



"And when they could not bring [the paralyzed man] to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him..." — Mark 2:3-4 (paraphrased)

CALLS TO WORSHIP

- Leader 1: You have blessed me in so many ways
- Leader 2: Thank you for my eyes
- Group: So that I might see your love in others
- Leader 1: Thank you for my ears
- Group: So that I might know Your word
- Leader 2: Thank you for my mind
- Group: So that I might understand what you desire for my life
- Leader 1: Thank you for my arms and legs
- Group: So that I might use my muscles to work for you
- Leader 2: Thank you for my heart
- Group: So that I can feel your love and share it with others.
- All: I am grateful for my life. Amen

~~ Julie Foster
Director, We Are Able workcamp

Disabilities Awareness Month

March 2011

Inspired by thoughts that came during a joyous Christmas celebration for participants, staff and board members of Lighthouse Vocational Services, an Anabaptist-founded sheltered workshop in New Holland, PA.

One: As we gather for worship, we gather in joy
All: For in our infirmity, we find God is our strength.

One: As we gather for worship, we are comforted
All: That God comes to us at the point of our need.

One: As we gather for worship, we are assured
All: That God comes to ordinary people with extraordinary Good News.

One: As we gather for worship we call upon God's name
All: Trusting that God will be revealed this hour.

One: As we gather for worship, we seek the Good News
All: Believing in the Gospel of Christ and trusting in His way for Abundant life.

*Completed New Years Day, January 1, 2011
David S. Young, Board Member
Lighthouse Vocational Services*

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Leader: Shout to the Lord, all the earth!

All: We raise our voices in joyful praise!

Voice one: What about the shout coming from my autistic child – will you seek to silence our worship?

Leader: Worship the Lord in the beauty of Holiness. Come into God's presence with joyful singing!

All: We raise our voices in joyful praise!

Voice two: I was asked to leave the choir. I am hard of hearing, but I like to sing. What about my voice? Doesn't God want my voice?

Leader: Know that the Lord is God! It is he who has made us! We are his people and the sheep of his pasture!

All: We raise our voices in joyful praise!

Voice three: My family was asked not to come to church anymore. Our severely retarded child was a hindrance to worship. Lord, aren't we your sheep too? May we enter into your presence?

Leader: Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise!

All: We raise our voices in joyful praise.

Voice four: I can't get into the sanctuary. My legs do not work and the church building does not accommodate my wheelchair.

Leader: The Lord is good! God's love endures forever!

All: God's love is for all of us! Let us tear down the barriers and open our hearts and minds to God! Amen.

~~ Cindy Barnum-Steggerda
La Porte Church of the Brethren
St. John's United Church of Christ

Disabilities Awareness Month

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DISABILITIES MINISTRY

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LITANY

In the Midst of Challenges

- One: When I need protection and guidance
and seek deep, abiding rest, I affirm
- All: The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down in green pastures
- One: When I feel anxious and depleted
I am comforted to know that
- All: He leads me beside still waters
He restores my soul
- One: When the direction seems unclear
and I am afraid, I seek God's way and declare that
- All: He leads me in right paths for his name's sake
- One: When my needs seem overwhelming and I
might feel afraid, in faith I find strength to say
- All: Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
- One: When I feel lost and vulnerable
I believe that you will show a sure path
- All: For You are with me, your rod and your staff—
They comfort me.
- One: When some underestimate me and I feel left
out and misunderstood, I need you to heal
my hurts; I thank you for your blessings.

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All: You prepare a table before me in the presence
of my enemies,
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows

One: Rather than be resentful or ungrateful, I discover
so many blessings that in faith I proclaim

All: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life

One: In faith I find that my life is full of God's love;
in Christ I gain perspective and affirm.

All: And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
My whole life long.

*-- David S. Young
Pastor and author*

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CLOSING AFFIRMATION

We are able! I am able!

- I see that all persons are sons and daughters of God.
- I see that we are all different in some way, and I ask that God's love live in me and cast out my fear of others who are different from me.
- I will look for what I have in common with others of all abilities.
- I enjoy life – help me to share my joy with others as we share the freedom to enjoy life's opportunities together.
- I am able! Help me to share my gifts, abilities and strengths with others.
- I will give thanks for God's faithfulness in the midst of our common humanity, trusting in the Lord all the days of my life.

~~ Adapted from an affirmation by Nancy Sollenberger Heisman, former member of the Church of the Brethren General Board; adapted by Heddie Sumner

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