

## Contemplative Prayer: Remembering our Call

**Centering Time** — As people gather play music from *The Inviting Word Audiocassette* (Year 1, 2, or 3). You might select a song such as “I Want Jesus To Walk With Me” sung by Marian Anderson (on *The Inviting Word Audiocassette*, Year 1, Side B, Number 10).

### Silence

### Centering Breath

**Scripture** — Read one of the following scriptures (slowly, more than once):

Luke 1:26-28 (The call and response of Mary)

Acts 8:26-40 (Philip and the Ethiopian court official – one point of this scripture is that the Ethiopian helped to spread the Gospel in Ethiopia)

Acts 9:1-19 (Paul’s conversion and call)

### Silence

**Journaling** — Use the following spiritual direction questions to help you reflect on the passage you chose:

- ! With what word, phrase or character did you identify? Why? Explain.
- ! How is the call in the passage similar or different from your own call into ministry?
- ! What in this passage speaks to you? How does this support, inspire or strengthen you in your call response and practice? How does this passage challenge you in your ministry? Explain.
- ! When did you receive your call into ministry? Who was instrumental in helping you to hear God’s call upon your life and work?
- ! What do you need from God in order to assist you in sustaining and growing in your current path of ministry?
- ! You may end by thanking God for your call and asking for what you now need.

**Sharing in Pairs** – Divide into pairs and share as you choose your answers to two or three of the spiritual direction questions. One person shares while the other person listens prayerfully. Only clarifying questions may be asked by the listener, otherwise the speaker should not be interrupted. When the speaker has finished speaking, the listener simply thanks the speaker for sharing and silently prays for the speaker. Then the listener shares, following the same pattern.

**Prayer Partners** — The partners are encouraged to pray for each other during the event and in our work together as Partners In Education.

Thanks to Carolyn Landers Pettigrew for this contemplative prayer design.

## **Contemplative Prayer: Being Attentive to God In Our Work**

Contemplative prayer can help us be attentive to God in our lives and in our work. Through habitual prayer, our spiritual life is united with our ministry and work. God is the background and surrounding presence in our work as we pray constantly through word, scripture, sight, sound, smell, or touch. Spiritually grounded in God's presence underneath each thought and action, we experience unity and wholeness in life, self, work, call, and ministry.

**Centering Song** — As people gather play “Thuma Mina (Send Me Now)” performed by John Manly, or “You Are Mine” sung by Sandra Simon and Allie Laurie (found on *The Inviting Word Audiocassette*, Year 3, Side A, Number 4 and 5).

### **Silence**

**Centering Breath** — During this time, center on your breathing and in this deep calmness center in God's presence. We will end with a simple quiet prayer of love and desire for God's presence and guidance now and during our working time together.

- ! Take long slow breaths. Breathing in all that is of God and breathing out toxins and tensions and all that would block us from sensing God's presence within our time and work.
- ! Continue breathing slowly, notice each breath, then begin noticing what's in your thoughts and, as each thought or sensation comes, give it gently to God.
- ! Continue your gentle desire for God's presence, breathing slowly and gently with an attitude of thanksgiving and appreciation. With your mind and spirit, begin gently to listen, letting a short word or phrase rise from your deepest center and being. Do not force it but listen as it rises to just below your consciousness. Hold the word or short phrase in your mind.
- ! Begin to gently and tenderly repeat the word or phrase in your mind. Continue to be relaxed and repeat it until it drops within you and then sit quietly and silently, resting in the presence of God. When thoughts or distractions come, gently repeat the word or phrase until you can again sit in the quiet and warmth of God's love. Remain still for the next ten to twenty minutes (this time limit will depend upon the experience one has with silence).
- ! Closing: When the time is right invite the participants to return to normal consciousness with silent words or unspoken thoughts of thanksgiving and prayer.

**Journaling** — Use the following questions to help you reflect on this experience:

- ! What was the word or phrase that the God gave you?
- ! How did the word or phrase help the quality of your experience of God's presence?
- ! Consider keeping this word or phrase as part of habitual, centering prayer and return to it, praying it underneath your working time during this meeting, especially when you become kidnaped by ego, tensions, or other distraction.

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