

## **Prayer Service for the Calling to Ministry**

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+ In the name of The Father and of The Son and of The Holy Spirit

LEADER: Lord, you have created us in your own image. Male and female you created in your image and likeness. You have blessed us and commanded us to be fruitful, to multiply, to fill the earth, to be good stewards of your creation, especially to care for one another.

ALL: **Lord, we praise and thank you for all that you have given us, especially for the gift of each other. Help us to put aside all that keeps us from being more like you, Lord. May we decrease that your Spirit may increase in us.**

LEADER: A Reflection from the Gospel according to Matthew (Matt 25:31-46)  
When the Son of man come in his glory, all nations will be assembled before him. He will separate people from one another as a shepherd separates sheep from goats. He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those sheep on his right hand, Come, you whom my Father has blessed. Take as your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world.

VOICE 1: **When I was hungry, you gave me food.**

ALL: **Whatsoever you do to the least of these, you have done to me.**

VOICE 2: **When I was thirsty, you gave me drink.**

ALL: **Whatsoever you do to the least of these, you have done to me.**

VOICE 3: **When I was a stranger, you welcomed me.**

ALL: **Whatever you do to the least of these, you have done to me.**

VOICE 4: **When I was naked, you clothed me.**

ALL: **Whatever you do to the least of these, you have done to me.**

VOICE 5: **When I was sick, you visited me.**

ALL: **Whatever you do to the least of these, you have done to me.**

VOICE 6: **When I was in prison, you came to see me.**

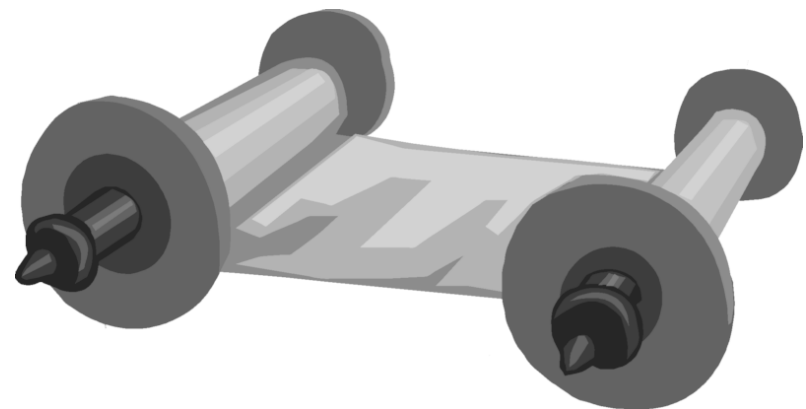
ALL: **Whatever you do to the least of these, you have done to me.**

LEADER: Then he will say to the goats on his left hand, Go away from me with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For when I was hungry, you never gave me food, I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink, I was a stranger and you never welcomed me. I was naked and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you never came to visit me.

ALL: **But Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or lacking clothes, sick or in prison and did not come to your help ?**

LEADER: In truth, I tell you, whenever you have not done this to one of the least of these, you have neglected to do it to me.

ALL: **Lord, we have not always remembered that you have made each of us in your image and goodness. We have not always taken good care of all that you have given us. Open our eyes and our hearts, Lord, that we may more clearly see you in others. We pray for the wisdom, compassion, and courage to care and love each other as you loved us.**



## CLOSING READING and PRAYER

LEADER: A Reading from the Gospel according to Luke  
(Luke 4:16-21):

He came to Nazareth and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day. He stood up to read and they handed him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found where it is written :

ALL: **The spirit of The Lord is upon me for he has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted, to heal the brokenhearted. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, to give sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of favor from The Lord.**

LEADER: He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. All eyes were upon him. Then he began to speak: "This text is being fulfilled today even while you are listening."

ALL: **Lord, may your words become our life and our mission. We ask your blessing upon us that we may be able to recognize you in all our brothers and sisters, especially the least among us. May your will, not ours be done. Amen!**

ALL: *Turn to each other and give each other a blessing.*