

*Worship in the Ecumenical Centre  
Monday 15 February 2010  
A service to launch the Lenten campaign for an end to violence against women*

*Is there anyone among you who,  
if your child asks for bread, will give her a stone? (Matt. 7:9)*

*Words of greeting and introduction*

*Silence*

*Call to Worship*

In the beginning the Spirit God danced over the void.

**It was a dance of creation, of joy, of freedom of wholeness, of power. . .**

And God, knowing that all that is good is shared,

**held the Earth tenderly and yearned for relationship.**

And humanity was born in the yearning of God.

**We are born to share the earth.**

*(adapted from: Blessing the Earth, Carter Heyward, USA)*

*Sing: Schweige und höre ~ Thuma Mina 23*

*Schweige und höre, neige deines Herzens Ohr, suche den Frieden (3 times)*

*A litany of violence against women from the Bible*

This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.

(Deuteronomy 30:19)

When Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the region, saw Dinah, he seized her and raped her. (Gen 34:2)

**Choose life.** (Deut. 30.19)

But the men would not listen to him. So the man took his concubine and sent her outside to them, and they raped her and abused her throughout the night, and at dawn they let her go. (Judges 19:25)

**I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.** (John 10:10)

But he refused to listen to Tamar, and since he was stronger than she, he raped her.

On the day that Amnon raped Tamar, Absalom decided to kill him. (2 Samuel 13:14; 32)

**I have set before you life and death.**

On Zion and everywhere in Judah our wives and daughters are being raped.

(Lamentations 5:11)

**I came that they may have life.**

Let me send out my daughter instead. She's a virgin. And I'll even send out the man's wife. You can rape them or do whatever else you want, but please don't do such a horrible thing to this man. (Judges 19:24)

**Choose life.** (Deut. 30.19)

**Sing: Fais taire nos voix ~Thuma Mina 23**

**Fais taire nos voix, ouvre nos vies à la foi, donne nous ta paix.**

*Please rise holding your stone in your hand as we listen to the gospel of Christ*

**Gospel reading John 8:2-10**

Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, they said to him, ‘Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?’ They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, ‘Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.’ And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus straightened up and said to her, ‘Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?’ She said, ‘No one, sir.’ And Jesus said, ‘Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.’

**Sing Gloria à Dios ~ Thuma Mina 56**

## Gloria a Dios

Peru

*♩ = 60*  
**First time-Leader; Repeat-All**

Glo - ria a Dios, Glo - ria a Dios, Glo - ria en los cie - los!  
 Glo - ry to God, Glo - ry to God, Glo - ry in the high - est!

**All**

A Dios la glo - ria por siem - pre! Al - le - lu - ya, A - men!  
 To God be glo - ry for - e - ver!

Al - le - lu - ya, A - men! Al - le - lu - ya, A - men!

- |                                                                 |                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2. Gloria a Dios, Gloria a Dios,<br>Gloria a Jesucristo. . .    | 2. Glory to God, Glory to God,<br>Glory to Christ Jesus. . . |
| 3. Gloria a Dios, Gloria a Dios,<br>Gloria sea al Espiritu. . . | 3. Glory to God, Glory to God,<br>Glory to the Spirit. . .   |

***Prayer of confession and laying down of stones***

*(After each prayer a stone is laid down, at the end of the formal confession everyone is invited to come forwards and lay down their stone in a communal act of confession. If you wish to say a word of confession aloud you are welcome to do so.)*

God of heaven and earth before you we confess our sin

God of transformation hear our prayer

***Sing: Nkosi Nkosi, yibaneceba. Krestu Krestu, yibaneceba.***

We confess the terrible physical and sexual violence that so many women and girls across the globe are subjected to.

God of transformation hear our prayer

***Sing: Nkosi Nkosi, yibaneceba. Krestu Krestu, yibaneceba.***

We confess how even into our own time scripture has been used to justify violence against women and their exclusion from a full role in society.

God of transformation hear our prayer

***Sing: Nkosi Nkosi, yibaneceba. Krestu Krestu, yibaneceba.***

We confess a violent culture which turns women's bodies into sexualised commodities and sees women as part of the spoils of war and commerce.

God of transformation hear our prayer

***Sing: Nkosi Nkosi, yibaneceba. Krestu Krestu, yibaneceba.***

We confess the structural violence of our institutions including the church which too often exclude women from decision-making, power or authority.

God of transformation hear our prayer

***Sing: Nkosi Nkosi, yibaneceba. Krestu Krestu, yibaneceba.***

*(please move forwards to lay down your stones)*

**Assurance of forgiveness and transformation**

There appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment". When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. (Luke 13:11-13)

Let us stand to listen to words we can trust, words which help us and our societies to stand up straight, be transformed and walk humbly in God's paths. *(please rise)*

Behold says God I am making all things new.

I will wipe every tear from their eyes (Rev. 21:5, 4)

For the mountains may depart

and the hills be removed,

but my steadfast love shall not depart from you,

and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,

says the Lord, who has compassion on you. (Isaiah 54:10)

In the name of Christ we are forgiven,

## Alleluia, amen!

### *Stand firm O stand firm (sung three times)*

traditional: Cameroon

*All*  
Stand O stand firm: stand, O stand firm:  
stand, O stand firm and see what the Lord - 2 - cap  
*Leader*  
do. O my sis - ter, stand ve - ry firm!

Arrangement, John L. Bell 1990 WGRG, Iona Community, Pearce Institute, 840 Govan Road, Glasgow G51 3UU, Scotland.

## **Meditation**

### *Stand firm oh stand firm (sung three times)*

#### **Prayers**

Great God we give you thanks that you call us out of silence to name hidden and domestic violence.

Today we pray for all those women who despite suffering from violence, continue to care for family and children, to grow and prepare food, carry water, earn a living and offer support to others.

We pray for women who are trafficked as domestic or sex workers; for women who are raped and do not know how to find words to name their pain or a way into the future.

We pray for transformation of our societies which often find it easier to judge the victims of violence than to solve the problems of injustice.

We pray that women's voices may be heard and taken into account in all peace and reconciliation work.

We pray for a transformation in the violent way many men act towards and think about women.

We pray for right and just relations between women and men that together we may transform and overcome violence in all its forms and learn to celebrate our diversity and interdependence

We look forward to the age of peace, when violence is banished, both women and men are able to love and to be loved, and the work and wealth of our world is justly shared.

*Silence or free prayer*

**Lord's Prayer**

**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.

**Ameni**

South Africa

A - - me - ni, a - -

Ba - ba - ba - ba - bam, ba - ba - ba - ba -

The first system of musical notation for 'Ameni' consists of three staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. It contains three measures of music with lyrics 'A - - me - ni, a - -'. The middle staff is a bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, containing three measures of music. The bottom staff is a bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, containing three measures of music with lyrics 'Ba - ba - ba - ba - bam, ba - ba - ba - ba -'.

me - ni, a - men, a - men, a - men, a - men.

bam, ba - ba - ba - ba bam - ba - bam - ba - bam, ba - ba - ba - ba - bam.

The second system of musical notation for 'Ameni' consists of three staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. It contains four measures of music with lyrics 'me - ni, a - men, a - men, a - men, a - men.'. The middle staff is a bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, containing four measures of music. The bottom staff is a bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, containing four measures of music with lyrics 'bam, ba - ba - ba - ba bam - ba - bam - ba - bam, ba - ba - ba - ba - bam.'.