

## World Day of Prayer Worship Service 2023

### Taiwan (Shortened Version)

#### “I have heard about your Faith”

#### WELCOME AND GREETINGS

**Leader 1:** “Ping-an” (pronounced peng-an) This phrase in Taiwanese means “May God grant you peace, a peaceful relationship with God and with one another.”

**Leader 2:** Welcome! On behalf of the sisters in Taiwan, we would like to welcome all of you to join us today in worship.

**Leader 1:** Dear sisters and brothers, through this celebration we would like to share our experiences with you and to witness to God’s wonderful grace and mighty works.

#### OPENING SONG: Praise my soul the King of Heaven

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven,  
to his feet your tribute bring;  
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,  
who like you his praise should sing?  
Alleluia, alleluia!  
praise the everlasting King.

Praise him for his grace and favour  
to our fathers in distress;  
praise him, still the same as ever,  
slow to blame and swift to bless;  
Alleluia, alleluia!  
glorious in his faithfulness.

Father-like, he tends and spares us,  
All our hopes and fears he knows;  
in his hands he gently bears us,  
rescues us from all our foes:  
Alleluia, alleluia!  
widely as his mercy flows.

Angels, help us to adore him;  
you behold him face to face;  
sun and moon, bow down before him,  
praise him all in time and space.  
Alleluia, alleluia!  
praise with us the God of grace.

Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847)

## CALL TO WORSHIP

**Leader 1:** Praise to the Lord. We thank God for all the blessings bestowed upon Taiwan.

**Leader 2:** Praise God, the Creator, who created this beautiful island covered with mountain forests and nurtured by the ocean. Taiwan is rich in natural resources.

**All:** **Let the name of the Lord be praised. May our glory be with us.**

**Leader 1:** More than one hundred years ago missionaries came to Taiwan to spread the good news. The people heard the gospel and received the grace of salvation.

**All:** **Let the name of the Lord be praised. May your glory be with us.**

**Leader 2:** Since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Taiwan has been colonised by different foreign forces. The people experienced ethnic, cultural, social and political conflict and integration. By the grace of God, the islanders can live in peace. Taiwan shows great hospitality and is willing to help and become a blessing to others.

**All:** **Gracious God, we thank you and praise you. May your glory be with us.**

**SONG:** **Open my eyes Lord, I want to see Jesus**

Open our eyes Lord  
 We want to see Jesus  
 To reach out and touch Him  
 And say that we love Him  
 Open our ears Lord  
 And Help us to listen  
 Open our eyes Lord  
 We want to see Jesus

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Leon Lumpkins

## PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

**Leader 1:** Forgiving God, we confess our sins to you. We sin against you; we fail to take care of the land you entrusted to us and use it in unrighteous ways, causing pollution and the extinction of various species.

**All:** **Oh Lord, have mercy on us.**

**Leader 2:** Gracious God, we are selfish and arrogant. We have overlooked human dignity; we ignore the needs of minorities, migrants and immigrants. We hear the cries of the land, women, children and young people, but we have not done enough to respond to the grace that we received. These actions have caused some people to suffer and be oppressed.

**All:** **Oh Lord, have mercy on us.**

## Assurance of Pardon

**Leader 1:** Oh God, you are faithful and righteous. May you forgive us, cleanse away our sins and help us live in the light. May you give us a spirit of wisdom and revelation as we come to know you and be filled with love and faith. May you reveal yourself to us so that we may know the immeasurable greatness of your power.

**All:** **Amen.**

## THE WORD OF GOD

### SCRIPTURE READING – Ephesians 1: 15-19

**Reader 1:** I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power

## MEDITATION

## LETTERS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

*Congregation remains seated throughout*

**Leader 2:** Just as Paul wrote a letter of encouragement to the saints, so we, having heard the faith stories of women and girls in Taiwan, are sending them letters of encouragement. Let us hear what these have to say.

**Woman 1:** Dear Sister Fen-Jiau (pronounced fong-jiao),

I have heard of your faith. You, a middle-aged, indigenous woman, have become a wonderful blessing to women of a similar age.

As a homemaker, you have dedicated yourself to your family for decades. When you tried to find a job to support your family, you were challenged at the workplace. You faced discrimination because of your age and felt pressured to accept social rules against women. You felt you were neglecting your family responsibility when the reason you looked for a job was to take care of your family. Facing a dilemma, you trusted God's guidance and found the path to support your family by teaching traditional weaving and taking care of your tribe. Your creative potential and strength thrived once again. Your testimony is a wonderful blessing that inspires many sisters.

**Woman 2:** Dear Sister Pearl,

As a hospital cleaner on the front-line during the COVID-19 pandemic, you risked your life to clean and sanitise patients' rooms in the hospital. You could not go home after work as you did not want to risk infecting your three young children. Struggling on a meagre income, you still needed to rent a room and live there to minimise contamination risks. During self-isolation you could not be there to take care of your family so you felt frustrated and lonely. I am so impressed by the sacrifices you made and pray for you earnestly, hoping that the Lord of my life will also be your strength.

### **Response Prayer.**

**All:** **Merciful God, we come to you in our prayers like the faithful women in the letters who told you of their struggles and hopes. They were not defeated by the difficulties but empowered by your wisdom. We are not alone, for you are listening. We thank you for your presence, guidance and protection as we walk through the valley of shadows. May we glorify you and become a living testimony of Christ.**

### **INTERCESSORY PRAYERS**

**Leader 1:** Merciful God, Taiwan has been caught in a superpower struggle. It has been isolated internationally for decades, though not officially recognised by the international community, Taiwan has tried its best to help the world in agriculture, technology, medicine and humanitarian assistance.

**Leader 2** Oh Holy Spirit, may you grant people in Taiwan the strength and wisdom to cope with an uncertain future. We trust you to help Taiwan to be a blessing in the world.

Divine Consoler, you are the Lord of the world. We cling to you; we give ourselves and Taiwan to you, and ask you to watch over us in our weakness. You are our fortress and place of safety.

**Leader 3** Creator God, we thank you for entrusting us with this amazing world rich in natural resource. However, we ignore the cry of Mother Earth: we are facing ecological problems, such as air and water pollution, the waste disposal crisis, the over-utilisation of hillsides, habitat destruction and climate change.

**Leader 1** Wonderful God, you showed us the value of family when you placed your Son within our human family. We ask you to bless all those who have the responsibility of raising children and providing for their needs. May the examples parents give be rooted in the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Leader 2** Holy Spirit, may your guiding influence prevail upon those in Taiwan who seek to discriminate against those working women who have to support their families financially. Bless all women

who show, through their examples, that your love has helped them overcome great hardships in the workplace.

**Leader 3** Loving God, you created us in your own image and blessed us. You saw that it was good. We pray for women and girls who bring love and justice into the world.

**Leader 1** Holy Spirit, please give us wisdom to fight for the marginalized and the oppressed, the poor and the helpless. Give us courage to speak up for them and inspire leaders to create a safer place for women and girls.

**Leader 2** Caring God, to you all people are equal and deserve to be treated with kindness and respect. We pray for all those – men, women, and children – who have suffered abuse in any form. Be with them as they try to rebuild their lives.

**Leader 3** O Lord, may you guide us toward the path of unity in Christ. May God hear our stories and keep us in faith. May Jesus grant us wisdom truly to know the meaning of redemption. May the Holy Spirit open our hearts so that we can be a blessing to others. AMEN

### **CLOSING HYMN     In Christ Alone**

In Christ alone my hope is found  
 He is my light, my strength, my song  
 This cornerstone, this solid ground  
 Firm through the fiercest drought and storm  
 What heights of love, what depths of peace  
 When fears are stilled, when strivings cease  
 My comforter, my all in all  
 Here in the love of Christ I stand

In Christ alone who took on flesh  
 Fullness of God in helpless babe  
 This gift of love and righteousness  
 Scorned by the ones He came to save  
 Till on that cross as Jesus died  
 The wrath of God was satisfied  
 For every sin on Him was laid  
 Here in the death of Christ I live

There in the ground His body lay  
 Light of the world by darkness slain  
 Then bursting forth in glorious day  
 Up from the grave He rose again  
 And as He stands in victory  
 Sin's curse has lost its grip on me  
 For I am His and He is mine  
 Bought with the precious blood of Christ

No guilt in life, no fear in death  
 This is the power of Christ in me  
 From life's first cry to final breath  
 Jesus commands my destiny

No power of hell, no scheme of man  
Can ever pluck me from His hand  
Till He returns or calls me home  
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand

Keith Getty / Stuart Townend

An artistic illustration for the World Day of Prayer 2023 poster. The scene is set in a lush, vibrant landscape. In the foreground, several large, bright pink flowers with yellow centers are in full bloom. A blue bird is perched on a yellow leaf among the flowers. In the middle ground, a woman in an orange shirt and white pants stands with her arms raised in prayer, looking towards a white dove flying in the sky. To her right, another woman in a blue top and white skirt is kneeling in prayer. The background features rolling green hills and a dark, starry sky with a bright light source in the upper right corner. The overall mood is peaceful and spiritual.

World Day  
of Prayer  
2023

I Have Heard  
About Your Faith

Worship Service Bulletin

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## World Day of Prayer—March 3, 2023

### “I Have Heard About Your Faith”

This year, the women of the World Day of Prayer Committee of Taiwan call us to worship with the words "I have heard about your faith", inspired by *Ephesians (1:15-19)*. We are invited to learn about Taiwan's history and culture. The women share their stories of intergenerational wisdom, traditions, and experiences of God's profound love.



The theme of the worship service “I Have Heard About Your Faith,” based on the letter to the Ephesians, is an invitation to active listening, which is the ground of our prayers. Following the example of the letter (1:15-19), where the author praises the church for their faith in Jesus and love toward all the saints, the worship service contextualizes the witness of the saints with the stories from Taiwan.

The worship service shares the letters of encouragement sent to women who faced suffering and injustice. Their stories of faith contemplate issues that are shared by women and girls around the world and that continue to challenge us to prayerful action.

They remind us of the urgency to protect the environment and have a nuclear-free homeland; to be aware of the gender stereotypes women face when defying the traditional role in the workplace or in the family, and to care for the healing of the victims of verbal and sexual abuse. It also brings to light the hidden struggle of essential workers during the pandemic who had to balance between work and family in a vulnerable economic situation. The sisters thank God for the natural resources of the island and pray for wisdom in face of the political isolation of Taiwan in the international community. They ask for our prayers.

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## About World Day of Prayer

Since the nineteenth century, Christian women in the United States and Canada have initiated cooperative activities in many areas of concern for women and children, recognizing the critical role of prayer in mission work and their call to promote

world peace through worldwide mission work. The first organized “day of prayer for the world” was held in Canada on January 9, 1920. the United States soon followed on February 20, 1920.

Now, hundreds of thousands of women (and men, youth, and children) from around the world and in every region gather to collectively worship on the first Friday in March. Each year, a different country serves as the writer of the World Day of Prayer worship service and other materials. Women of that country’s national WDP committee interpret scripture within their cultural context and prepare a worship service; women around the world lead the services.

World Day of Prayer is supported by sacrificial and benevolent mission offerings given by individuals through these annual services. Each of the 170 countries celebrating World Day of Prayer has an ecumenical committee of women representing many cultures, races, and faith traditions. Each country’s committee is responsible for determining the use of the offering as it relates to the theme for each year. Offering grants are made to women and children’s groups in each country.

World Day of Prayer USA promotes justice and equality for women through prayer, partnerships, service and celebration. For more information, visit [www.wdp-usa.org](http://www.wdp-usa.org).

### World Day of Prayer USA

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