
Worship Resources for Ukama Partnership Sunday

Some Prayer Suggestions:

This prayer comes from the World Council of Churches Prayer Cycle

(<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/prayer-cycle/week-22-botswana-zimbabwe>)

Prayer from Zimbabwe

Lord God,

we give you thanks for sending your only Son to give us life.

In the midst of wealth we are crushed by poverty,
and while we are offered Christ-life in all its fullness,
we are surrounded by disease, death and destruction.

We are tempted to despair, and yet keep hoping,
knowing that you care.

At times we weep silent tears, and cry out with deep emotion.

We come to you, our only hope and refuge.

Thank you for the gift of laughter,
even when the going is tough.

With you, O Lord, we may be troubled but not destroyed.

By Rev. Farai Chirisa, Zimbabwe. www.ctal.org.uk/zimbabwe.htm

Unison Prayer (from Zimbabwe)

Open my eyes that they may see the deepest needs of the people; move my hands that they may feed the hungry; touch my heart that it may bring warmth to the despairing; teach me the generosity that welcomes strangers; let me share my possessions to clothe the naked; give me the care that strengthens the sick; make me share in the quest to set the prisoner free. In sharing our anxieties and our love, our poverty and our prosperity, we partake of your divine presence.

(adapted from *A Procession of Prayers*, ed. John Carden, c. 1998 by World Council of Churches Publications.)

An Opening Prayer (Africa) From Janet Morley, *Bread of Tomorrow*, Orbis Books

Holy One, enlarge my heart,

that it may be big enough to receive the greatness of your love.

Holy One, stretch my heart,

that it may take into it all those,

who with me around the world, believe in Jesus Christ.

Then stretch it again

that it may take into it all those who do not know Christ,

but who are my brothers and sisters because I know him.
And stretch it still, that it may take in all those
who are not lovely in my eyes
and those hands I do not want to touch.
Enlarge my heart, O God, through Jesus Christ, my Savior. Amen

Prayer of Dedication: (Zimbabwe) from Maren Tirabassi's *Gifts of Many Cultures*
God of All Good, our gifts we bring to you. May they be multiplied and blessed, as the fish and
the loaves were. Little though our offering is, but meaningful in love, may it be. May they be
received as tokens of our love. Amen.

Some Song Suggestions:

Tinotenda Jesu is a song from Zimbabwe that has blessed many an Ukama gathering. The
simplicity of sentiment (Thank You Jesus, Alleluia, Amen) and ease of singing can bless the
whole congregation. The words are:

Tinotenda Jesu. Tinotenda Jesu. Tinotenda Jesu. Alleluia, Amen.

Thank you Jesus, Amen. Thank You Jesus Amen. Thank you Jesus, Amen. Alleluia, Amen.

Another simple song for worship and a good introit is "Uyai Mose." You may have this as
"Come All You People" in a Hymnal or Praise Song book on your shelves. It was also included
in "Come All You People: Shorter Songs for Worship" from the Iona Community. You can
find many versions of this on YouTube. The words are:

Shona:

Uyai mose, tinamate Mwari;

Uyai mose, tinamate Mwari;

Uyai mose, tinamate Mwari;

Uyai mose zvino.

English:

Come all you people, Come and praise your Maker.

Come all you people, Come and praise your Maker.

Come all you people, Come and praise your Maker.

Come now and worship the Lord.

Additionally, at the end of each worship service in Zimbabwe, the congregation sings the
benediction together followed by the 3 fold amen.

*May the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart,
Be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.
Amen. Amen. Amen.*

Suggestions for Zimbabwean Rituals/Customs:

Hand washing is an act of hospitality among members of the churches and a ritual that begins every church meal. This is how it is done: Two people stand together, one with a pitcher of water, the other with a basin and towel draped over the arm. (Usually these are women or girls) The twosome moves around the community to serve. The one with the pitcher pours a small amount of water slowly over the person's hands. The water is caught in the basin and the towel is offered. Every one participates, then the event begins. This happens in homes, in churches at meals and potlucks. There is a lot of eye contact while all this is going on, and always smiles. It is really a gracious custom, and quite moving.

At the communion table, the same ritual is observed by the officiant before touching any of the elements. Sometimes the pitcher is omitted, and the minister simply rinses his or her hands in a small basin.

Offering: The offering is gathered up by a number of people who walk through the congregation and receive it in buckets, bags, baskets, bowls or on open Bibles. It is brought forward often with people dancing. At many of the churches the offering is counted during the service, so that the amount given can be announced and celebrated!

Relinquishing Seats: As newcomers arrive, those who have been sitting on benches move out of their seats and onto the floor (or ground) so that those who have walked a long way can have a comfortable seat. (There are often more people than seats!) One pastor in Zimbabwe, commenting on this act of hospitality said, "Remember it is very hot, and someone has been walking for a long distance in sun to come to church. When the chair is given it is a gesture of welcome and recognition that you have come far and must rest in the best place." Worship seating is still often segregated by gender.

Worship in Zimbabwe is filled with singing and dancing, accompanied by drumming and hoshos (gourd-like seed-filled shakers). Most every aspect of worship is wrapped in song. Generally, one person simply begins singing, and the others will join in on the hymn. The dancing also seems to begin spontaneously. It seems that most know all the verses to all the hymns. Not everyone has a hymnal. When someone is asked to pray, he or she will usually sing a verse of a hymn before praying. When singing Zimbabwean hymns, drums and rhythm instruments are authentic sounds.

Passing the Peace at the end of worship in a way that all will greet all: In Zimbabwe and many other African church settings, at the end of worship, the pastor greets the congregation at the back of the church (as is common in many NH churches). When the first person shakes the pastor's hand, he/she stands behind him. The next person shakes the hand of the pastor and the person next to him/her. If this continues, with each person adding him/herself to the line, every person in the church will have greeted every other person in the church. When doing this, a circle is often formed in the churchyard just outside the main entrance.

Rev. Kim McKerley and Rev. Ezra Chapola contributed these worship resources.