

Refrain

*Wonderful Saviour, wonderful Saviour
Thou art so dear, so precious to me.
Wonderful Saviour, wonderful Saviour
My heart is filled with praises to Thee.*

Jesus my Lord, I'll ever adore Thee
Lay at Thy feet, my treasures of love
Lead me in ways to show forth Thy Glory
Ways that will end in Heaven above. **R**

When in that bright and beautiful city
I shall behold Your glories unfold
I shall be like Thee, wonderful Saviour
And I will sing while ages unfold. **R**

Reader 9: CLOSING

In loving memory, we have gathered today to commemorate and honour the suffering of women, both living and deceased, who have been victimized by violence. Only God's saving intervention can restore us to God's vision of humanity - living in peace and harmony in a world free from violence and sin. In Matthew 21:22, Jesus said that whatever we ask for in prayer with faith, we will receive. Let this service be our asking today. May our whispers of hope for an end to violence against women be elevated to the same level as the loud cries of the stones and indeed, even the mighty roar of the Holy Spirit. All this we ask in God's name.

Amen.



WICC

*Rooted in faith.
called to action ♯
De la foi à l'action*

Cover art: stones which washed down the mountainsides in Vermont in August 2011 during Hurricane Irene, violating the people and desecrating the landscape.

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*DECEMBER 6, 2011
SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE
AND ACTION on
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN*

In Loving Memory

**PRAYER SERVICE FOR THE NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND ACTION
ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
December 6, 2011**

The focus table is set with a Christ candle, Bible, fall leaves (to represent our fallen sisters), and a basket of stones. White ribbons for decoration & wearing.

Reader 1:

Let us take our sins, grief, troubles, pain, trials and temptations to the Lord.
Please join in the opening hymn, *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*.
Please stand

WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS

(by Joseph Scriven, 1820-1886 and Charles C. Converse, 1832-1918)

What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.

Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged; take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our refuge, take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in Prayer!
In His arms He'll take and shield you; you will find a solace there.

Reader 2: CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather as children of God.

All: to remember and heal.

We gather as children of God.

All: hoping for comfort and strength.

We gather as children of God.

All: looking for guidance and action.

We gather as children of God.

All: seeking justice and reconciliation.

Let us open ourselves to God's grace, as we worship in love and thanksgiving.
Please sit.

Reader 3: REMEMBRANCE

December 6th is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence

For You alone have been our help in ages past,
and You are our shelter and our hope in the years to come. **Amen.**
(prayer compiled by Denise Colterman-Fox. Found in We Dare to Say - Praying for Justice and Peace.) Used with Permission.

Reader 8: SHARING OF PEACE

God makes peace within us.

All: Let us claim it.

God makes peace between us.

All: Let us share it

The peace of God is here to stay.

All: Thanks be to God.

Let us greet one another as a sign of God's peace. *Sharing.*

Reader: 1

Please join in this worship song thanking God for taking away our sins. Jesus can come into a life and forgive sins and change their lives forever. For the persons who have been wronged, they are now worshipping God as God has made them free from all hurts.

WONDERFUL SAVIOUR

(by J M Harris 1867-1934)

<http://hymntime.com/tch/htm/w/o/n/wondsavr.htm>

Jesus my King, my wonderful Saviour,
All of my life is given to Thee
I am rejoicing in Thy salvation
Thy precious blood now maketh me free

Refrain

*Wonderful Saviour, wonderful Saviour
Thou art so dear, so precious to me.
Wonderful Saviour, wonderful Saviour
My heart is filled with praises to Thee.*

Freedom from sin, O wonderful story
All of its stains washed whiter than snow
Jesus has come to live in His temple
And with His love my heart is aglow. **R**

How then should Christians live? What can the followers of Jesus do to make the prophetic vision become a reality here and now? Here are just a few solutions.

- Starting at home, by behaving in a non-violent manner, create a peaceful atmosphere and environment to raise our children and teach them by example to live and act in non-aggressive ways.
- Promote peace by example.
- Support women's shelters in our cities.
- Volunteer!
- Be generous with our time.
- Support agencies who work to provide stable homes for children.

When children lack love and encouragement, they seek other ways to feel accepted. How can we improve the situation?

- Offer kind and encouraging words where possible.
- Engage in random acts of kindness.
- Look out for our neighbours, extending a helping hand when needed.

The Christian Scriptures teach us gender equality. Men and women are created as equals. The sacred scriptures of the many world religions teach the same truth. Therefore, all people ought to work for the establishment of a society which is peaceful, loving, caring, compassionate and non-violent. May God help us in this endeavour!

Reader 7: PRAYER

Loving Creator,

You who set the stars in the skies, and the dreams in our hearts,

we praise you and thank you for your many blessings.

You create and sustain all that is good and beautiful.

You give life to the earth.

You have called us to wholeness, to the fullness of life,

but as we gather here, we are conscious of our brokenness,

both as persons and as communities.

We have heard the cries for justice and peace from all over the earth.

We are moved to tears by the suffering and struggles of so many around the globe.

We sense the dark clouds of violence looming over us;

we sit in the shadow of death.

Grant us the grace to walk in righteousness.

Draw us closer to You that our hearts and minds may discern the way of peace shown by Your son, Jesus.

Against Women. It is a day to remember all women who are victims of violence. We remember women who have been abused and those who have been murdered: due to domestic violence, by planned actions, by random acts of violence, as targets of systematic hatred, and as victims of war. We pray for them and their families. We seek ways to end violence; locally and globally; striving to heal our broken world so that all people may live with dignity, without fear, as children of God.

Reader 4: INTENTIONS

Let us centre ourselves in prayer, but let our daily lives and actions cry out against injustice. As Jesus said, "If we keep quiet, even the stones will cry out." (Lk. 19:40). *Pause.*

We light the Christ candle as a light to guide our hands and feet to action.

Please choose a stone from the basket, and as you read your part, place the stone around the central candle to form a wreath of "stones that cry out."

Voice 1: I place this stone for mothers who answer the knock at the door or the phone call to hear the words: "Your daughter will not be returning home."

All: WE, WITH THE STONES, CRY OUT.

Voice 2: I place this stone for mothers, sisters, daughters, who have watched family members swept away by floods, winds and fires because we have not been caretakers of our green earth.

All: WE, WITH THE STONES, CRY OUT.

Voice 3: I place this stone, remembering our First Nations sisters, who are missing or known dead as "The Highway of Tears" flows endlessly on.

All: WE, WITH THE STONES, CRY OUT.

Voice 4: I place this stone for women and children who suffer from domestic violence and who endeavour to make a women's shelter into a new home.

All: WE, WITH THE STONES, CRY OUT.

Voice 5: I place this stone, remembering our sisters who face the terror of war on their doorsteps each day; the many who have died, fighting for freedom.

All: WE, WITH THE STONES, CRY OUT.

Voice 6: I place this stone for our sisters who are smuggled from their homelands, with promises of a brighter future and who become victims of trafficking.

All: WE, WITH THE STONES, CRY OUT.

Voice 7: I place this stone for women and children who toil endlessly in fields and factories so the rich may prosper. For those who face dire poverty each day and who walk miles for medical aid, only to be turned away.

All: WE, WITH THE STONES, CRY OUT.

Voice 8: I place this stone for women who walk hand in hand with their children to seek food, especially during the African famine, only to have them die in their arms.

All: WE, WITH THE STONES, CRY OUT.

Voice 9: I place this stone for women who battle corrupt and unfair government agencies, as they seek to create a safer environment for their children.

All: WE, WITH THE STONES, CRY OUT.

Voice 10: I place this stone for women who face slurs, discrimination and violent acts because racism still abounds.

All: WE, WITH THE STONES, CRY OUT.

Voice 11: I place this stone for the victims of random acts of violence, especially the 14 women who were senselessly murdered at École Polytechnique de Montréal, just because they were women.

All: WE, WITH THE STONES, CRY OUT.

Voice 12: I place this stone for the families of the 14 women whose lives were suddenly and forever changed by a senseless act of violence. May God grant them comfort.

All: WE, WITH THE STONES, CRY OUT.

Voice 13: I place this stone, remembering in prayer perpetrators of violence and those suffering fear, pain and bitterness because of it. May God's love and forgiveness bring about healing.

All: WE, WITH THE STONES, CRY OUT.

Voice 14: I place this stone, remembering in prayer those who are in authority: politicians, health care providers, teachers, clergy - grant them wisdom and compassion as they make decisions regarding daily lives.

All: WE, WITH THE STONES, CRY OUT.

Reader 4: *Anyone who wishes to place a stone with another intention is invited to do so now.*

SILENCE, HYMN OR INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Reader 1:

When the wrong that has been done to a person is so great that they don't know which way to turn, they can turn to the Rock of Ages, Jesus, and find comfort, peace and healing. The perpetrator can hear *how to* find forgiveness and going forward, live a pure life in Christ Jesus. Let us sing (or listen to) this hymn which speaks of forgiveness:

ROCK OF AGES

(by Augustus M. Toplady, 1740 - 1778 and Thomas Hastings, 1784 - 1872)

Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure:
Save from wrath and make me pure.

Could my tears forever flow,
Could my zeal no languor know
These for sin could not atone:
Thou must save and Thou alone
In my hand no price I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyes shall close in death,
When I rise to worlds unknown,
And behold Thee on Thy throne,
Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee.

Reader 5: SCRIPTURE - Isaiah 65: 17-25

Reader 6: REFLECTION

We have just heard Isaiah's vision of the Peaceable Kingdom of God. In this vision the city streets are full of happy children playing. And people, women included, all live to a ripe old age.

When Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, Peter tries to defend him and draws his sword, cutting off the right ear of the slave of the High Priest. But Jesus' reply is very clear: "Put your sword back into its sheath." Violence is not the way of Jesus.