**Liturgical Resources for Churches**

**Acknowledging Family Violence**

Compiled by Mothers Union

**Opening Prayer**

May God give us eyes to recognise abuse where it exists. May God give us a heart to reach out in compassion.

May God give us courage and resolve to make a difference wherever we are.

May God bless you and nurture your head, heart and hands

as we invite God to guide and comfort us as He gently directs our paths.

*Source unknown, adapted for ‘Equipping The Church to take Action to End Domestic Abuse’, 2022*

**Opening Prayer and Confession**

Loving Lord,

who came to proclaim justice, make us bold to speak out truth

and break the power of silence.

Loving Lord,

who came to minister mercy make us agents of compassion

to release the oppressed from fear.

Merciful and loving God,

forgive us when we have closed our eyes to the sufferings of others;

when we have stayed silent in the face of abuse and oppression;

when we have declined to challenge unacceptable actions and attitudes.

Take away our selfishness and fill us with new resolve

to proclaim justice and mercy in the name of Christ.

Amen

[16 days 2021 - Worship and prayer resource.docx (live.com)](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.mothersunion.org%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fresources%2Fpublic%2F16%2520days%25202021%2520-%2520Worship%2520and%2520prayer%2520resource.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)

………

Merciful and loving God,

We confess our wrong doing, our wrong thinking and our hurtful words.

We recognise that abuse imprisons and oppresses people.

We recognise that silence, in the face of abuse, is not an acceptable option.

Stir us with a resolve not to be silent.

To speak out against the abuse of power; especially in our homes.

To speak up for those who have been pushed down in any way.

To speak to the needs of those who are suffering at the hands of another.

We pray in the name of Jesus Christ,

who extended his forgiving hands to all. Amen

*Restored Church Pack*

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Loving Lord,

who has called us to be the body of Christ,

make us ready to act as his hands and feet in the world.

to raise awareness of what must be challenged,

and to address the plight of the vulnerable. Amen

Forgive us, Lord,

who call ourselves your own but daily cause you pain,

who see someone in need and walk across the road,

hear about injustice and fail to say a word.

Forgive us, Lord,

who call ourselves your own.

Renew our hearts, our souls and minds;

Strengthen our faith and make us a people who are your hands, your feet and voice

within this world. Amen

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………

Lord of justice and mercy,

draw us close to those who hurt.

Let us reach out our hands in your name to share the sorrow and lessen the pain.

Lord of justice and mercy

lengthen our strides to march for good.

Clothe our feet with your living Word

to trample the works of unrighteousness.

Lord of justice and mercy

knit us together as the body of Christ

that we may speak out with one accord for the kingdom of God to prevail.

Amen

………

Forgive us Lord

when we hear neither your plea,

nor the cries of your people.

Free us Lord

from the fears that bind us,

or from any sense of powerlessness.

Fill us Lord

with your dream of a just world

and the tenacity to keep going in playing our part,

in your name, Amen

*Maggie Lunan*

………

God our Creator, we thank you for our shared calling as your children, male and female together, to care for all of creation.

Forgive us when we fail to notice or to question that which is less than good: when we condone or perpetuate violence of any kind.

Fill us with your Spirit of wisdom and help us to see the world through your eyes of compassion and justice.

Give us courage to challenge and to change,

In the name of Jesus Christ our Liberator, Amen.

*Erica Wishart*

………

**A Final blessing**

God is waiting to be gracious to you,

will rise up to show mercy to you,

and is a God of justice.

Go out into the world to see, listen, and speak out, free those held captive,

and provide healing and hope to the broken.

And may the God of peace bless you,

so that you might be a blessing to others.

Amen

*Rev. Diane Wildow* [*www.mnys.org*](http://www.mnys.org)

**A Franciscan Blessing**

May God bless you with holy anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may tirelessly work for justice, freedom, and peace among all people.

May God bless you with the gift of tears to shed with those who suffer from pain, rejection, or the loss of all that they cherish, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and transform their pain into joy.

May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that

you really CAN make a difference in this world, so that you are able, with God's grace, to do what others claim cannot be done. Amen

*Franciscan blessing*

**Benediction**

May the God of Eve teach you to dance.

May the God of Hagar bring you comfort in the desert.

May the God of Miriam bring companions to you when you struggle. May the God of Deborah teach you courage for your battles.

May the Christ who knew Mary and Martha show you the way of balance. May the Christ who healed the bent-over woman heal your pain.

May the Christ of Mary Magdala send you out to proclaim your story.

In the name of Christ who is the memory, hope and authority of the future.

*Adapted from a worship created by Jane Stranz for the World Council of Churches*

**A Closing Prayer and Blessing**

May God give us eyes

to recognise abuse where it exists.

May God give us a heart

to reach out in compassion.

May God give us courage and resolve

to make a difference wherever we are.

And the Blessing of God Almighty, the Holy Trinity,

guide our steps today, this week and always.

Go in peace and in resolve. Amen

*Source unknown*

**Relevant Bible Verses**

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| God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good. *Genesis 1:27, 31* |
| The Lord hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles. The Lord is close to the broken-hearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed. *Psalm 34:17-18* |
| Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure ustice for those being crushed. *Proverbs 31:8* |
| Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God.  I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.  *Isaiah 41:10* |
| Jesus said: Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. *Matthew 25: 40* |
| He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the Lord’s favour has come. *Luke 4:18-19* |
| Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and love your neighbour as yourself.  *Luke 10:27* |
| Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. *John 3:20* |
| The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come in order that you might have life — life in all its fullness*. John 10:10* |
| There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. *Galatians 3:28* |
| Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.  *1 John 3:18* |