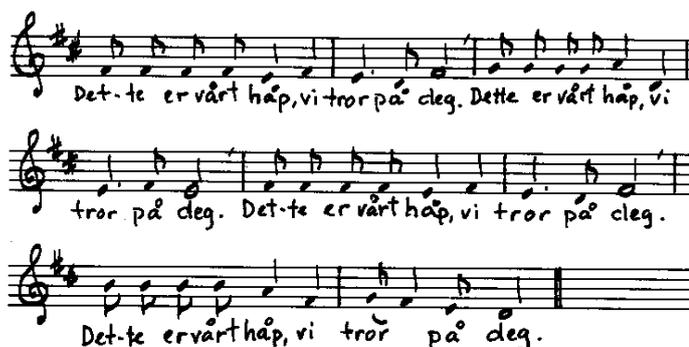
I believe in a God who stands to see, stands to know.

I believe in Jesus who strengthens what is good in life.

I believe in the Holy Spirit who gives freedom of acting and resting.

We believe in a church that needs to listen to our voice.

L: God creates new possibilities of respectful care and love.



This is our hope, we believe in you.

This is our hope, we believe in you.

Symbolic act - Prayer

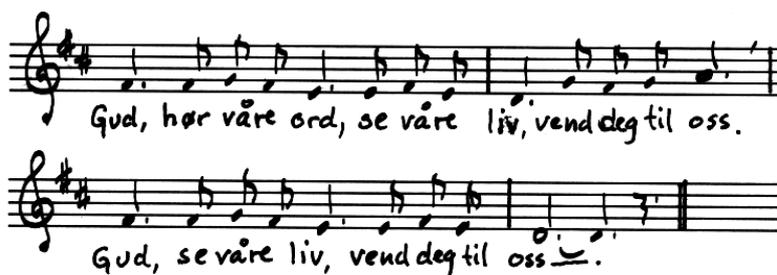
Lighting of candles

L: Here is our place. To this place we may come with everything that is ours.

If we want, we may light candles and mark the candles in our own way, with colours of our own choice. In this way we may make visible some of what is ours.

Choose from wax stripes in different colours and mark your candle with the stripes.
Music during lighting of candles

C: When we approach you God, receive our lives. Look at the visible and the invisible we carry to you. Here are our lights and our prayers. Amen.



God, hear our words, see our lives, turn to us.
God, see our lives, turn to us.

Symbolic act - Receiving

1. Meal – Blessed bread for the road

R: Listen to what the 1st Book of Kings says about Elijah in the desert:

Elijah was afraid and ran for his life, he went a days journey into the desert.

He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life." Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep.

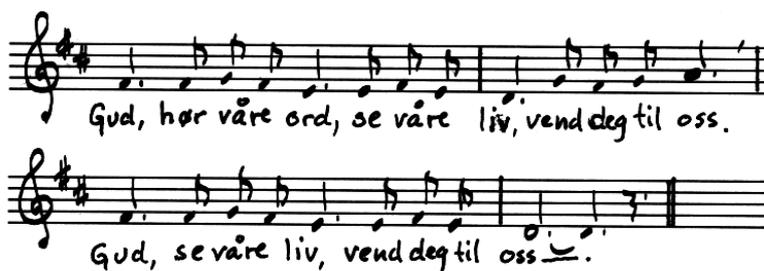
All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat."

He looked around, and there by his head was a cake of bread, and a jar of water.

He ate and drank and then laid down again.

The angel of the Lord came back and said "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you."

So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled until he reached the mountain of God.



God, hear our words, see our lives, turn to us.

God, see our lives, turn to us.

L: Here is bread. As Elijah got bread, we may also get bread.
Blessed be this bread, God's good gift to us.
Receive blessed bread as nourishment for the body, as strength on the road.
Blessed bread that gives power and courage.

Words of distribution
Blessed bread that gives power and courage.

Music during the meal

2. Act of dignity - Pearls

Listen to the prophet Isaiah:
In your darkness I shall give you treasures
In hidden places you shall find wealth.
I am your God who call you by your name.

L: Here is a collection of treasures, many kinds of pearls.
What creates the pearl is something alien and irritating that the mussel
wants to push away. But every pearl is created in darkness and becomes
a pearl in the closed mussel.
When the pearl is found it has become a treasure.
When the light shines on the pearls they reflect Gods heaven.
It is a symbol of freedom and dignity.

L: We send forward a box with many kinds of pearls.
Choose the pearl you want and then give the box to the person next to you.

Words of distribution:
In your darkness I shall give you treasures.

Music during the act of dignity

Blessings

Blessing 1 (dignity)

L: Receive the blessing.
The God who embraces us with respectful love and care.
The God who gives dignity and freedom.
That God bless us now and for ever.
Amen.

Blessing 2 (meal)

L: Receive the blessing.

The God who embraces us with respectful love and care.

The God who in the blessed bread gives us power and courage.

That God bless us now and for ever.

Amen.

The material can be used freely when crediting the source.

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