

UCW 45th Anniversary and Memorial Service
1962 - 2007

(In preparation for this service you will need a table at centre front, an open Bible on a display stand, a loaf of bread, a bouquet of flowers, and ushers for the required number of offering plates. The hymns are chosen from Voices United, and it is recommended that a modern translation of the Scripture be used.)

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Call to Worship: We are gathered together today to celebrate the 45th Anniversary of the United Church Women (UCW) and to praise God for the lives of women in our congregations who have given their time, energy and talent for their church in the years gone by.

Purpose of the UCW: *(please stand if you are able and repeat our purpose in unison)*

To unite women of the congregation
for the total mission of the Church
and to provide a medium through which
we may express our loyalty and devotion
to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, Study,
Fellowship and Service.

Hymn #707 VU: *(please remain standing to sing **For the Faithful Who Have Answered**)*
*(sung to the tune **Hymn to Joy, #232**)*

Scripture Reading: I Corinthians 12: 4 - 7

Prayer of Thanksgiving: *(please respond with “**Spirit of God, bless our celebration**” each time that you hear the word “**dreams**”)* Let us pray:

Loving God, we thank You for each woman in the past who shared her gifts in the hope that Your love will be made known to all Your people. We remember their courage and we pray that we continue in their vision and **dreams**.

Response: *Spirit of God, bless our celebration.*

Creator God, we thank You for the energy that is present among us today. Each woman in our gathering is dedicated to serve You and fulfil Your purpose for us in this time and place. Give us joy in our work, hope in our vision and imagination in our **dreams**.

Response: *Spirit of God, bless our celebration.*

All-knowing God, we thank You for giving us faith that You will be with us tomorrow and every day in our future, guiding and forgiving and encouraging us. Help each one of us to reach out to one another as we endeavour to fulfill our **dreams**.

Response: *Spirit of God, bless our celebration. AMEN*

CELEBRATION OF SYMBOLS OF SERVICE

THE OPEN BIBLE is brought forward and placed on the table.

The Sacred Scriptures remind us of our purpose “to express our loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian Witness [and] Study....” It symbolizes the gifts of women who have led in prayer and devotions and Bible Studies, who have served as Elders, Stewards and Trustees, who have taught Sunday School and led Youth Groups and CGIT, who have served Communion and made hospital visits and sent cards and letters.

A LOAF OF BREAD is brought forward and placed on the table.

This loaf of bread reminds us of our purpose “to express our loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in ...Fellowship and Service”. It symbolizes nourishment for our bodies and the fellowship of sharing around the table. We remember the hours that many women have spent preparing food for Church Suppers, Receptions for funerals and weddings, Congregational Fellowships and Coffee Hours, Presbytery Suppers, the labour of cleaning and polishing, the preparation of Communion, snacks for kids and cookies for Seniors, volunteering in Soup Kitchens, and hosting Rummage Sales and furnishing bedrooms in Transition Houses.

A BOUQUET OF FLOWERS is brought forward and placed on the table.

This bouquet of flowers reminds us of the beauty that women have brought to our worship and to our lives. Women have offered their creativity in arranging flowers for the Sanctuary and for the sick, making quilts and crafts, playing the piano and organ, singing in the choir, decorating for special events, putting on plays and variety concerts, and carolling at Nursing Homes. These women have presented a beauty of Spirit that transcended the mundane tasks at hand.

PRESENTATION OF THE WHITE FLOWERS

Each year our UCW groups are saddened by the death of long time members. These were our friends, supporters and leaders. We remember them now with the placing of three white (roses) in the bouquet.

The OFFERING PLATES are brought forward and held by ushers.

These offering plates symbolize the many offerings that women have made to causes too numerous to include them all: The Mission and Service Fund , building and renovating projects, funds for organs, pianos, choir gowns and choir music, Church camps, Sunday School and midweek group supplies, local charities, Fellowship of the Least Coin, and hours spent canvassing in the community for Cancer Society, Heart Fund, Kidney Foundation and all manner of charity fund drives.

We will now place our gifts in these offering plates today and remember all the good things that have been accomplished and dream of the good things that we as UCW can do in the future, in the name of Jesus Christ who sustains and challenges us all. Our offerings will now be received.

(appropriate music)

Dedication of Offering:

We place these gifts, our God, with all the gifts from our hands and hearts beside those gifts of women in our past. They represent the products of our work and devotion to You and to Your church. Bless us as we celebrate all that we have and are, as we dedicate ourselves to the service of others. In Jesus' name we pray, AMEN

The Offering Plates are placed on the table among the other Symbols of Service.

Hymn # 511 VU (*please stand if you are able to sing “Before You Now, O God, your Servants Stand”. We will use the words “that ministry of hope” in the second verse, as indicated at the bottom of the page.*)

Blessing #428 VU (*please remain standing and read in unison the benediction #428 VU*)

Written for Wilmot UCW to present at the Spring Rally of Woolastook Presbytery UCW's held at Marysville United Church, May 12, 2007.