



WORLD YWCA AND WORLD YMCA
WEEK OF PRAYER & WORLD FELLOWSHIP



12-18 NOVEMBER 2023

SEEDS TO BLOSSOMS

CULTIVATING HOPE AND
LOVE IN SOLIDARITY

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A JOINT MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENTS OF WORLD YWCA AND WORLD YMCA

As we prepare to embark on our Week of Prayer and World Fellowship this year, under the theme, ‘Seeds to Blossoms: Cultivating Hope and Love in Solidarity,’ we invite you to reflect on the profound connection that binds us together as part of the global YWCA-YMCA movement and family. We are an assorted garden of individuals, each unique and requiring different care to thrive, much like the various plants we can cultivate, while pushing together toward a brighter future right now and for generations to come.

In our movements, we embrace a diversity of backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives. Just as in a garden, where we can cultivate an array of plants, we encourage you to recognise the beauty and strength that comes from this diversity. Some may require more sunlight, while others flourish in the shade. Some need regular watering, while others thrive with occasional nurturing. Our differences can indeed be our strength; in recognising this, we honoured the essence of intergenerational solidarity and shared leadership that can go beyond any potential barrier.

Much like the gardener who tends to each plant’s specific needs, we can nurture one another by listening, learning, and adapting our support to ensure that every individual within the communities we serve can grow and bloom. By acknowledging and respecting each person’s uniqueness as a human being with human rights, we embody the true spirit of solidarity and contribute to the global garden of peace, justice, and equity.

As we reflect on the journey from seeds to blossoms, let us also remember that the care we provide today may not yield immediate results. Just as a tiny seed takes time to grow into a mighty tree, our efforts in supporting one another may require patience as well as the creation of the right environment. We may plant the seeds of positive change today, and future generations may enjoy the fruits of our labour. But this can be an opportunity for us as individuals and as a global community to learn and adapt to the understanding that our actions today can be the foundation of a more vibrant and inclusive YWCA-YMCA movement tomorrow.

In this Week of Prayer 2023, we invite you to come together in prayer with open hearts, embracing the diversity that enriches our movements. Let us reflect on the gardeners who tend to each other’s needs and can create a safe space and environment where every seed can grow into a beautiful blossom. May this Week of Prayer inspire us to cultivate hope and love, strengthening the bonds that unite us for positive change.

We look forward to our collective reflections, prayers, and actions as we navigate this inspiring journey together.

With warmth and solidarity,

Mira Rizeq
President, World YWCA

Soheila Hayek
President, World YMCA

INTRODUCTION

The vision for a brighter future, marked by justice, peace, reconciliation, and healing, hinges on intergenerational collaboration in our modern world. It demands the transfer of wisdom and a shared commitment to shaping the future.

“Recognising the importance of intergenerational solidarity as the cornerstone for creating a world where ‘justice and peace will embrace each other’ (cf. Psalm 85:10), this year’s Week of Prayer resources are centered on the theme ‘Seeds to Blossoms: Cultivating Hope and Love in Solidarity.’ To illustrate the journey, we’ve drawn upon the metaphor of nurturing a plant, structuring the week’s resources around each phase of the plant’s growth cycle: preparing the soil, sowing the seeds, nurturing with care, being guardians of growth, fostering resilience through pruning, and finally, harvesting the fruits.”

In the true spirit of intergenerational solidarity, most of these resources have been meticulously crafted by pairs of individuals representing different generations and genders. This approach vividly illustrates the powerful force of collaboration. Our intention was deliberate: to harness the insights and wisdom of scholars, activists, clergy, students, and practitioners. This resource is a testament to the wealth of knowledge that stems from practical, real-world experience.

We sincerely hope that these resources serve as a wellspring of inspiration and a source of blessings as you strive to manifest the essence of God’s kingdom on Earth – a world characterized by justice, peace, and boundless joy. We share these resources with the profound understanding that intergenerational solidarity is a lifelong endeavor.

With unwavering hope and a deep sense of humility and gratitude to each of the contributors, we offer these tools, fully cognizant that our pursuit of a brighter future may entail planting the seeds today for trees under whose shade we may never find respite and from whose fruits we may never taste. Yet, we do so with the conviction that these endeavors will bear fruit for the generations that follow.

Rebecca Sangeetha Daniel

Lead Editor



— DAY 1

NOURISHING THE GROUND

WITH HOPE FOR GROWTH

Anne Heikkinen, Doctoral Researcher in Theology and Religious Studies (University of Helsinki), Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland & Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro, Coordinator, Interfaith Cooperation Forum, Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs.

BIBLICAL TEXTS

2 CHRONICLES 7:14

If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

ACTS 4:31-32

When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness. Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common.

INTRODUCTION

The image of “preparing” when cultivating in a land implies tilling the soil to make it fit for planting. It is an image that tells us that anything we want to transform and flourish entails a lot of prior work. Preparation for transformation needs to happen intergenerationally. This means nurturing the next generation, the young people, to take over the task of cultivating the field and work for it to remain healthy so that the cornucopia of a good harvest can nourish society with hope toward continuous growth. The task is difficult because the soil that will have to be worked in the future is hard.

The preparatory work of nourishing the ground is a work to be carried out in partnership. It needs to become a community activity.

CONTEXTUAL BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

2 Chronicles 7:14 is God's answer to Solomon's prayer. King Solomon prayed in the face of the challenges and adversities that his people went through. The answer that God gives Solomon implies that the people had become arrogant and had turned away from God. They were wicked and had totally lost their virtues.

Today, the world is in a similar situation. Humanity's arrogance has brought a myriad of disasters to the people and the Earth. It has invented an imbalanced development that brought the world to the peak of human hubris, resulting in the advent of the Anthropocene.¹ This system that conjoined patriarchy with capitalism exploits and subjugates women, children, and marginalized people, who are fed into the machinery of the empires. The globalization of capital stoked by neoliberalism has excluded these people from participating in the economic processes by denying them just wages and much more from profit sharing. Transforming such a world needs intergenerational actions.

Acts 4 presents the image and model of communal life that can guide us. After prayer and the filling of the Holy Spirit, the early followers of Jesus lived in a way of sharing and oneness. They "shared everything they had" – this implies a lifestyle that is rooted in deep solidarity and interconnectedness of different identities. My joys, successes, and talents are yours, and your sorrows, challenges, and pains are also mine. This story of unity among the community of faith, sharing everything they had, may be regarded in our 21st-century world as too good to be true. Communal life does not always offer a safer space where all people, regardless of age, gender, identity, and disabilities, can be equal. The passage from the book of Acts reveals the enormous power of community and communal life in building a more just and sustainable future. This cannot happen without awareness and intentionality. One of the main reasons for the suffering and imbalance in our world is how human beings have not been inclusive enough but formed hierarchies and pushed some to the margins. This is true also when it comes to youth in the communities.

Today, humanity is entangled with greed. The gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" to use the language of community organising has become deeper and wider. Human lives are even becoming commodities. Working for social transformation is a serious matter that requires a change of values and commitment. It requires people of all ages and identities to engage with each other and in the common call to transform God's world. It demands seeing that children and young people are not only the hopes of the future - they hold a role and impact now. In the just, sustainable community that is one, all the human hierarchies lose their power: we can learn from each other. Young people can be prophetic voices, and older generations can share their wisdom. Everyone must be included

¹ Anthropocene is a word often used to describe a new geological era characterized by human's impact on the Earth.

in the process of intergenerational action in social change for justice and peace.

QUESTIONS/REFLECTION POINTS

1. How can YWCAs and YMCAs encourage each member and their communities to live out the message of 2 Chronicles 7:14 and Acts 4:31-32?
2. In what ways, and to what extent, do the YWCAs and YMCAs study and analyze social situations and campaign for social justice? Are the young people included in these efforts?
3. What plans do you have, as YWCAs and YMCAs, to engage and nurture young people in more in depth study and activities, other than sports, physical fitness, and dole-out activities?

CONTEMPLATIVE ACTION

1. Write a haiku or poem on the theme “Seeds to Blossom: Cultivating Hope and Love in Solidarity”. A haiku is a Japanese poem with a total of seventeen syllables, written in three lines. The first line has five syllables, the second line has seven, and the third, with five syllables.
2. Values clarification exercises and commitment:
 - Make an inventory of the things we do, and use, from the time you wake up to the time you go to bed.
 - In your list, what are the things you do that harm other people, aside from yourself, as well as the Earth? What things can you do without? Write a commitment list and paste it on your mirror to remind you of such commitment every day.
 - If possible, share this exercise with others and think together about how you could commit to the listed goals. How can we form communal structures and guidelines to provide a more just and safer community that can support individuals to maintain a more sustainable lifestyle?

PRAYER OF BLESSING

Triune God, who calls us to Unity, reveals to us how to form communities rooted in solidarity and sharing.

Help us prepare spaces where people can be free from harmful hierarchies, stereotypes, and attitudes.

Open our minds to recognize and understand the perspectives of others and help us to learn from each other. Amen.



— DAY 2

SOWING THE SEEDS OF SOLIDARITY

FOR A FLOURISHING FUTURE

Ester Sakaria, Facilitator at Oniipa Infohut and Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LUCSA) Women Representative and Nicole Ashwood, Programme Executive for the Just Community of Women and Men, World Council of Churches

BIBLICAL TEXTS

CORINTHIANS 3:4-8

“For when one says, “I belong to Paul,” and another, “I belong to Apollos,” are you not all too human? 5 What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. 7 So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. 8 The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and each will receive wages according to their own labor. “

INTRODUCTION

In sowing, we continually nourish the plant and protect it from insects and animals as it begins to grow. There are times that come when a tree is attacked by insects, and the life of this plant will be in danger. The same can happen to a person experiencing challenges and losing focus. Being there for this person - even if the person messed up - provides nourishment and water that can free them from insects. We need to be the friends we want others to be when we are in trouble. We must be the support system for others that we ourselves need. As we ‘plant’ or ‘sow’ into the lives of others, we need to think about what we want to inculcate in others.

When Paul speaks about the relationship between himself, Apollos, and the Corinthian Church, he likens the impact of their teaching to the process of nurturing a plant. Just as seeds need to be sown in the correct soil and watered and given additional nutrients from the sun in order to grow, so did their teachings and mentorship of these leaders had a similar effect on the members of the Corinthian church.

In making that positive stance, Paul sowed seeds of solidarity rather than division. It is the same in our relationships, as the words and deeds of others influence our thoughts and actions. [A survey on self-confidence](#) indicates that 85% of people worldwide struggle with self-esteem issues due to feeling inadequate, unlovable, and/or incompetent. The study also suggests that 75% of high school girls with low self-esteem are likely to be involved in cutting, bullying, smoking, drinking, or disordered eating. With 70% or more teenagers desiring better communication with their parents and [another report indicating that](#) 66% of adults feeling that the absence of someone who believes in them contributes to lowering self-esteem, the business of nurturing and planting is very important. Choosing to plant positively in others increases their self-esteem and creates a solid foundation for their future. Consequently, the task of the YWCA-YMCA movement is to transform the statistics on insecurity so that our communities are able to cope better.

The African Ubuntu philosophy, which means 'I am because we are,' speaks to how we sow in the lives of others. The word ubuntu is part of the Zulu phrase "Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu", which literally means that a person is a person through other people. That is, we need each other in every process of life.² Our relationships must be mutually supportive.

The same applies to mentoring communities. We must stand by and offer support until the person is able to get up on their own feet. Mathew 6:3 says, '3 But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,'. Therefore, when we support each other, we should do it without the expectation of receiving back or getting compliments for our efforts.

Violence continues unabated in our societies nowadays because people are more interested in hearing other people's stories for the sake of gossip rather than offering help. If we shift from this to a support system that is able to walk by the side of a survivor or sexual and gender based violence and not walk behind them or further victimise them, we are, in fact, nourishing others and plowing around them to help them flourish.

In valuing all relationships, we live the Ubuntu philosophy, engendering flourishing communities for the future. We must weed the distractions and negative elements when and where we can, providing support for recovery in times of trial.

God places people in our lives to plant positive seeds and offer nourishment in others' lives individually and collectively. That was what happened when Paul and Apollos encountered the Corinthian community, and that is what the YWCA - YMCA movement aims for. Providing and creating opportunities for young people to grow, exposing them to positive decision-making skills, and offering them leadership role go a long way in helping them become productive leaders as we build better communities this season.

² See [What Does Ubuntu Really Mean? | The Guardian](#).

QUESTIONS/REFLECTION POINTS

1. Who has sown positively in your life? Who and how?
2. In a time of struggle or negativity, WHAT DID YOU DO to help someone else, and in your case, WHO MOTIVATED YOU?
3. How have you helped another person to grow or become a better person?
4. Where did you see God's intervention when negativity was being sown?

CONTEMPLATIVE ACTION

In a space already designated for activities, paste a picture of soil.

Items needed: seeds, soil, sun, water/fertilizer (prepare as cut-outs for use in the activity. You may also prepare a real garden to complement the activity)

1. Identify 2 women/men, 1 older and 1 younger than you, and place their names in the 'soil' as seeds.
2. If they were seeds planted in good soil, what would they need to nurture their potential and bear good fruit? (Mentoring, capacity enhancing, advocacy, safe spaces, counselling, prayer, etc. Let each nurturing action be 'water drops' to be placed above the soil. Words of encouragement = Sunshine.)
3. How often do they need watering/fertilizing as seeds?
4. Consider how you can nurture them through mentoring and encouragement in the short/medium/long term. (This is an individual or group commitment, to nurture someone in the community, schedule the activity, so you can track the progress)
5. Make a plan for watering them as often as needed. Each time you perform an act of nurturing, add a new drop into the soil. (Remember to keep pouring on the sunshine). Notice the changes and see what other nutrients are needed. Keep watering them as you are able.
6. Watch them flourish. Write a thank you note.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

Creating and Sowing God, thank you for giving us this opportunity to evaluate ourselves to see if we are serving as per your wish. Help us to remember with gratitude all those that walked by our side in various paths we pursued in life, and enable us to count the blessings we received through this accompaniment. Amen.



— DAY 3

TENDING WITH CARE

TOWARDS NURTURING ENVIRONMENTS

Elaine Neuenfeldt, Gender Justice Programme Manager, Act Alliance

BIBLICAL TEXTS

GENESIS 24:28

“Then the young woman (Rebekah) ran and told her mother’s household about these things.”

SONG OF SONGS: 3:4

“Scarcely had I passed them,
when I found him whom my soul loves.
I held him and would not let him go
until I brought him into my mother’s house
and into the chamber of her that conceived me.”

SONG OF SONGS: 8:1-2

“O that you were like a brother to me,
who nursed at my mother’s breast!
If I met you outside, I would kiss you,
and no one would despise me.
I would lead you and bring you
into my mother’s house
and into the chamber of the one who bore me.
I would give you spiced wine to drink,
from the juice of my pomegranates.
O that his left hand were under my head
and that his right hand embraced me!”

INTRODUCTION

Creating nurturing environments means creating safe spaces of care that facilitate growth. A safe space is a place to feel whole and safe. Safe spaces can be physical or virtual. It is a place where people can confidently share their experiences without judgment. It is a place where no hand is left un-held and alone - joining hands is a sign of togetherness and communion. Safe spaces are learning sites, allowing moments where wisdom circulates in a dance, and in this space, Intergenerational knowledge is shared. Each person is treated equally and respectfully, with kindness and compassion. Fears are named and faced, not always to overcome, but to recognize and acknowledge them. A safe space is also a place to experience pleasure, joy, and love. Safe spaces will provide what is necessary for people to understand their differences and accept each other as expressions of the Divine - breathing in each one and breathing together the Spirit of Life.

CONTEXTUAL BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION:

This reflection focuses on the mother's house as a safe space to overcome fears. In the Bible, "the mother's house" is an institution that has the same importance as the "father's house." However, the only difference is that there are only a few references to the mother's house in the Bible. It is a place to receive visitors, host a meal, and engage in negotiations regarding marriage or other issues related to the family household. It is not necessarily a physical space, not necessarily related to a biological mother, but a space where intergenerational knowledge is shared and safety and security are experienced. It is where a young woman feels safe to be herself, reflect on what she has learned, and even bring her beloved. It is a source of wisdom from where help can be sought to sustain intergenerational actions. It is a place to get authentic information to make decisions in life.

Here are some of the references to the "mother's house" in the Old Testament:

1 - Genesis 24 narrates the story of how Rebekah, as a young woman, was promised in marriage to Isaac, son of Abraham. Rebekah was drawing water at the well and met the servant sent by Abraham to find a wife for his son, Isaac. The first moment of the conversation was with Rebekah; she was informed about the intention of the visit and received jewels as gifts. Then she ran to her mother's household to tell everyone what was happening to her. After the negotiation takes place with the household, the story continues with the young woman being consulted about her will. The brother and the mother both had their voice in the conversation about the marriage; they invited the young woman to convey her opinion if she wanted to be married; Only after Rebekah voiced her agreement to get married was she sent to meet Isaac, her promised husband. Later, when they met, "Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent. He took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her." Gen 24.67. The story gives us some information about the mother's house: it is a place where a young woman feels comfortable running to talk about her personal life about what happened at the encounter at the well. It is a place to discuss the future and where the voices and opinions of all are heard. This is also experienced by a young man, Isaac, who felt free to go with his recently married spouse to his

mother's house, where they had their first sexual relationship as their own moment of love.

2 - The two texts from the Songs of Songs (3:4 and 8:1-3) are enigmatic in defining the mother's house: it is a place where a young woman feels safe to bring her beloved and share love. It is a place where love is learned and taught throughout generations. The Songs of Songs is a book where a young woman and a young man express their love freely and without prejudices. It is a biblical poem of love, which expresses the love of God. This love is passed from generation to generation, from mother to daughter, and is learned like being nursed by the mother's breast. The mother's responsibility is to nurture and build safe spaces where fear can be faced and named. It is not that fear is eliminated, but it is rather a method to face fears and to overcome them is learned as a mechanism that enables actions to thrive in safe and healed relations.

In times of crisis and uncertainty, many people look to religion for guidance and consolation. Religion and belief are an important way to cope with trauma and distress. Some of us whose daily task is to engage with churches and Faith Based Organisations, or church-related organisations are familiar with articulating why we need to work with faith leaders, faith communities, or religion in general to make a difference. It is important to cultivate safe spaces where we can work in intergenerational and interreligious solidarities. Joining safe spaces, nurturing solidarity to overcome fears, and learning from each other are the motivations that keep us rising as the sun rises each morning. It is about this strong feeling when you look at the stars and believe that there is a power that sustains us all and the cosmos. Togetherness is this feeling of moving energy when you sing that well-known song, when you close your eyes in prayers. Solidarity generated in safe spaces is the assurance of things you hoped for - love, being loved, embraced, and being held warmly in loving arms.

Faith is the conviction of things hoped for, of things not seen. Faith is hope in action, it is this impulse to act in solidarity, to resist greed, and to share. Beyond an intellectual definition, faith, hope, and love are nesting in our hearts. These are bases to build safe spaces, like a mother's house, built in love and confidence.

QUESTIONS/REFLECTION POINTS

1. What is causing fear in our lives, in the world today, that safe spaces are needed?
2. How do we find and create spaces where love and overcoming of fear can be felt, as in the mother's house - so that intergenerational trust & solidarity become possible?
3. What is the role of faith in nurturing safe spaces? How do you understand faith and its role in addressing fears and building safe spaces?
4. Where do we find safe spaces in your communities? How do we ensure that safe spaces are accessible for all?

CONTEMPLATIVE ACTION

You are invited to draw what your own safe place would look like. Name those who would be sharing this space with you. Together with each name and person you invite to be with you, say a word of welcome and encouragement. If possible, share with these friends the picture (in person or via message) of your safe space and the word you are spelling out for them to be with you in your safe space.

This same dynamic can be done in a group. Invite participants to sit in pairs and draw one common safe space. Each one will share words of welcoming and encouragement with each other.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

Praying is entering into dialogue with God – expressing your own fears through prayer can have the positive effect of naming our fears and our dreams so that we can face them. In this confidence, let us pray:

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 worship created by Jane Stranz for the World Council of Churches

<http://www.overcomingviolence.org/en/resources/campaigns/women-against-violence/week-6-stories-from-around-the-/prayers.html#:~:text=May%20the%20God%20of%20Eve,you%20courage%20for%20your%20battles>



— DAY 4
**GUARDIANS
OF GROWTH**
ENHANCING SOLIDARITY BUILDING

*Karla Steilmann Franco, Pastor of the Evangelical Church of the River Plate (Paraguay)
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BIBLICAL TEXTS

The reflection for today and tomorrow draws from the story of Ruth and Naomi. While today provides a broad overall reflection on the entire book of Ruth, tomorrow will focus on a particular passage from Ruth. Given the richness of the story of Ruth in exploring the theme of intergenerational solidarity, we have dedicated two days to this book with differing emphasis.

RUTH CHAPTERS 1-4

This reflection for today is based on the stories of the book of Ruth; therefore, we invite you to read the whole book (only 4 chapters) in order to understand and to connect with the development of the narratives.

INTRODUCTION

Growth happens in a community through solidarity. Solidarity building is, therefore, essential for transformative actions. Solidarity involves overcoming differences, activating compassion, and pursuing change in the midst of challenges.

CONTEXTUAL BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION:

In the book of Ruth, the main characters are two women and a man, two widows (a mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law), and a distant relative. The other characters appear only to help the development of the narrative. Nothing is casual, everything has a reason.

The events oscillate between Bethlehem and Moab, as do the characters. The narrative follows a special sequence; at the beginning, they are forced to move to Moab because of the famine. In the same line, Ruth and Naomi are forced to move back to Bethlehem because of their precarious situation after the death of their respective husbands. The arrival of the two women to Bethlehem is their last attempt to survive in a very difficult environment (especially for women). It is in this very place that their lives, the course of history, and the importance of this place changed forever.

The narratives of Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz occurred at the time when the judges ruled. It is a tragic story with a happy ending, which could happen to anyone at any time. The four chapters of the book of Ruth concentrate on the narratives of the fate of the two women and the unimpeachable reaction and action of Boaz, who never declined his duty and was ready to help both women. In this sense, it could be mentioned that this book presents a clear example of how women, men, and foreigners realise their call and role to be guardians enhancing mutual solidarity.

Three things should be mentioned here:

1- Boaz never questioned Ruth or treated her differently because she was a foreigner. He accepted her as part of his family and an honorable woman. By redeeming a plot of land and Ruth, he became the guardian-redeemer for Naomi's family. In fact, it was not an act of charity but solidarity and partnership.

2- The relationship between Ruth and Naomi reflects a respectful and loving connection between two people who come from different backgrounds and represent different generations, coexisting in that and in any society. Here, Ruth and Naomi represent an essential form of connectedness that emphasises self-sacrifice for the common good over alliances for egotistical purposes. To be stewards of solidarity is a call to establish permanent connectedness rather than transient alliances.

3- The connection between the three main characters allows a very special development of the story, in which the most important thing is to act in favor of others, especially those who are in danger (see Ruth with Naomi vs. Boaz with Ruth and Naomi). These forms of relationships manifest intergenerational, intergender, and interracial covenants, which are the foundations of effective and liberative solidarity.

QUESTIONS/REFLECTION POINTS

You are invited to reflect on the following questions using the pictures shared:

1. How do these people (in the pictures) connect to each other?
2. How are they connected to us?
3. How could they help/or advise us today?

4. If they are present, how do we relate to them?
5. How can we, as guardians of solidarity, connect with each other for common flourishing?

In the end, we invite you to have a moment of silence and think about those people in the pictures, but also in the ones who are surrounding us and all those around the world who are fighting, like us, every day for a world with solidarity, respect, and love for everyone.

CONTEMPLATIVE ACTION

Having this inspiring story in our minds, we invite you to bring together photographs of family members from different generations (from the past or the present) and, if possible, of people you know from diverse nations and races/castes. And, of course, also pictures of yourself. Put them on a table or in a place where everyone can see them and maybe also recognise the various faces.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

God of all nations and all generations, we thank You for the incredible gift of life in all its many forms. Infuse us with Your spirit and teach us Your wisdom so that we can love, respect, and care for one another. We admit that we have often failed to consider others as part of ourselves, to co-exist with them, and to act for their benefit. Forgive and transform us into guardians of solidarity who bring joy, justice, and peace to all. In Jesus' name, we pray, Amen.



— DAY 5

PRUNING FOR RESILIENCE

TO SHAPE TRANSFORMATION

Nontando Hadebe, International Coordinator, Side by Side/ Gender Consultant, Bread for the World & Savanna Sullivan, Program Executive for Youth, Lutheran World Federation

BIBLICAL TEXTS

RUTH 1: 1-14

1 In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons. 2 The name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon^[a] and Chilion;^[b] they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. 3 But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. 4 These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there about ten years, 5 both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

6 Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had considered his people and given them food. 7 So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. 8 But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go back each of you to your mother’s house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. 9 The LORD grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband.” Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. 10 They said to her, “No, we will return with you to your people.” 11 But Naomi said, “Turn back, my daughters. Why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? 12 Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, 13 would you then wait until they were

grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the LORD has turned against me.” 14 Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her.

INTRODUCTION

Pruning is an action done to plants that cut off dead or diseased branches to enable growth, fruitfulness, and flourishing. The plant does not prune itself – we can surmise that given the option; it may not be keen to undergo a ‘painful process’ of cutting off parts of itself! Similarly, in life, external circumstances often “cut off” or cause us to change practices and beliefs that impede growth, transformation, and flourishing. These life events that seem personal are, in fact, embedded in the broader social world and structures of injustice and inequality that affect the lives of youth, women, men, girls and boys. However, pruning can also happen when we identify areas in ourselves or our communities that are harming us or impeding our own growth, and we decide to cut those out so that new growth can begin.

So, pruning has two parts: (1) the circumstances of life that cause us to adapt and change and (2) the action of choosing to prune beliefs and practices that work against the flourishing and transformation of life and society. So ‘being pruned’ and ‘pruning’ are related concepts.

CONTEXTUAL BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION:

This is the story of migration and the challenges faced by women, such as landlessness, poverty, and being confined to marriage as the only option for survival, signaling multiple vulnerabilities.

Naomi and her family of husband and two sons are forced to migrate to survive because of drought in their homeland. In the new homeland, Naomi’s sons married women named Ruth and Orpah. Later her husband and sons die, which in a patriarchal culture is a disaster for women. It means they have less protection, lower social status, and are less culturally able to seek economic opportunities. Naomi decides to return to her homeland alone, but her daughter-in-law, Ruth, refuses to leave her and accompanies her to her home as a migrant. Together they face an unknown future as impoverished, destitute, landless beggars in a patriarchal society. Through the agency of Naomi, Ruth marries the landowner Boaz and bears a son securing her and Naomi’s future. The lives of Ruth and Naomi are pruned by experiences, which were complex and difficult to face. However, they emerged stronger from these experiences because of a resilience that was born from their solidarity and mutual support for one another.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

Answer the following questions by applying the principles of pruning described in the introduction.

1. What were the life experiences pruned Ruth and Naomi’s lives as migrants and as landless, impoverished widows?
2. Describe the social structures and systems in Bethlehem and Moab that rendered Naomi, Ruth, and Orpah powerless, poor, and destitute.
3. The strong bonds between Ruth and Naomi speak to intergenerational solidarity in addressing the systems just described. These systems include inequality and cultural norms, particularly the exploitation of widows and the vulnerability of young women. What needs to be “cut away” or pruned from our societies today to bring flourishing and growth for women? How can people of different generations work together for this?
4. What ideas or actions did the women in this story need to “prune” or let go of to make room for flourishing? Which of them do you relate with the most?

CONTEMPLATIVE ACTIONS:

	Vulnerabilities and challenges they face	Social, cultural, and religious drivers of their marginalisation and vulnerabilities
Elderly (particularly widows/widowers) in your community		
Young people in your community		
Other groups in my community		

- a. **Individual activity:** Undertake a social analysis of the status of elderly, young people, and other marginalised groups in my community using the table below.
- b. **Group Activity:** Building solidarity through storytelling

Host an intergenerational story-telling afternoon for young and elderly women/men or other marginalised groups to share their stories and lead them in an exercise to identify the social and cultural structures responsible for their marginalisation and vulnerability.

You may use questions like:

1. What was a time you felt like an outsider? How is this related to the social and cultural structures in your community?
2. What was a time you have experienced hardship as a woman or other marginalised group in your community?
3. Tell us a story about an intergenerational relationship that is meaningful for you. What are the gifts of that relationship? What are the specific challenges the other person faced?
4. How is life particularly difficult for young/old people in your community? How has this affected your life?

Conclude with a pruning exercise to identify steps that they can take to cut back these narratives pushing their marginalisation so that new liberating affirmations of their rights and dignity can emerge.

You may ask them to reflect in the following ways:

1. What ideas and actions need to change in your community to promote life and flourishing for everyone in this story? What new growth would be possible if these ideas and actions were pruned?
2. What false ideas or cultural/societal norms do you personally need to let go of or prune to be able to grow?
3. How do the women in this Bible story inspire you to cut back on these narratives of limitation for women or other marginalised group in your community? What reassurances do you hear from God in this story?
4. What next step would help you prune back the narratives of limitation in your own life? What is one next step that would help your community to do the same?

PRAYER OF BLESSING:

“A Franciscan Blessing”:

MAY GOD BLESS YOU with discomfort,
at easy answers, half-truths,
and superficial relationships
so that you may live
deep within your heart.

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

May God bless you with tears,
to shed for those who suffer pain,
rejection, hunger, and war,
so that you may reach out your hand
to comfort them and
to turn their pain into joy.

May God bless you
with enough foolishness
to believe that you can
make a difference in the world,
so that you can do
what others claim cannot be done,
to bring justice and kindness
to all our children and the poor.



— DAY 6

HARVESTING THE FRUITS OF UNITY

WITH LOVE & KINDNESS

Cynara Dubé-Khan, Minister at the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago & Joy Eva Bohol, Regional Migration Specialist for Europe, United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)

BIBLICAL TEXTS

JOHN 15: 1-4, 9-17

Jesus the True Vine

1 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. 2 He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes[a] to make it bear more fruit. 3 You have already been cleansed[b] by the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

9 As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. 10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. 11 I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

12 “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command you. 15 I do not call you servants[d] any longer, because the servant[e] does not know what the master is doing, but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. 16 You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. 17 I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

INTRODUCTION

Trinidad and Tobago has a tradition that guides how we harvest. If we need fruit or any part of a tree, but it's after six o'clock in the evening or the sun has gone down, we first need to wake up the plant and seek its permission to pick from it.

Upon reflection, this practice seems to stem from a heart of love, appreciation, and reverence toward God for providing for our needs through the plant. This is also an act of kindness toward creation as we gently and carefully yield its produce gifts.

In John 15:1-4, 9-17, from the experiences of Jesus' relationship with his disciples, we recognize that harvesting the fruits of unity within mentorship relationships is like harvesting fruit from a tree after dark, and it must be done with love and kindness.

CONTEXTUAL BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

In our reading from John, Jesus created a picture for his disciples where God was the gardener, Christ was the vine, and the disciples were the branches that bore fruit. This image described the divine connectedness that the disciples shared with God through Jesus. However, when Jesus had this dialogue with his disciples, he was preparing them for the world ahead, where he would no longer walk with them and talk with them in the same physical way. This is the first signal that Jesus' mentorship relationship with his disciples is about to change.

In psychology, the last stage of mentoring is redefining the mentor/mentee relationship. After the mentor has passed on their knowledge to the mentee, the mentorship ends and the relationship is redefined. That seems to be happening with Jesus and his disciples as he says, "I no longer call you servants...Instead I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you." Therefore, as Jesus and his disciples enter this last stage of mentorship where everything is about to change, Jesus gives us two important lessons on mentorship that we ought to pay attention to.

First, Jesus teaches us that we must love our mentees as mentors. Jesus loved his mentees. Although their relationship would soon be different, Jesus promised the disciples they would still be connected to Him if they loved each other as He did. Jesus harvested their gifts of love by loving them. Similarly, the time will come when our relationship with our mentees will change so that they can go into the world to bear good fruit. However, our example of love will remain in them and empower them to love others. So, when working with your mentee, let love be your guide as you help them unleash their potential.

Secondly, Jesus teaches mentors how to prune their mentees. In our reading, when God the gardener notices that a branch bears fruit, the only way to increase the harvest is by pruning the branch. Without pruning, the branch will never reach its full potential. When we prune a branch, part of the branch is lost. However, we must trust that the gardener is skilled and thoughtful in His pruning and that the plant is not harmed. Instead, what the plant loses is gained in its eventual growth and its increased harvest.

As mentors, how we prune our mentees to harvest their gifts is essential. Pruning our mentees is the process by which we help them let go of attitudes and behaviors that stunt their growth. However, as we offer corrections, kindness must be our guide. In a world that often confuses violence with discipline, we must be thoughtful and careful as we prune our mentees to ensure that we cause no harm.

The formative leadership experience of one of the contributors to this reflection was from their engagement with the United Methodist Youth Fellowship in the Philippines (UMYFP).³ There is an unwritten rule in the leadership style of the UMYFP that has been handed over from generation to generation. To ensure continuity of a shared vision, goals, and mission from one term to the next, the election of officers in all levels must constitute different age sub-groups within the youth age group—a first and second line of leaders. For example, three out of the 10 elected officers are within the 14-17 ages, another three from 18-20 year olds, and four from 21-23 year olds. This allows a space for intentional mentorship and for reflecting unity in the continuity of organizational knowledge, practices, and memories. This leadership legacy continues until today. It enables both young people and other generations to learn from one another and to grow together, and to be confident with themselves in taking leadership roles in the church and society. It was a safe space to affirm our God-given gifts and talents to serve, and to prepare ourselves for leadership roles in different levels in the church.

Mentorship and leadership development is a continued process and renewal or relationships, as described in Psalms 84: 5-7:

**“Happy are those whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.
As they go through the valley of Baca,
they make it a place of springs;
the early rain also covers it with pools.
They go from strength to strength;
the God of gods will be seen in Zion.”**

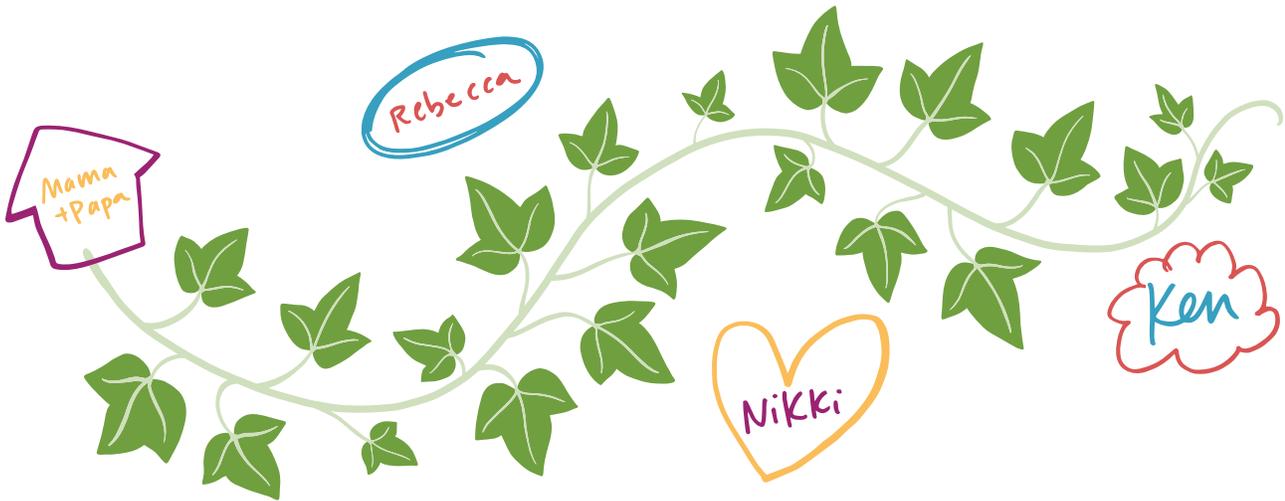
CONTEMPLATIVE ACTION

Mapping out your leadership journey and praying in colour.

1. How did your leadership journey as a young person or worker with young people start?
2. Who inspired you and provided the platform for you to learn and grow, at the same time be a source of learning and growth to that person/those persons?
3. In what ways do you continue the legacy of a leadership style that moulded you into the leader that you are today?

³The United Methodist Youth Fellowship in the Philippines (UMYFP) is the most organized youth arm of the United Methodist Church (UMC) throughout its global connection. UMYFP is led by, with, and for young people between 12 and 23 years old. It has its own constitution and by-laws that are respected by the church structure. The UMYFP since its formation back in 1901 (the Epworth League in the Philippines), has produced notable intergenerational church leaders within the denomination and beyond, continuing to take leadership roles in different capacities in the global ecumenical movements and in international organizations.

As you begin to reflect on these questions, draw a vine that represents your journey in leadership both as a mentee and a mentor. As you identify those signposts of your journey, start writing the name/s of the person/s who inspired you and those that you wish to inspire along the way. Add their names to your drawing, and remember your journey together. As you add their names, include a color representing each person and even a shape you can draw around the name. Use this space as one of thanksgiving and one of prayer for that person/those persons as you doodle.



PRAYER OF BLESSING

Our mentor, our guide, our friend, our companion, our shepherd...
 May we strain to live like Jesus, who modelled humility and servanthood,
 May we recognize you, oh God, through our mentors and mentees,
 May we reflect Sophia, the Holy Spirit, in the way we build each other up,
 May we strive to be gentle, kind, compassionate, love-driven when we prune,
 May we fix our eyes and our hearts to what is true and just, as Jesus demonstrated,
 May our gifts add to the great harvest that nourishes and strengthens our unity,
 Amen.

— WORLD YWCA WORSHIP 2023

ORDER OF SERVICE

SEEDS TO BLOSSOMS: CULTIVATING HOPE AND LOVE IN SOLIDARITY

Mikie Roberts, Program Executive for Spiritual Life and Faith and Order, World Council of Churches and Winelle Kirton – Roberts, Pastor, Geneva Moravian Fellowship.

Please rise, if able.

- L: We are called to sow the seeds of justice and peace in our daily lives.
- C: *We are called to tend and cultivate those seeds, so they can grow to be trees of life.*
- L: Trees that heal God's creation suffering from injustice, oppression, conflict, and disaster.
- C: *Trees that shelter and provide shade for all creation.*
- L: We are called to plant and cultivate the seeds of righteousness without selfish ambition but only with a compassionate servant's heart.
- C: *We are called to plant a garden of justice and peace amongst diverse religions, cultures, races, and nations.*

Opening Song: Que esta iglesia sea un árbol

Que esta iglesia sea un árbol

Pablo Sosa, Argentina
F

1. Que es - ta i - gle - sia se - a un ár - bol en el fon - do de tu ca - sa,
1. May this church be like a tree, be - hind your house, there in your gar - den,
que ha - ya fies - ta ya - le - grí - a y o - ra - ción ba - jo sus ra - mas.
meet - ing place for joy, and feast, and sim - ple prayer be - neath its branch - es.
Con ra - í - ces bien pro - fun - das, y sus bra - zos ha - cia el cie - lo,
With its roots in earth so fer - tile, and its arms raised high to hea - ven,
que es - ta i - gle - sia sea fe - cun - da dan - do fru - tos de con - sue - lo
may this church bear fruits of jus - tice, acts of lov - ing and com - pas - sion.
"Ár - bol plan - ta - do jun - to a las a - guas de vi - da e
Tree ev - er grow - ing by liv - ing wa - ter, run - ning e -
ter - na de nues - tro Dios," nues - tro Dios,*
ter - nal, flow - ing from God. ing - from God.

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Opening Prayer (inspired by Mark 4:26-34)

- L: God of small seeds and mighty plants,
you take our meagre lives and with your love
cause them to produce acts of loving kindness for you in this world.
You hear our cries and find us when we are lost and wandering in fear.
You bring us home with you so that we may be made whole,
rejoicing in your goodness.
Help us to joyfully serve you all our days,
knowing that you are always watching over us.
Prepare our hearts to receive your word and our spirits
to respond in eagerness to serve you.
In Jesus' name, we pray.
- C: *Amen.*

Please be seated.

Responsive Psalm 126

- L: When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those
who dream.
- C: *Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts
of joy*
- L: Then it was said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things
for them."
- C: *The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.*
- L: Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses in the Negeb.
- C: *May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.*
- L: Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing,
C: *Shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.*
- L: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
C: *As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen.*

(Silence)

- L: O God, the source of our belonging to one another,
none of us can give anything to our sisters and brothers
if we have not first of all belonged to you;
give us your Spirit in the bond of perfect unity
so that the Spirit may transform us into a new humanity,
free and united in your love,
through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who is God,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, world
without end.
- C: *Amen.*

Please rise.

Halle, Halle, Halleluia

Caribbean

Gospel Reading - Mark 4:1-9, 30-32

1 Again Jesus began to teach beside the sea. Such a very large crowd gathered around him that he got into a boat on the sea and sat there, while the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. 2 He began to teach them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them:

3 "Listen! A sower went out to sow. 4 And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and it sprang up quickly, since it had no depth of soil. 6 And when the sun rose, it was scorched; and since it had no root, it withered away. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. 8 Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold." 9 And he said, "Let anyone with ears to hear listen!"

30 He also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? 31 It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; 32 yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

L: The Word of the Lord

C: *Thanks be to God.*

Sermon/Reflection

The following narration can be used in lieu of the above sermon/reflection or done afterwards.

Hi-to tsu bu no mugiwao

Toyohiko Kagawa

Ushio Takahashi: Japan

1 F Dm

Hi - to - tsu - bu no mu - gi wa o -
 When a grain of wheat, in - to the ground
 Quand un grain de blé sur la ter -

6 Gm

chi - ke - ri chi - no u - e ni
 has fall - en, in - to the cold ground,
 re est tom - bé, dans la ter - re gla - cée

11 Dm

ma - ta ha - e - - i - zu - ru
 and lies in wait - - - ing for the spring,
 re - po - se et at - - - tend le prin - temps,

15

ha - ru o ma - chi - tsu - tsu
 and lies in wait - - - ing for the spring;
 ce grain tom - bé re - pren - dra vie,

19 F

ma - ta ha - e - - i - zu - ru
 this fall - en grain will rise to life,
 ce grain tom - bé re - pren - dra vie,

23 Am

ha - ru o ma - chi - tsu - tsu.
 this fall - en grain will rise to life!
 ce grain tom - bé re - pren - dra vie!

Music © Ushio Takahashi. Japanese, Toyohiko Kagawa © 1981 Sumimoto Kagawa, Kagawa Foundation, 3-8-19 Kamkitzawa, Setagaya, Tokyo, Japan.
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 Français: Christian de Ferry © 1998 WCC 150, Route de Ferney, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland.

*Narrator: This is a story of Jesus:
A sower went out to sow...*

*A: And the first seed fell on me.
And I am a path,
I am easily walked over;
people do that all the time.
I have no identity of my own.
And should anything fall on me,
others will pick it up,
like birds scrambling for crumbs,
and I am left bare and fruitless.
I am the one people walk over.*

(Silence)

When a Grain of Wheat

*Narrator: This is a story of Jesus:
A sower went out to sow...*

*B: And the second seed fell on me.
And I am a rock garden,
attractive but shallow.
People admire me all the time.
They say how good I look
and I like looking good.
They say what novel ideas I have
and I like having novel ideas.
The trouble is they are always novel, always new.
Here today, withered tomorrow,
no root... no depth ...
but admirable in a shallow way.*

(Silence)

*Narrator: This is a story of Jesus:
A sower went out to sow...*

*C: And the third seed fell on me.
And I am the waste land
on which weeds thrive.
I am filled with 'isms':
commercialism, materialism,
consumerism, industrialism,
capitalism, communism.
I am full of theory
and barren of life,
choking to death everything real.
I am the waste land,
full of 'isms',
none of them working.*

When a Grain of Wheat

*Narrator: This is a story of Jesus:
A sower went out to sow...*

*D: And we are the fertile soil
to whom he gives much,
from whom he expects much.*

(Silence)

*Narrator: And on the good soil
the seed fell and produced plants.
And the plants ripened and produced grain
thirtyfold
and sixtyfold,
and a hundredfold.
And Jesus said,
'If you have ears to hear,
then hear.'
And lest we disown the past
or forget the future
and covet the present,
Jesus also said,
'What someone else sowed you are reaping.
And what you sow someone else will reap.'
And that is the way*

*the kingdom comes:
the seed from God
and the cooperation from God's people.*

(In: Present on Earth WGWG, p. 165-167)

When a Grain of Wheat

Prayers of the People

Let us pray:

- L: Where ignorance, egoism, greediness and love for power
have fractured life in community,
C: *empower us to sow your self-giving love, O God.*
- L: Where injustice and oppression
have broken the spirit of peoples,
C: *empower us to sow your liberating justice, O God.*
- L: Where hunger and poverty, illness and death
have made life an unbearable burden,
C: *empower us to sow your compassion, O God.*
- L: Where suspicion and hatred, conflict and war
have challenged your goodness,
C: *empower us to sow your peace, O God.*
- L: Where personal interests and various separating walls
have divided our society,
C: *empower us to sow communities of love, O Holy Trinity.*
- L: Eternal God, fount of all wisdom, power of transformation,
stir in us your Spirit to give hope
when we are in doubt and despair.
Sow in us the seeds of your love
that we learn to die with Christ
and to share the glory of Christ's resurrection.
C: *Amen.*

Please rise.

Lord's Prayer (in our many languages)

Si Tuvieras Fe

Si tu - vie - ras fe co - mo un gra - ni - to de mos -
 If we on - ly had faith, just like a lit - tle grain of

ta - za; e - so lo di - ce El Se - ñor. Si tu - vie - ras
 mus - tard; this is what Je - sus has said. If we on - ly had

ñor: Tú le di - rí - as a e - sa mon - ta - ña: ¡mué - ve -
 said. We would be a - ble to tell that moun - tain: Move a -

te, mué - ve - te!; tú le di - rí - as a e - sa mon -
 way! Move a - way! We would be a - ble to tell that

ta - ña: ¡mué - ve - te, mué - ve - te! Y la mon - ta - ña
 moun - tain Move a - way! Move a - way and then the moun - tain

se mo - ve - rá, se mo - ve - rá, se mo - ve - rá. Y la mon - ta -
 would move a - way, would move a - way, would move a - way and then the moun -

ña se mo - ve - rá. Y la mon - ta - ña se mo - ve -
 tain would move a - way and then the moun - tain would move a -

rá, se mo - ve - rá, se mo - ve - rá.
 way, would move a - way, would move a - way.

Music and words: *Anonymos from Latin America, based on Matthew 17:20*

Blessing

- L: What is sown in the earth as a perishable thing is raised imperishable.
Sown in humiliation, it is raised in glory;
sown in weakness, it is raised in power;
sown as physical, it is raised as spiritual. (1 Cor 15:42-44a)
Let us continue our journey with God's blessing:
- L: May the God of love, who loves us freely,
C: *strengthen us in our love for others;*
- L: May Jesus Christ, who gave his life for us,
C: *grant us grace to give our lives for others;*
- L: May the Spirit, who dwells in us,
C: *empower us to live for others.*
- All: *Amen.*



— WORLD YWCA WORSHIP 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We sincerely acknowledge and appreciate the remarkable contributors and dedicated team members who supported and propelled the Week of Prayer 2023. Your unwavering commitment, tireless efforts, and collaborative spirit have been invaluable in creating this booklet for communities worldwide, which can be used beyond this week!

- Rev. Rebecca Sangeetha Daniel (Lead Editor of this year's booklet, Pastor at the Lutheran Church in Great Britain, and International University Student Chaplain)
- Rev. Anne Heikkinen (Doctoral Researcher in Theology and Religious Studies (University of Helsinki), Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland)
- Dr Muriel Orevillo Montenegro, Ph.D., (Coordinator, Interfaith Cooperation Forum, Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs)
- Ester N Sakaria (Oniipa Infohut Facilitator and Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LUCSA) Women Representative)
- Rev. Nicqi Ashwood (Program Executive for the Just Community of Women and Men, World Council of Churches)
- Rev. Dr Elaine Neuenfeldt, Ph.D., (Act Alliance Gender Program Manager)
- Rev. Karla Steilmann Franco (Pastor of the Evangelical Church of the River plate - Paraguay)
- Rev. Dr Viji Varghese Eapen, Ph.D., (Presbyter, Church of South India - Diocese of Madhya Kerala)
- Dr. Nontando Hadebe, Ph.D., (International Coordinator Side by Side/Gender Consultant Bread for the World)
- Savanna Sullivan, M.A. in Theology (Program Executive for Youth, Lutheran World Federation)
- Joy Eva Bohol (Regional Migration Specialist for Europe, United Methodist Committee on Relief/UMCOR; global missionary of the United Methodist Church)
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- Funded by Norwegian Church Aid (NCA)

Biblical references from New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition - NRSVUE

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BIBLE READING PLAN

January 2024 - December 2024

JANUARY 2024

- 1 Psalm 89,1-19
- 2 Marc 1,1-8
- 3 Marc 1,9-13
- 4 Marc 1,14-20
- 5 Marc 1,21-28
- 6 Marc 1,29-39
- 7 Psalm 89,20-53
- 8 Marc 1,40-45
- 9 Marc 2,1-12
- 10 Marc 2,13-17
- 11 Marc 2,18-22
- 12 Marc 2,23-28
- 13 Marc 3,1-6
- 14 Psalm 148
- 15 1 Timothy 1,1-11
- 16 1 Timothy 1,12-20
- 17 1 Timothy 2,1-7
- 18 1 Timothy 2,8-15
- 19 1 Timothy 3,1-13
- 20 1 Timothy 3,14-16
- 21 Psalm 86
- 22 1 Timothy 4,1-11
- 23 1 Timothy 4,12-5,2
- 24 1 Timothy 5,3-16
- 25 1 Timothy 5,17-25
- 26 1 Timothy 6,1-10
- 27 1 Timothy 6,11-21
- 28 Psalm 135
- 29 2 Timothy 1,1-12
- 30 2 Timothy 1,13-18
- 31 2 Timothy 2,1-13

FEBRUARY 2024

- 1 2 Timothy 2,14-21
- 2 2 Timothy 2,22-26
- 3 2 Timothy 3,1-9
- 4 Psalm 128
- 5 2 Timothy 3,10-17
- 6 2 Timothy 4,1-8
- 7 2 Timothy 4,9-22
- 8 Titus 1,1-9
- 9 Titus 1,10-16
- 10 Titus 2,1-10
- 11 Psalm 31
- 12 Titus 2,11-15
- 13 Titus 3,1-7
- 14 Titus 3,8-15
- 15 Philemon 1-25
- 16 Exodus 1,1-22
- 17 Exodus 2,1-10
- 18 Psalm 91
- 19 Exodus 2,11-25
- 20 Exodus 3,1-22
- 21 Exodus 4,1-17
- 22 Exodus 4,18-31
- 23 Exodus 5,1-6,1
- 24 Exodus 7,1-13
- 25 Psalm 123
- 26 Exodus 7,14-25
- 27 Exodus 11,1-10
- 28 Exodus 12,1-20
- 29 Exodus 12,21-33.51

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MARCH 2024

- 1 Marc 10,32-45
- 2 Marc 10,46-52
- 3 Psalm 141
- 4 Marc 11,1-11
- 5 Marc 11,12-25
- 6 Marc 11,27-33
- 7 Marc 12,1-12
- 8 Marc 12,13-17
- 9 Marc 12,18-27
- 10 Psalm 132
- 11 Marc 12,28-34
- 12 Marc 12,35-40
- 13 Marc 12,41-44
- 14 Marc 13,1-13
- 15 Marc 13,14-23
- 16 Marc 13,24-37
- 17 Psalm 130
- 18 Marc 14,1-11
- 19 Marc 14,12-16
- 20 Marc 14,17-26
- 21 Marc 14,27-31
- 22 Marc 14,32-42
- 23 Marc 14,43-52
- 24 Psalm 88
- 25 Marc 14,53-65
- 26 Marc 14,66-72
- 27 Marc 15,1-15
- 28 Marc 15,16-23
- 29 Marc 15,24-41
- 30 Marc 15,42-47
- 31 Marc 16,1-8

APRIL 2024

- 1 Marc 16,9-20
- 2 1 Peter 1,1-12
- 3 1 Peter 1,13-16
- 4 1 Peter 1,17-21
- 5 1 Peter 1,22-2,3
- 6 1 Peter 2,4-10
- 7 Psalm 134
- 8 1 Peter 2,11-17
- 9 1 Peter 2,18-25
- 10 1 Peter 3,1-7
- 11 1 Peter 3,8-12
- 12 1 Peter 3,13-17
- 13 1 Peter 3,18-22
- 14 Psalm 136
- 15 1 Peter 4,1-11
- 16 1 Peter 4,12-19
- 17 1 Peter 5,1-7
- 18 1 Peter 5,8-14
- 19 1 Corinthians 1,1-9
- 20 1 Corinthians 1,10-17
- 21 Psalm 96
- 22 1 Corinthians 1,18-25
- 23 1 Corinthians 1,26-31
- 24 1 Corinthians 2,1-5
- 25 1 Corinthians 2,6-16
- 26 1 Corinthians 3,1-4
- 27 1 Corinthians 3,5-8
- 28 Psalm 149
- 29 1 Corinthians 3,9-17
- 30 1 Corinthians 3,18-23

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MAY 2024

- 1 1 Corinthians 4,1-5
- 2 1 Corinthians 4,6-13
- 3 1 Corinthians 4,14-21
- 4 1 Corinthians 5,1-8
- 5 Psalm 129
- 6 1 Corinthians 5,9-13
- 7 1 Corinthians 6,1-11
- 8 1 Corinthians 6,12-20
- 9 Philippians 2,5-11
- 10 1 Corinthians 7,1-16
- 11 1 Corinthians 7,17-24
- 12 Psalm 131
- 13 1 Corinthians 7,25-40
- 14 1 Corinthians 8,1-6
- 15 1 Corinthians 8,7-13
- 16 1 Corinthians 9,1-18
- 17 1 Corinthians 9,19-23
- 18 1 Corinthians 9,24-27
- 19 Ephesians 1,3-14
- 20 Psalm 150
- 21 1 Corinthians 10,1-13
- 22 1 Corinthians 10,14-22
- 23 1 Corinthians 10,23-11,1
- 24 1 Corinthians 11,2-16
- 25 1 Corinthians 11,17-26
- 26 Psalm 68,1-19
- 27 1 Corinthians 11,27-34
- 28 1 Corinthians 12,1-11
- 29 1 Corinthians 12,12-26
- 30 1 Corinthians 12,27-31
- 31 1 Corinthians 13,1-7

JUNE 2024

- 1 1 Corinthians 13,8-13
- 2 Psalm 133
- 3 1 Corinthians 14,1-11
- 4 1 Corinthians 14,12-25
- 5 1 Corinthians 14,26-33a
- 6 1 Corinthians 14,33b-40
- 7 1 Corinthians 15,1-11
- 8 1 Corinthians 15,12-19
- 9 Psalm 36
- 10 1 Corinthians 15,20-28
- 11 1 Corinthians 15,29-34
- 12 1 Corinthians 15,35-49
- 13 1 Corinthians 15,50-58
- 14 1 Corinthians 16,1-12
- 15 1 Corinthians 16,13-24
- 16 Psalm 53
- 17 Exodus 13,17-22
- 18 Exodus 14,1-14
- 19 Exodus 14,15-31
- 20 Exodus 15,1-21
- 21 Exodus 15,22-27
- 22 Exodus 16,1-16
- 23 Psalm 42
- 24 Exodus 16,17-36
- 25 Exodus 17,1-7
- 26 Exodus 17,8-16
- 27 Exodus 18,1-12
- 28 Exodus 18,13-27
- 29 Exodus 19,1-15
- 30 Psalm 73

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JULY 2024

- 1 Exodus 19,16-25
- 2 Exodus 20,1-21
- 3 Exodus 23,1-9
- 4 Exodus 23,10-19
- 5 Exodus 23,20-33
- 6 Exodus 24,1-18
- 7 Psalm 139
- 8 Exodus 25,1-22
- 9 Exodus 31,18-32,14
- 10 Exodus 32,15-29
- 11 Exodus 32,30-33,6
- 12 Exodus 33,7-11
- 13 Exodus 33,12-23
- 14 Psalm 119,25-32
- 15 Exodus 34,1-10
- 16 Exodus 34,27-35
- 17 Exodus 35,4-29
- 18 Exodus 35,30-36,7
- 19 Exodus 40,1-17
- 20 Exodus 40,34-38
- 21 Psalm 119,33-40
- 22 Marc 3,7-12
- 23 Marc 3,13-19
- 24 Marc 3,20-30
- 25 Marc 3,31-35
- 26 Marc 4,1-9
- 27 Marc 4,10-20
- 28 Psalm 119,41-48
- 29 Marc 4,21-25
- 30 Marc 4,26-29
- 31 Marc 4,30-34

AUGUST 2024

- 1 Marc 4,35-41
- 2 Marc 5,1-20
- 3 Marc 5,21-34
- 4 Psalm 122
- 5 Marc 5,35-43
- 6 Marc 6,1-6
- 7 Marc 6,7-13
- 8 Marc 6,14-29
- 9 Marc 6,30-44
- 10 Marc 6,45-56
- 11 Psalm 145
- 12 Marc 7,1-23
- 13 Marc 7,24-30
- 14 Marc 7,31-37
- 15 Marc 8,1-9
- 16 Marc 8,10-13
- 17 Marc 8,14-21
- 18 Psalm 147
- 19 Marc 8,22-26
- 20 Marc 8,27-33
- 21 Marc 8,34-9,1
- 22 Marc 9,2-13
- 23 Marc 9,14-29
- 24 Marc 9,30-37
- 25 Psalm 120
- 26 Marc 9,38-41
- 27 Marc 9,42-50
- 28 Marc 10,1-12
- 29 Marc 10,13-16
- 30 Marc 10,17-27
- 31 Marc 10,28-31

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SEPTEMBER 2024

- 1 Psalm 146
- 2 Jeremiah 1,1-10
- 3 Jeremiah 1,11-19
- 4 Jeremiah 2,1-13
- 5 Jeremiah 3,1-10
- 6 Jeremiah 3,21-4,4
- 7 Jeremiah 6,9-26
- 8 Psalm 127
- 9 Jeremiah 7,1-15
- 10 Jeremiah 7,16-28
- 11 Jeremiah 9,22-23
- 12 Jeremiah 12,1-6
- 13 Jeremiah 13,1-11
- 14 Jeremiah 14,1-16
- 15 Psalm 68,20-36
- 16 Jeremiah 15,10-21
- 17 Jeremiah 16,1-13
- 18 Jeremiah 18,1-12
- 19 Jeremiah 19,1-13
- 20 Jeremiah 20,7-18
- 21 Jeremiah 21,1-14
- 22 Psalm 138
- 23 Jeremiah 23,1-8
- 24 Jeremiah 23,16-29
- 25 Jeremiah 26,1-19
- 26 Jeremiah 28,1-17
- 27 Jeremiah 29,1-14
- 28 Jeremiah 31,1-14
- 29 Psalm 142
- 30 Jeremiah 23,1-8

OCTOBER 2024

- 1 Jeremiah 23,16-29
- 2 Jeremiah 26,1-19
- 3 Jeremiah 28,1-17
- 4 Jeremiah 29,1-14
- 5 Jeremiah 31,1-14
- 6 Psalm 65
- 7 Jeremiah 23,1-8
- 8 Jeremiah 23,16-29
- 9 Jeremiah 26,1-19
- 10 Jeremiah 28,1-17
- 11 Jeremiah 29,1-14
- 12 Jeremiah 31,1-14
- 13 Psalm 106,1-23
- 14 Jeremiah 23,1-8
- 15 Jeremiah 23,16-29
- 16 Jeremiah 26,1-19
- 17 Jeremiah 28,1-17
- 18 Jeremiah 29,1-14
- 19 Jeremiah 31,1-14
- 20 Psalm 106,24-48
- 21 2 Corinthians 1,1-11
- 22 2 Corinthians 1,12-24
- 23 2 Corinthians 2,1-11
- 24 2 Corinthians 2,12-17
- 25 2 Corinthians 3,1-11
- 26 2 Corinthians 3,12-18
- 27 Psalm 143
- 28 2 Corinthians 4,1-6
- 29 2 Corinthians 4,7-18
- 30 2 Corinthians 5,1-10
- 31 2 Corinthians 5,11-15

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NOVEMBER 2024

- 1 2 Corinthians 5,16-21
- 2 2 Corinthians 6,1-10
- 3 Psalm 125
- 4 2 Corinthians 6,11-7,1
- 5 2 Corinthians 7,2-16
- 6 2 Corinthians 8,1-15
- 7 2 Corinthians 8,16-24
- 8 2 Corinthians 9,1-15
- 9 2 Corinthians 10,1-11
- 10 Psalm 90
- 11 2 Corinthians 10,12-18
- 12 2 Corinthians 11,1-15
- 13 2 Corinthians 11,16-33
- 14 2 Corinthians 12,1-10
- 15 2 Corinthians 12,11-21
- 16 2 Corinthians 13,1-13
- 17 Psalm 51
- 18 2 Peter 1,1-11
- 19 2 Peter 1,12-21
- 20 2 Peter 2,1-11
- 21 2 Peter 2,12-22
- 22 2 Peter 3,1-10
- 23 2 Peter 3,11-18
- 24 Isaiah 26,7-19
- 25 Isaiah 56,1-8
- 26 Isaiah 56,9-12
- 27 Isaiah 57,1-13
- 28 Isaiah 57,14-21
- 29 Isaiah 58,1-9a
- 30 Isaiah 58,9b-14
- 31 Marc 4,30-34

DECEMBER 2024

- 1 Psalm 24
- 2 Isaiah 59,1-15a
- 3 Isaiah 59,15b-21
- 4 Isaiah 60,1-14
- 5 Isaiah 60,15-22
- 6 Isaiah 61,1-11
- 7 Isaiah 62,1-12
- 8 Psalm 144
- 9 Isaiah 63,7-14
- 10 Isaiah 63,15-64,6
- 11 Isaiah 64,7-11
- 12 Isaiah 65,1-10
- 13 Isaiah 65,17-25
- 14 Isaiah 66,1-4
- 15 Psalm 130
- 16 Isaiah 66,5-14
- 17 Isaiah 66,15-24
- 18 Luke 1,1-17
- 19 Luke 1,18-25
- 20 Luke 1,26-38
- 21 Luke 1,39-56
- 22 Psalm 102
- 23 Luke 1,57-66
- 24 Luke 1,67-80
- 25 Luke 2,1-14
- 26 Luke 2,15-20
- 27 Luke 2,21-24
- 28 Luke 2,25-35
- 29 Psalm 2
- 30 Luke 2,36-40
- 31 Luke 2,41-52



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