# Call and Vocation: Prayers for Use in Worship

*These prayers can be used to celebrate Vocation Sunday,
or in any worship service in which the theme is appropriate.*

## Lighting the Christ Candle

You assure us, Jesus, that wherever two or three are gathered in your name, you are there.
We light this candle to remind ourselves and to celebrate your constant presence.
May we always seek your guiding light in our lives.

*–or–*

“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:14–16)

We light the Christ candle, reminding us that God’s light shines among us
and we are called to carry that light into the world.

## Call to Worship

We gather together in worship and praise.
 **Praise to you, God!**Praise to you for this morning.
 **Praise to you, God!**Praise to you for the great commission: to make disciples, to baptize, to teach.
 **Praise to you, God!**Praise to you for always lighting our way.
 **Praise to you, God!**

*–or–*

Come together. Be present. Sing loudly.
Today is our day to shout loud hosannas and celebrate God’s call for us.
As we worship together, help us to discern God’s will for us this day.
For in worship, we offer praise, and in reflection, we will find God’s message for us.

## Opening Prayer

Generous and loving God,
who provides water in the desert,
 wine at a wedding, fish when there are no bites,
 bread when we are hungry, and answers when we are confused,
be with us this morning, as you are always.
Blow through us, that we might sense your presence.
Wrestle with us, that we might discern your path.
Love us that we might become who you call us to be. Amen.

*–or–*

Generous and loving God,
 help us to receive your call for us,
 help us to feel your presence with us,
 help us to discern the path you would have us follow.
We come together, opening our hearts to each other,
 that we might recognize your work in our neighbours,
 that we might appreciate all the blessings that we have received,
 that we might celebrate your grace and be so changed by it,
 that we might go forth into the world,
 shining your light and love on those we meet.
Bless us in this time of worship that we might carry forth blessings into the world.

## Prayer of Confession

Sometimes,
 **I think I have all the answers.**Sometimes,
 **I ignore feelings of unease.**Sometimes,
 **I forget that you are active in my life, my calling, purpose.**Sometimes,
 **I don’t want to listen, I don’t want to act, I don’t want to serve.**Forgive us for these times.
 **Help us to respond to all that we are, all that you have made us,
 with love, with abundance, with care.**

*–or–*

Each morning we rise,
 convinced that we know what we are supposed to do,
 of who we are supposed to be.
We confess that we sometimes convince ourselves that we are all we need.
That we know all we need to know.
That we have done everything we could and can.
We give up on new beginnings and unknown pathways
 because we are afraid,
 because we are comfortable,
 because we don’t want to risk all that we have.
Forgive us for believing that we don’t need you, O God.
Forgive us for not listening or hearing.
Forgive us for the times when we just want to do what we know,
 and not answer your call to new pastures.

## Words of Assurance

Be assured, people of God,
when we fail, God does not;
when we avoid, God seeks us out;
when we forget, God calls us back;
when we disengage, God builds relationship.
God forgives you, God loves you,
and God calls you to new life, again and again. Amen.

*–or–*

Be assured that God is always with us.
Even when we don’t listen or turn away,
 God remains with us,
 waiting for us to turn back,
 to open our eyes and ears to God’s will for our lives.
Be assured that even when things seem unclear or uncertain, God is with us.
Breathe deeply God’s love for us.

## Prayers of the People

Generous and loving God,
we thank you for the many gifts that you have given us.
We thank you for the sunshine and the rain,
 the mountains and the valleys,
 the challenges and the gifts,
 the snow and the flowers.
We are grateful to live in your grace.
We remember those who are struggling this day,
 those close to our hearts,
 those we learn about through the news,
 those we pass on the street and do not know,
 our neighbours sitting beside us this day.
Be with each of them. Help them to know your love and grace.
Help us to recognize your presence among us.
Help us to hear your voice in the busyness of our lives.
Help us to pay attention to your words all week long.
As we make plans, work hard, and enjoy friends and family,
 help us to remember that we have purpose,
 your purpose.
Help us to always be building up your church, Christ’s body in the world.
Help us to support, foster, and create faith communities that love the world.
Asserting that we love our neighbours as we love ourselves,
let us recite A New Creed together as a community of faith…

*–or–*

Thank you for the many blessings that you have bestowed upon us.
Your grace flows around us, even when we cannot feel it.
In celebration, we praise you for all that you have created in this world,
 but we also mourn that this world is not all that it could be.
Although we acknowledge that we need to do more,
 we know we cannot do it alone.

Help us to be the people you would have us be,
 help us to care for our neighbours:
 not just the person next to us in the pew,
 but the people of the world,
 crying out for justice and peace.
Help us to be the people you would have us be,
 help us to love ourselves:
 not so that we can be overconfident or arrogant,
 but so that we might be strong and capable of reaching out,
 taking a position, and making a difference.
Help us to build the world you would have us live in,
 help us to care for creation and your creations:
 not so that we can dominate or fix things we don’t understand,
 but so that we can listen, understand, and help where needed.

We name silently in our hearts the people and places that weigh on us this day. (*Silence*)

Receive our prayers, O Holy One.
Help us to know your Grace, help us to do better,
 and bless the people, places, and things, that we have offered to you.
We pray in Jesus name, Amen.

## Benediction

Go from this place knowing who you are and to whom you belong.
May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you now and forevermore. Amen.

*–or–*

May blessings abound around you this day.
Feeling God’s loving presence among us, let us go forth into the world,
allowing our light to shine on all we meet.

*—Rev. Bronwyn Corlett,
Ministry Recruitment, The United Church of Canada*