

Rekindling Relationship – A Worship Guide

Based on Worship at MC Sask 2024 ADS

On March 8-9, 2024, members from MC Sask congregations and partner organizations from across the province gathered at North Star Mennonite Church in Drake, Saskatchewan to rekindle and tend our relationships. In our worship and work, we found again the delight of our relationship with Jesus, with folks from other congregations, with the programs and commissions of MC Sask, and with partners in the wider church.

We invite to utilize some of the songs and prayers from the event in the worship of your own congregation. As we draw near to Jesus, may we also embrace one another as gifts given in the love of God.

Scripture - Romans 12:4-5

Focus Statement - Gathering around Jesus draws us into relationship with one another.

Song Suggestions

- "Oh How Good It Is" by Keith and Kristen Getty
(<https://store.gettymusic.com/us/song/oh-how-good-it-is/>)
- "Summoned by the God Who Made Us" (VT 1)
- "Let Us Build a House" (VT 36)
- "You're Not Alone" (VT 779)
- "One Is the Body" (VT 386)
- "We Are One in the Spirit" (VT 387)
- "There's a Wild Hope in the Wind" (VT 828)
- "A Little Like Yours"
(<https://togetherinworship.net/QuickSearch?search=Song+-+A+Little+Like+Yours&sort=relevance>)

Gathering

Leader: Come, let us build a house where Love dwells,

People: for God dwells in the presence of God's people.

L: Come, let us build a house where dreams of justice and shalom come true,

P: where all can know the blessing of belonging.

L: Come, let us make home for every outcast and stranger,

P: where the weak find strength and the afflicted grace.

L: Let us fill this house with prayer and laughter, proclaiming

ALL: All are welcome, all are welcome.

All are welcome in this place!

Offering Prayer - VT #1016, adapted

Jesus of love and leftovers,
we struggle with what to share
and how much is enough.
Sometimes we are the disciples,
quietly suggestion you send the needy crowds away.
Sometimes we are the crowds,
bringing only our desire and need to be close to you.
When we have little,
embolden us to share it.
All we are and all we have comes from you.
When we have nothing,
welcome us to stay and eat.
All we are and all we have comes from you.
In giving and receiving,
we participate in the miracle of enough.
We have enough when we have you.
Amen.

Sharing & Prayer

Great Giver of every good,
we bring to you these our stories,
our laughter and also our worries,
our enthusiasm and also our pain.
Nothing is lost in your hands,
none of your varied gifts are given in vain,
no labor or prayer of our offered to you goes forth
but returns, accomplishing what you intend for it.
You hold us in love;
please hold our stories and our conversations in your heart with tenderness,
making our every story and every work new,
in righteousness, in justice, in joy, and in the Holy Spirit of your Son.
Amen.

Sermon Seed

Read Romans 12:1-6. In our congregations, we find many gifts, many functions, many tasks—all from the same Spirit of Jesus. Each and all carry us toward God's holy, pleasing, perfect desire for a world made whole in the love of God.

In verse 4, Paul names different ways of being congregations, of ministering to one another, and of following Jesus. The following list doesn't describe our strengths or talents; instead v 3 attributes these to God's faithful promise working among, through, and beyond us, even in our weaknesses. To know these gifts, we need Spirit-enabled discernment, the renewing of our minds.

Where have you witnessed God's faithful promise given in and through your relationships? What gifts have you seen at work in your congregation? When have you received gifts (maybe in a time of need) from outside your congregation? How might your congregation celebrate the way God's strength upholds you and others?

You might consider inviting one or two other folks from the congregation sharing their stories of experience God's strength given through their relationship.

Responses

Use one or more of the following response activities to rekindle and tend relationships within your congregation.

- (1) Turn to 2-3 people seated near you. Share one story about when you have *felt proud* or *felt joyful* about your congregation in the last year.
- (2) Turn to 2-3 people seated near you. Share one story about when you have *felt grief* or *worry* in your congregation during the last year.
- (3) Turn to 2-3 people seated near you. What is *one question* your congregation might have *for God* as you face the coming year? What is one question God might have *for your congregation*?

Closing Prayer

There are many gifts, but the same Spirit.
There are many works, but the same God.
And the Spirit gives each as it chooses.
Alleluia! Praise God!

Eternal Giver, Dreamer of Good Dreams,
Worker of our world's renewal,
receive praise: the stories we tell of your work among us,
the whispers of the dreams and visions you've given us,
the songs of joy and of lament we bring to you, Giver of life.
May our mouths be filled with stories of your generosity,
may our days be made testament to your mighty compassion.
May we be made witnesses of the Son of your love,
Your great Gift given for the healing of every hurt.
To the praise of your glory, we pray. Amen.

Sending

May God, who calls you to this ministry grant you grace, joy, and endurance.
May Christ guide and empower you for service and leadership.

May the Holy Spirit fill you with the gifts you need.
May the One whose love unites us as the body of Christ strengthen us to live and
proclaim the gospel together. Amen.