

Ecumenical Pre-Assembly
International AIDS Conference
Ontario, Canada

Faith in Action: Keeping the Promise

Worship Thursday morning 10 August 2006

Musical Preparation

Greeting

The promise of the one seated on the throne:
"See, I am making all things new." Revelation 21:5

The promise of the resurrected one:
"I am with you always, to the end of the age."

The promise borne on the wind:
***The Spirit bears witness with our spirit
that we are children of God,
and if children, then heirs,
heirs of God and join heirs with Christ.***
Romans 8:15b-17a

We worship a faithful God, keeping the promises of love.
In the name of the Blessed Trinity, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Hymn Standing on the promises

Prayer

God,
forever promising,
giving new dreams
and speaking new possibilities
giving your Spirit so all your children can breathe free.
Keep your promises
so that scientists, nurses, husbands, politicians, pastors, mothers, counselors, banks, companies,
and presidents keep theirs,
and your people live abundantly,
through Jesus Christ. ***Amen.***

Entrance of the Word Rakanaka Zimbabwe

While this is sung, the first reader and a person carrying a large stone, go to the stage and to the altar.

$\text{♩} = 112$ Zimbabwe

Leader

1. Ra - ka - na - ka van - ge - ri. Ra - ka -
 2. Ri - ne mo - to van - ge - ri. Ri - ne

1. Ra - ka - na - ka
 2. Ri - ne mo - to

na - ka van - ge - ri.
 mo - to van - ge - ri.

Ra - ka - na - ka
 Ri - ne mo - to

All

Chin - gu - ri nda - ku - u - dza ku - ti ra - ka - na - ka. Chin -

gu - ri nda - ku - u - dza ku - ti ra - ka - na - ka

The Gospel is good. Over and over I tell you it is good. The Gospel has power. Over and over I tell you it has power.

When the song finishes, the stone bearer lifts up the stone, and places it on the table. If possible the reader lifts the Bible, then props it against the stone, then opens it to read.

First promise Jeremiah 29:10-14 read in a language other than English

Introduction

With all those in exile, those banned from their homes, those deported, those cast out, we hear God's promise through Jeremiah

For thus says the Lord: I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

Amen.

When the reading is over the reader takes the Bible and places it in a big clay tray.

Response Chinguri ndakuudza kuti rakanak.

While we sing, the reader of the second lesson comes along with another person carrying a large stone.

When the refrain is finished, the person lifts the stone and places it on the table. The reader lifts the Bible props it against the stone, and then reads.

Second promise Revelation 21:3-4

Introduction

Hear the promise of the new heaven and the new earth:

“See the home of God is among mortals,
God will dwell with them as their God, they will be God’s peoples.
And God will be with them;
God will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more,
Mourning and crying and pain will be no more
for the first things have passed away.”

When the reading is over the reader takes the Bible and places it in a big clay tray.

Response Chinguri ndakuudza kuti rakanak.

While we sing, the reader of the third lesson comes with another person carrying a large stone.

When the refrain is finished, the person lifts the stone and places it on the table. The reader lifts the Bible props it against the stone, and then reads.

Gospel reading John 14:18-20

Introduction

Here the promise of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of John:

“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

When the reading is over the reader takes the Bible and places it in a big clay tray.

Response Rakanaka

During the song the Bible readers leave the stage, but the stone people stay.

Response to the Word

As we gather before the World AIDS Conference, we remember the great promises of God. These promises are stones of hope in the midst of this crisis. On the table in front of you, or on your seat if you are in the back, are stones. You are invited to take the stone in your hand and hold it for a moment. Remember one of God’s promises which has supported you throughout the struggle with HIV and AIDS. Maybe it is a Bible verse. Maybe it is something that someone with HIV or AIDS has said to you. Remember one of God’s promises which encourages you for the days ahead here in Toronto.

To model what the people are supposed to do, the three ‘stone’ people of front take their stones and hold them.

Prayers of intercession

Holding on to God’s promises, we pray for God’s people

If the three stones at the front are too heavy to keep holding, they could put them on the altar but keep their

hands on them.

Gracious God,
your promises are life giving,
but for many death is close at hand
lurking in their bodies
waiting to make them defenseless.
The farmlands of whole villages have been turned into graveyards,
so widespread is the clutches of AIDS.
We pray for those for whom your promises seem remote
for those without medicine
without needed care,
without loved ones nearby.
God, keep your promises.

Response Kyrie

Faithful God,
we pray for this meeting of Christians before the World Aids Conference to come.
Instill within us your promises,
that we might be faithful people.
building together covenants
which lift up the fallen and heal the sick,
which claim orphans as your heirs, and the outcast as our sisters and brothers.
Make us fearless in serving you.

Response Kyrie

We are all affected by HIV and AIDS;
we are the body of Christ.
We have lost close relatives;
heal our bodies.
We have lost close friends and neighbours, church and work mates;
heal our hearts.
We have been rejected and despised by ones we thought we could count on;
heal our spirits."

We have lost our hope.
heal our minds.
We put our trust in you;
You are Emmanuel,
you are God With Us.
You will never leave us or forsake us;
You will be with us to the end of the ages.

Fulata L. Moyo Malawi and Musa W. Dube Bostwana
Source *AfricaPraying* ed Duba p. 44

Response Kyrie

The Lord's Prayer

Response to the Word.

This morning, we want to claim this place as a place of God's promise. Do you have a word of promise, in your own language, which you might be ready to speak aloud. As the people with the big stones pass through the congregation, people near them are invited to raise their stones high and say their word of promise. We will make a verbal wave of promises from the front all the way to the back.

Do you have in your mind a promise? As Christians at the start of this meeting, we are invited to fill this place with the promises of God.

The three stone bearers start walking through the tables. Maybe we add to this the clay container holding the Bibles. They might need to encourage the first group to do this, then they walk quite quickly.

Hymn

Kenya

Leader

1. An - a - we - za. An - a -
 2. Nim - shi - ndi. Nim -

People

1. An - a - we - za.
 2. Nim - shi - ndi.

we - za Ye - su. An - a - we - za. kwe - li.
 shi - ndi Ye - su. Nim - shi - ndi Kwe - li.

An - a - we - za.
 Nim - shi - ndi.

People An - a - we - za. Ye - le - le. Ye - le - le. An - a - we - za.
 Nim - shi - ndi. Ye - le - le. Ye - le - le. Nim - shi - ndi.

3. An-a-po-nya. 1. God is able. 3. God can heal.
 4. Ana-o-ko-wa. (Pronounced A-o-ko-wa.) 2. God can win. 4. God can save.

Benediction