

Vigil Service

Welcome and call to worship

Welcome to our service which is part of Mothers' Union's global action against domestic and sexual abuse. As we raise our voices on behalf of the voiceless, we also raise our voices in worship and intercession to our loving righteous God. We will include our act of silence in this service.

I love the Lord because he hears my voice
and my prayer for mercy.
Because he bends down to listen,
I will pray as long as I have breath!
Psalms 116:1-2 (NLT)

We draw near in faith to the Lord who draws near to us
with love and hears our prayers for mercy.

Opening prayers and confession

Loving Lord,
who came to proclaim justice,
make us bold to speak out truth
and break the power of silence.

Loving Lord,
who came to minister mercy
make us agents of compassion
to release the oppressed from fear.

**Merciful and loving God,
forgive us when we have closed our eyes
to the sufferings of others;
when we have stayed silent
in the face of abuse and oppression;**

**when we have declined to challenge
unacceptable actions and attitudes.**

**Take away our selfishness
and fill us with new resolve
to proclaim justice and mercy
in the name of Christ. Amen**

Bible Reading

Jesus stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

‘The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the
prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.’

Luke 4:16-19

Intercessions

Loving Lord,
we give you thanks that you call us out of silence
to name hidden and domestic abuse.

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

Loving Lord,
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.

Loving Lord,
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.

Loving Lord,
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,
and both women and men
are able to love and to be loved,
and the work and wealth
of our world is justly shared.

**Loving Lord,
hear our cries for justice
and break the chains of abuse
that all may live in safety.**

**Loving Lord,
hear our cries for righteousness
and break the chains of oppression
that all may live in freedom**

**Loving Lord,
hear our cries for mercy
and break the chains of fear
that all may live in peace.**

3 minute Silence

Amen

Closing Prayers and Blessing

May God give us eyes
to recognise abuse where it exists.
May God give us a heart
to reach out in compassion.
May God give us courage and resolve
to make a difference wherever we are.

And the Blessing of God Almighty,
the Holy Trinity,
guide our steps today,
this week and always.

Go in peace and in resolve. **Amen**

Source unknown