



(Photo: Stephen Webb)



Christian Conference of Asia

# **MAKE US HEALERS, O GOD!**

## **2011 Asia Sunday** A Worship Resource Guide

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Every year since 1974, Asia Sunday has been celebrated in Asia and among ecumenical organizations around the world on the Sunday before Pentecost. The observance is to commemorate the founding of the East Asia Christian Conference, renamed in 1973 as the Christian Conference of Asia.

This year Asia Sunday falls on **5 June 2011**.

The theme of Asia Sunday 2011 is

**“Make Us Healers, O God.”**

This is drawn from the CCA 13<sup>th</sup> General Assembly theme which will run for five years (2011-15),  
“Called to Prophecy, Reconcile and Heal.”

The theme is a prayer for us to become healers even as we also pray to be healed of our brokenness and division in our personal and communal life, and in relation to the whole creation.

## **FOREWORD**

As we prepare this Worship Resource Guide for the 2011 Asia Sunday, we hear the cries of many people in Aotearoa New Zealand, for losing love ones and homes due to the devastating earthquake; in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Australia due to floods, tsunami and cyclone; in the Middle East, where many Asian migrant workers are still trapped in the midst of upheavals. We hear people lamenting for their right and freedom to worship taken away. We hear the cries of many children in Asia going to sleep with empty stomachs. We hear silence from the oppressed and the downtrodden. We also hear from those muted and terrified by violence and political repression what they are not allowed to say. Let us, during this specific Asia Sunday, lift them up in our prayers.

In desperate and hopeless situations, the questions that often arise in the hearts of those suffering are these: *"Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his compassion?"* (Psalm 77:9, NRSV) When people are hurting, wounded, desperate and lonely, we are called to pray for and with them. We are called to work together so that the healing and the reconciling power of God may transform darkness; so that hope may shine again and become a life-giving power in people's lives.

We offer this Worship Resource Guide to you. As you notice, this is a collection of Bible Studies, reflections, prayers, benedictions, and worship guides. We asked friends around Asia to share their reflections on the theme. We hugely thank those who contributed and made this publication possible. We are aware that we all come from different church traditions, each with their own Sunday liturgy. In this case, we encourage you to use the worship resources as you find appropriate for your liturgy. Two worship guides are included here that you may want to consider. These suggested worship guides will help congregations to experience a Sunday liturgy that is different from what they have, thus promoting ecumenical learning.

If June 5, 2011 is not possible for you to celebrate Asia Sunday, please feel free to find the most suitable Sunday for your church calendar within 2011. CCA will greatly appreciate further efforts to circulate this Worship Resource Guide as widely as possible, and if necessary, to translate and adapt it to the local language and situation.

Please remember our fellowship and ministry through the Christian Conference of Asia in your prayers. CCA will be very glad and grateful if you can prayerfully consider giving tangible support to the ministry of CCA through your offering in this worship. You may send your contributions to:

Account name: Christian Conference of Asia

Bank: Hang Seng Bank

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May God's Spirit guide us in promoting life together in common witness to God's love through transforming mission. Have a joyous celebration, and let us continue to ask God's grace: *"Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me, for in you my soul takes refuge. In the shadow of your wings I will take refuge, until the destroying storms pass by.* (Psalms 57:1, NRSV)

Henriette Hutabarat Lebang  
General Secretary

## **BIBLE STUDIES AND MEDITATION**

### **TO HEAL...**

*(A Bible Study presented at the 13<sup>th</sup> CCA General Assembly in Kuala Lumpur in 2010, by the Rev. Dennis Raj from Malaysia)*

**Scriptures:** Hosea 6:1, 2; Malachi 4:2, 3; Revelation 3:17, 18

### **Introduction**

Healing was a key element in the ministry of Jesus when he appeared to humankind and walked upon this earth more than two thousand years ago. Many of us, as Christians, tend to merely focus on and remember only his dramatic acts of bringing physical healing to the many who were seeking Him.

But the thrust of Jesus' ministry was surely not just constrained to bringing healing to the finite parts of the human anatomy that would eventually end up decaying in death to become maggot food. Jesus was equally, if not, more concerned, about bringing healing to the inner being and the spirit within a person. It was a holistic healing to the injured and weary mind and the healing of a broken spirit.

Surely this was the essence of the passage of Isaiah that was read by Jesus at the temple when he said: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me to set the captives free". The demon infested man living in the tombs is an excellent example of this verse being fulfilled. He was healed and set free by Jesus internally and externally. We see him administering emotional healing to the Samaritan woman at the well. He healed her of the inner wounds that were caused by condemnation and guilt. He healed Zaccheus from the real and persistent emotional pain of being ostracized and reviled by the mainstream society. These were healing acts by Jesus to not just those who were held captive in their beds due to their bodily ailments, but also to those who were captive within themselves, in their emotions and in their spirits.

The challenge to us today is to bring healing to those who are hurting. Hurting because they are wounded and wounded because they are broken: physically, emotionally and spiritually. But I believe that the greatest challenge for us is not to rush into the world with a "ready made", "one size fits all" remedy, for the diverse ailments of those in Asia.

The first and greatest challenge would be, for us, as Christian church leaders, to be healed first. Let us look at Scripture to verify that. In Revelation 3:14-23, we see the church of Laodicea as the last of the seven churches who received a specific message from Jesus. In verse 17, we read that the Laodicean church prided itself for being rich in every way, spiritually strong and able; it even conceitedly congratulated itself by saying that they have no need of anything (including healing). But the omniscient spirit of God says to them plainly, that they were actually blind. Why? Because they were blind to see their own shortcomings, blind to their own spiritual needs which probably led to blindness to the needs of others around them as well. Therefore, today the first challenge when we talk about healing is to look at ourselves first in all humility and honesty to address our own spiritual maladies.

### **Our eyes need healing first, because we too have been blind...**

Blind, because we cannot see those who are hurting and in pain, even within the walls of our own churches and parishes. "I am ok, you are ok", is the mantra. We have wrongly perceived that it is only those outside the church who need healing. Blind, because we

cannot see the spiritual and physical poverty and hunger around us, lest we would be held accountable for their need.

Blind, because we refuse to see those who have been ambushed and dying on the Jericho road, just as how the Levite and the Priest pretended not to see, because of our busy preaching schedules and unending meeting appointments. Blind, because we are blind to the plight of the migrant workers in our midst, in case we feel that our emotions will get the better of us. It is not our problem; we don't want to get involved.

Blind, because we blind our eyes to the statistics of crime that show us the depravity of those who have been marginalized in our society. We quickly glance away without even offering a prayer because that would upset our day if we dwelt too much in such reports. Blind, because we cannot see the finger of God pointing us to go where God wants us to go. Instead, we can only see our own plans and directions that our futile minds show us.

More importantly, we are blind to our own faults and defects, but see with amazing clarity and precision the failures of others. Yet, friends, it is remarkable that our eyes can vividly open themselves to see opportunities and openings for ourselves, to advance ourselves and our own agendas. Friends, the Pharisees, who were the elite spiritual guardians of their time, also received the same spiritual diagnosis by Jesus when he called them, "Blind leaders of the blind" (Matthew 15:14).

#### **Our ears too need healing first, for we have been deaf and can't hear...**

We are deaf, because we can't hear the urgent cries of the rivers in Asia that are being choked with pollution. Deaf, because we cannot hear the painful sobs of the mother Polar Bear that is unable to feed its offspring because its habitat is shrinking rapidly due to global warming. Deaf, because we can't hear the cry of the birds whose homes are being destroyed in the name of development and deforestation. Deaf, because we cannot hear the voice of the indigenous tribes of Asia, whose livelihood and unique way of life are eroding fast due to illegal logging.

We are afraid to hear all of these because we are not willing to give up our excesses and luxurious ways of living. We are not willing to conserve the earth's natural resources of water and electricity because we have much money and in that arrogance, we don't mind paying for it even if it is being wasted. Deaf too, because we are unable to hear God's call to repent and change our selfish ways. Friends, we too have been guilty of the sad plight of some, when Jesus said, "They may be ever hearing but never understanding..." (Mark 4: 12).

#### **Our hands too need healing first, for our hands hang limp and paralyzed...**

Our hands are frozen and unable to shake hands with one another and reconcile our broken relationships. Our arms are paralyzed because they are not able to lock our arms and stand in solidarity with those who come from different denominations.

We need healing as our hands have not fed the poor for we complain that we don't have the needed resources. But we forget that Jesus used his hands to feed the masses with just two fish and five loaves. We need healing as our hands have not clothed the naked as shown by Jesus in Matthew (chapter 25). Yet our hands are trained to find the best of silks for our own religious apparel.

Our hands are not able to save those who are drowning; drowning in their own alcohol dependence and drug addictions. Our hands can't wipe away the tears of the widows and orphans whose men of the house died in a war that was started for trivial and selfish

reasons by others. Our arms are too limp and unable to break the bondage of injustice of the mistreated worker in mass production factories and to cut down their heavy chains of oppression.

I believe that we need to seek healing quickly because we have been warned in Proverbs 24: 11-12, "Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering towards slaughter. If you say, 'but we knew nothing about this,' does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it? Will he not repay each person for what he has done? (and what we have not done!)"

**Our feet too need healing first, for they are lame...**

Our feet have not been able and willing to take the gospel to the places where Jesus has told us to go in Matthew 28:19-20. Our feet have not gone to the slums and ghettos to seek out and offer Jesus' love to those who need Him most.

Our feet have not stepped out in faith, as Joshua did when the Jordan was parted. Our feet have not been able to stand firm and resolved in the trials that we face, as Daniel did in Babylon's palace. Our feet have not been able to run away from temptation as Joseph did in Potiphar's house.

Our feet have not been able to stamp out the fires of corruption and flames of political conspiracies in our churches, conferences, dioceses and synod elections. Our feet have refused to walk the path of sacrifice and suffering that Jesus himself walked before us. Friends, our feet too need to be washed first, just as the disciples' feet were washed by Jesus.

**Our tongues too need healing first, as our mouths have been silent and lips muted...**

We have not spoken against child abuse, domestic abuse and marital rape that secretly happen in our members' homes. We have been afraid to speak the truth and confront sin in our congregations lest we lose our own 'supporters' in the church.

We are silent because we think no one will take our message seriously but we are reminded of God's call to the prophet Ezekiel (chapter 2) when he was told to speak the truth from God, 'whether the people listen or fail to listen'. We have not been able to speak up for others, who can't speak up for themselves as they do not have the rights to do so or the available platform to raise their own issues and concerns.

Our mouths need cleansing; cleansing from the filth of lies and deception that come out of it. Friends, we are reminded vividly that in Isaiah chapter 6, Isaiah's lips were cleansed by God before he carried God's words of prophecy and reconciliation to others.

**Our hearts too need healing first before we attempt to heal others...**

Our hearts too, need to experience deep inner healing. Our hearts have not been strong for they have been weakened with envy and jealousy. Our hearts are infected; infected with parasites of prejudice and favouritism.

Our hearts are covered; covered with the fat of greed and selfish ambition. Our hearts are clogged; clogged with the cholesterol of hatred and bitterness so that love, the blood of life, cannot flow freely from it as it should.

Our hearts have been weakened as they are now dependent on the pacemaker of titles, position and power to keep them running. Our hearts need surgery to remove the

growing tumours of self-righteousness and prideful arrogance. We need to ask God who gave a new heart to Saul in 1 Samuel 10:9 to give us a change of heart today. Without deep inner healing we cannot carry prophecy without fear or favour. Without healing within we cannot bring lasting and genuine reconciliation.

### **Conclusion**

Friends, to conclude, allow me to ask: "Why is it important that we seek healing first before we attempt to heal others?" The answer is quite simple. If we ourselves are not healed yet, we stand the actual risk of infecting others around us who are vulnerable, and contaminating them with our own ailments in the process. For example, a doctor infected with the H1N1 virus cannot treat others. He has to isolate himself and receive treatment for himself first although he is a healer himself. Otherwise he puts patients who come to him at risk.

Once again, an appropriate example by Jesus comes to mind. In Matthew 23:15, he vehemently condemns misguided spiritual zeal when he said, "Woe to you teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You travel over the land and the sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are".

Even today the same malady remains among us in our churches. We travel, we evangelize, win converts and eagerly bring them into our churches. But in due time they too learn from us the evil arts of political rivalry in church leadership, backstabbing others for our own agenda, gossiping maliciously, and proud egocentricity.

We must be willing to be wounded first as the Bible says in Hosea 6:1, 2 that God allows wounds before healing can appear. For physical healing, we pay surgeons to cut us open and wound us, for we know that without that healing cannot take place. We cannot receive healing unless our egos are wounded.

That would be sad indeed, for our healer God is ABLE, WILLING and WAITING to heal us and thereafter to use us as agents of healing in God's broken world in Asia. All that we need, to receive the healing that God offers, is humility, to acknowledge our inner predicament and a genuine willingness, to change for the better.

Allow me to finish with the prophetic words of healing from Malachi 4:2-3 "... but for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall. Then you will trample on the wicked..." Today, just as the verse says we can trample on the wickedness of injustice, oppression and inequality only when we ourselves have been healed.

May all these words of scripture that we meditated upon today bring God's healing upon us and through us, to all the needy in Asia. Amen.

## SCRIPTURE MEDITATION AND PRAYER FOR HEALING

*(A meditation guide based on the above Bible Study by the Rev. Dennis Raj, Malaysia)*

*When we think and speak of healing, we primarily tend to focus on bodily, physical healing. But the healing of our bodies lasts only for our lifetime and our bodies eventually meet decay in death. In the Gospels, Jesus was equally, if not, more concerned about emotional and spiritual aspects of healing of the people he met. We too, need to focus on internal healing which have eternal value, together with external healing of our physical bodies.*

**Meditation One:** Matthew 15:14; Revelation 3:14-23

**Leader:** Lord, we confess that we do not have the spiritual vision that you want us to have and our eyes have not been seeing as compassionately as you did. We have also been selectively blind to our own faults yet see clearly the failings of others. We lack your perspective in the ministry that you give us.

**People:** Lord, have mercy upon us and open our eyes to see what you show.

**Meditation Two:** Proverbs 21:13; Mark 4:12

**Leader:** Lord, we confess that we have not heard the groaning pains of your creation that is being abused. We have shut our ears to the plight of those in need. We have also chosen to ignore your call to repent and return to you.

**People:** Lord, have mercy upon us and open our ears to hear what you and others are saying. Amen.

**Meditation Three:** Proverbs 24: 11-12; Matthew 25: 41-46

**Leader:** Lord, we confess that our hands have not fed the poor or clothed the naked. We have also refused to use our hands to rescue those who are being oppressed.

**People:** Lord, have mercy upon us and strengthen our hands, that we may be able do everything that you tell us to do in this world. Amen.

**Meditation Four:** Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 8:4

**Leader:** Lord, we confess we have remained comfortable where we are and have refused to walk where you lead us. We have refused to go to those who need the gospel message. We have also conveniently chosen not to walk the path of sacrificial living and holiness.

**People:** Lord, have mercy upon us and enable our feet to obediently walk the path that you show us. Help us to walk together with you in this journey of life. Amen.

**Meditation Five:** Isaiah 29:13; Jeremiah 5: 23-24; Jeremiah 17: 9-10

**Leader:** Lord, we confess that the arteries of our hearts have been filled with the cholesterol of jealousy, hatred and bitterness. It is covered with the fat of greed and selfishness. It has been infected with the parasites of pride and prejudice.

**People:** Lord, have mercy upon us that our hearts may be filled with your love and that we, too, may love others as you did. Amen.

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## "YOUR FAITH HAS MADE YOU WELL"?

*(A Bible Study by Sarah Shepherd and Barbara Lloyd, United Church of Canada)*

Many of the stories about how Jesus interacted with people focus on healing: giving sight to people who are blind, curing lepers, restoring the ability to walk to those who can't or

never could, offering hearing to people who are Deaf, and facilitating speech for people who could not talk.. Some of these people are given names, and have relationships with Jesus and specific roles in society; many are anonymous.

How do these stories speak to us today? How do we read them in a way that sees all of us as God does: having the potential to be whole and holy regardless of our physical and mental condition? How can they help us to work for a society where those who call for respect and justice for all are listened to and honoured?

In this passage from Mark 10, the person who is being healed is persistent: he asks for what he wants, although those who have more power try to silence him. This is also a story where Jesus specifically asks the person he is responding to what he wants, giving him the power to name what his wishes and needs are.

In reading, reflecting, and sharing our ideas, this 30-minute study gives an opportunity to examine the voices that have been silenced and need to be heard, and at how Biblical portrayals of people living with disabilities can be understood today.

### **Leader Preparation**

Read through the scripture passage and questions reflectively. Consider which of the discussion questions and suggestions for action might be appropriate for your group. Be prepared for issues people bring up in response to the reflective reading and to be flexible in how the conversation goes.

Many of the questions are framed as being about individual health, but they can also be applied to the "health" of larger groups of people, societies, communities, countries. Think about how this fits with the group you are working with, and what broader issues affect or interest them.

### **Opening Prayer**

Holy God, creator, healer, pain-bearer - open us to your image in all people and all creation. Be with us as we examine attitudes and behaviours that cause hurt and dis-ease in our world. Help us to see your vision of health and wholeness as we reflect together today. May this be a time of healing for us all. Amen.

### **Bible Reading: Mark 10: 46-51**

Read the passage through once, so everyone in the group is familiar with it. Then divide the group into three, and ask each group to imagine themselves in one of the three roles: Bartimaeus, the disciples, or Jesus. Read the passage again slowly, asking everyone to imagine their reaction to what is described as the story unfolds. If you have time, give the people in each small group a chance to discuss their responses together.

### **Questions for Discussion**

What did people experience when they were imagining themselves in their role? Did they have emotional reactions? Clear visual images? What were their feelings, and how did they change? What was motivating them to do what they did?

This passage is interesting because Bartimaeus names what he wants, and says it more loudly when those with more power try to silence him. When have we been like him? Like the disciples, wanting someone to be quiet because when they are asking for what they want? Like Jesus, standing still and hearing a voice from the margins?



Jesus asks Bartimaeus, "What do you want me to do for you?" What is the significance of this? When have we experienced people making assumptions about what we wanted without asking us, and when have we done this to others, "helping" when help hasn't been asked for? How does this happen to people with health or ability challenges? How do organizations and countries, as well as individual people, do this?

Is healing about curing or "fixing" someone, or restoring relationship and community? What other changes can we imagine Bartimaeus asking for instead of having his sight back?

Jesus says "your faith has made you well." What kind of faith does Bartimaeus show?

What experiences have you had in your own life of having challenges to deal with, but still knowing that you are "well," with much to share and give? How have you received such gifts from others living well with challenges?

### **Moving to Action**

Bartimaeus is on the margin of the road, and socially and economically on the margins of the society he lives in. Who is on the margins in our community, congregation, and wider world? What are the visible and invisible barriers that prevent all from being welcome? How can we work to change this?

Jesus starts by asking Bartimaeus what he wants. Think of a source of information that will help your group hear the voices of people on the margins want, and bring it to the next meeting.

### **Closing Prayer**

Hold us, heal us, help us O God, to live unto your widening circle of care and compassion. Nurture us to use your grace and power to become healers in our relationships and in our society, and give us the humility to accept healing from others. Bless us as we journey together toward wholeness. Amen.

### **Background**

This is an opportunity to look at the "miracle healing" stories from a new perspective. While we don't know exactly how people who were lame, blind, Deaf, or had other challenges were treated in Jesus' time, they are often assumed to have been on the margins of society.

This assumption, and the fact that disability is often linked with sin, and healing with being whole/holy/having faith, are a challenge if we want to live in a way that welcomes and respects all. The healing stories are often seen as being metaphorical—as in saying that restoring vision to the blind represents a development of awareness. Also, this part of Jesus' ministry challenged the norms of the society he lived in: reaching out to those who are on the margins and bringing them into the centre. It is significant that in Mark this encounter with Bartimaeus is the last thing that Jesus does before entering Jerusalem, where he confronts empire at its political and religious centre.

However, these metaphors can still be harmful to people living with ability challenges if the message is that people are only "complete" if they are physically healthy. And when we read about Jesus' healing miracles, they bring up the question of why his response is to change a few individuals so they can fit in, rather than changing the society to be more inclusive.

How can we live together today in a way that honours and embraces diversity, knowing that we all have gifts to share and lessons to teach? How are the attitudes, assumptions, actions of the temporarily able-bodied “disabling” for people with physical limitations? How can we look at the social “illnesses” our society has and work to heal them: exclusion, lack of awareness, power of some over others?

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## **PRAYERS AND BENEDICTIONS**

### **A PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

*(By the Rev. Claudia Genung Yamamoto, a Methodist missionary pastor in Japan)*

**Reader:** Join me in the Prayer of Confession

**All:** Loving God, by our actions and inactions we have hurt ourselves and others. We have neglected our spiritual and psychical health. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. Forgive us. Help us to grow in faith and understanding. Help us to care for ourselves so we may have energy to care for others. Help us to take time for You. Let your Spirit nourish our souls.

*(Silent prayer of confession)*

### **Words of Forgiveness**

**Reader:** We are loved by God and blessed by God’s grace, In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

**People:** Thanks be to God. Amen.

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### **A CLOSING PRAYER AND BENEDICTION**

*(By Norma Dollaga, a Methodist deaconess in the Philippines)*

God our Friend and Companion,  
We have tasted your gift of bonding and communion.  
We have seen and have reached-out to our sisters and brothers from near and far.  
And we have affirmed the gift of fellowship and kinship.

We learned and laughed together.  
We asked questions and found the challenges to move on.  
With joy and hope springing forth from the womb of our community,  
We have received the gift of grace and wisdom, love and faith.

As we unleash the power within us,  
and draw strength from each other’s wisdom and courage,  
make us strengthen our resolve to defend life and dignity.  
Cleanse us, renew us, empower us.  
We re-commit ourselves to move on and carry forward  
the tasks and challenges of defending life and dignity.  
We celebrate our journey because you are the Ruah that moves amongst us. **Amen.**

## A BLESSING OF OURSELVES BENEDICTION

(By *Claudia Genung Yamamoto*)

Leader: Touch your eyes. May God bless our eyes and may we see clearly the world around us. Repeat: Bless my eyes.

**All: Bless my eyes.**

Leader: Touch your ears. May God bless our ears so we may hear the voices of other women around us. Repeat: Bless my ears.

**All: Bless my ears.**

Leader: Touch your mouth. May we speak words of truth, healing, hope, and wisdom. Repeat: Bless my mouth.

**All: Bless my mouth.**

Leader: Touch your heart. May we be open to love and be loved. Repeat: Bless my heart.

**All: Bless my heart.**

Leader: Touch your hands. May we touch ourselves and others with love, compassion, and tenderness. Repeat: Bless my hands.

**All: Bless my hands.**

Leader: Touch (or reach down towards) your feet. May we walk with courage on our journey. Repeat: Bless my feet.

**All: Bless my feet.**

Leader: Touch the person next to you and say, "Bless you my sister/brother/friend."

**All: Bless you, my sister/brother/friend.**

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## HEALER GOD, HEAR US!

(By *Devashrie de Silva, member of the CCA General Committee from Sri Lanka*)

Healer God, hear us.  
 When we call out to you  
 amidst conflicts and catastrophes,  
 the pain of being separated from our loved ones,  
 these fears so profound.  
 Give us wisdom to understand  
 The Holiest dwells evermore closer,  
 transforming our brokenness into wholeness  
 Make us healers, O God; make us healers of our time.

Healer God, hear us.  
 When justice seems so silent,  
 when corruption and ravenous power  
 creeps in, spreading, consuming.  
 Turn our deaf ears, blind sight, and our stone hearts  
 to the realities around us  
 Stir us, break us, fill us, send us.  
 Make us healers O God; make us healers of our time.

Healer God hear us.  
 when our thoughts scatter,  
 when we are nothing but empty words,  
 when we succumb to double standards.  
 God heal us, forgive us.  
 Challenge and reignite the flames of living love  
 Make us Healers O God; make us healers of our time.

*(One line less in each stanza symbolizes the diminution of 'self' in the calling to becoming healers.)*

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### **REFLECTIONS AND A POEM**

#### **THE LOVE THAT YOU GAVE**

*(By Baby Clemen del Corro, a survivor of abuse from the Philippines and now living in Aotearoa New Zealand)*

When was the first time you said, "I know you can make it"?  
 Ah, that was a long, long time ago - but I still remember  
 Days, months, and years had passed by so quickly  
 Yet, the love that you gave never ceases.

I was deeply hurt; my life was full of agony  
 Where can I flee? Where can I hide?  
 I wanted to take my life, so close to giving up  
 Yet, the love that you gave made me alive.

Now, I am on the road to recovery  
 Starting to create a new life, a life that is full  
 But it seemed to be dark still  
 Yet, the love that you gave offered hope.

Shattered dreams, wounded heart, broken joy  
 Slowly and gently being replaced  
 With smiles and laughter, even just a little  
 Yet, the love that you gave continues to heal.

Where can I find comfort?  
 Where can I find happiness?  
 Perhaps, somewhere out there  
 Yet, the love that you gave satisfies my needs.

I offer to God, to you and to dear friends  
 All that I have great and small  
 Triumphs and victories to you I share  
 Because of the wonderful love, that you gave.

## A JOURNEY TO HEALING AND WHOLENESS

*(A testimony by Bishop Constante Claro and Susan Claro of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines)*

On 15 December 2009, our son Constant John “Jamjam” was diagnosed to have Acute Lymphocytic Leukaemia. The journey through the year 2010 could have been very miserable for us especially for Jamjam had it not been for all who have supported us through prayers, encouragement, medical expertise, empathy and financial gifts. God’s people have been instruments of God’s healing power in Jamjam. They have made us move on with our daily life individually and as a family with joy and dignity. For us as a family, healing and wholeness is a journey to **SHALOM**, where

**S** is for sense of community that we felt, one which transcended religious, nationality and geographical borders, a community where we experienced the touch of others in our lives. A sense of oneness among patients and families suffering similar conditions, their empathetic stares, smiles, chats and pats during long waits at lounges of doctors’ clinics, expressed solidarity and the feeling of not being alone in the challenging journey towards healing and wholeness. We felt the sense of community among the service institutions who give us their support in many different ways, among friends whose lives are dedicated to establishing health justice by improving access of people in the poor countries and communities to equitable health care services. They have compassionately understood, expressed solidarity and worked with people who are doubly burdened by illness/ill-health conditions because their governments are unable to provide affordable and at the same time quality health services and resources.

Where **H** is for the humbling experience of needing others amidst helplessness in dealing with anxieties, fears and scarcity of resources that concretized the essence of community and the call of living together in the household of faith. We are thankful for the awesome refinement of faith and character reshaping us for greater and deeper significance of life.

Where **A** is for the audacity of hope that Jamjam holds that gives us joyful hearts, trustful spirits, and peaceful mind despite the challenges in his life and ours. Our audacity of hope reclaims God’s assurances of deliverance from all forms of sufferings of all people and the promise “*that the leaves of the tree will be for the healing of nations*”. (Rev. 22:2)

Where **L** is the leading of God Almighty in all our decisions, God’s manifested loving kindness, tender mercies and forgiving grace. Decisions pertaining chemotherapy is one of the most daunting decisions to make, the process of making such decisions likens to the pierce of a two-edged sword. We have to deal with the irony of the destruction of the good blood cells in the hope of getting well. With God’s leading through medical expertise and prayers, God has made our decision-making smooth with the thought that certain people, things and procedures are instruments to help us come up with the right decisions.

Where **O** is for the outpouring of blessings of material/financial support, for the blessings of “two pieces of fish and five loaves of bread” multiplied by miracles of love and acts of sharing and giving. The outpouring of blessings from churches, members and leaders from different conferences and jurisdictions, Jamjam’s friends and classmates, from colleagues in our work, church-related service institutions of our church, from local and foreign partners, Cancer Warriors, from families and friends - concretized our experience of what it is to live in one household of faith.

Where **M** is for medications and medical personnel and equipment that we believe are God's instruments where God's healing power works through. It is our hope and continuous prayer that **Shalom** which is the completeness, wholeness, health, peace, justice and fullness of life, will someday be experienced, not only by Jamjam but by all people and creation.

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### **SUGGESTED WORSHIP GUIDE**

#### **MAKE US HEALERS, O GOD**

(A suggested worship guide for Asia Sunday by Lee, Le Hun, from Taiwan)

#### **COME AND JOIN TOGETHER FOR WORSHIP**

(Lighting of candle as a symbol of Jesus Christ living amongst us)

**奏樂PRELUDE** (nose flute)

**讚美詩DOXOLOGY** (in unison) "Pais ka lau pa ku U E Hey" (Come and join together)  
(Bunun tribe language in in Taiwan)

Leader: Pais ka lau pa ku 從現在開始 (Come and join together)

People: U E Hey

Leader: Mal ma na nu 什麼事情都要做的很好 (Efforts for all goodness)

People: U E Hey

Leader: Lis ka ta ma 要相信上帝的祝福 (Trust in God for all the blessings)

People: U E Hey

Leader: Ma dai dad tais an 要彼此相愛 (To love each other)

People: U E Hey

**宣召CALL TO WORSHIP** (Acts 1:8; Romans 5:5) by Leader

#### **A SPECIAL WORD ABOUT THE ASIA SUNDAY 2011**

**聖詩 HYMN** *This is the day* (in unison)

**信仰告白 CONFESSION** The Lord's Prayer

**讚美詩 PRAISE SONG** *People need Lord* (by the youth group)

#### **COME AND JOIN TOGETHER FOR PRAYER**

**啟應文 RESPONSIVE READING** (in unison)

Leader: God the Holy Spirit.

People: Have mercy on us.

Leader: From all evil and mischief, pride, vanity, envy, and all evil intent.

People: Good Lord, deliver us.

Leader: In all times of sorrow, in all times of joy, in the hour of death, and at the day of judgement.

People: Good Lord, deliver us.

Leader: God, We have sinned, misused gifts, destroying the relationship between ourselves, all creatures and God.

*People:* Lord, forgiven us.

*Leader:* Lord, we are the women of the world, segregated as black, white and coloured, our bodies and minds bruised, we bleed. We dare to touch you to be healed.

*People:* Lord, make us healers.

*Leader:* Lord we are the men of the world, segregated as black, white and coloured, our bodies and minds bruised, we bleed. We dare to touch you to be healed.

*People:* Lord, make us healers.

*Leader:* Dear God, help us women and men to work together for any gender at any age.

*People:* Lord, have mercy.

*Leader:* Dear God, help us women and men to work together for your creation and to be appropriate stewards.

*People:* Lord, have mercy.

*Leader:* Holy God, Holy and strong, holy and immortal.

*People:* Have mercy upon us.

*All:* Amen.

**祈禱 PRAYER**(in unison) *A candle shall be lighted and put beside a map of Asia, and three people will be requested to pray for the countries and churches around Asia, and the problems of violence, ecological destruction, trafficking, etc. they confront.*

**回應詩 HYMN RESPONSE** *People of faith, by God's command* (in unison)  
(chhun melody, Taiwan, words by I-to Loh)

**聖經 SCRIPTURE READING** Isaiah 49:13 (in unison)  
(three people will be asked to read the scripture in different languages)

**講道 SERMON** *Make Us Healers, O God* (by Preacher)

**祈禱 PRAYER** Preacher

### COME AND JOIN TOGETHER TO GIVE THANKS

**聖詩 HYMN** *Give Thanks* (in unison)

**奉獻 OFFERING**

**祈禱 PRAYER** Thanksgiving prayer and prayer for those in suffering (by Leader)

**報告 ANNOUNCEMENTS** (by Leader)

### COME AND JOIN TOGETHER TO BE BLESSED AND TO WORK WITH GOD

**聖詩 HYMN** *Lord, while for all mankind we pray*

**祝禱 BENEDICTION** ( 站 ) (in unison)

All to hold hands and say to each other: The love of the Lord Jesus draw you to God-self, the power of the Lord Jesus strengthen you in God's service, the joy of the Lord Jesus fill your hearts, and the blessing of God almighty be among you and remain with you always.  
Amen.

**聖詩 SONG** *God is so Good*

**殿樂 POSTLUDE** (by Pianist)

**平安禮 FELLOWSHIP**

## A SUGGESTED WORSHIP GUIDE FOR ASIA SUNDAY

(By Dr. Erlinda Senturias, CCA HIV and AIDS Consultant, from the Philippines)

### Preparation for Worship

(Say here a brief background of the 2011 Asia Sunday)

### Call to Gathering

Haleluya, Puji Tujan, *Sound the Bamboo*, p. 104

### Call to Worship

**Leader:** Sisters and Brothers in Christ, arise to worship God in holy splendour. Let the heavens be glad, and the earth rejoice. Let the sea roar, and all that fills it. Let the field exult, and everything in it. Let the trees of the forest sing for joy. Let the wolf and the lamb feed together. Let the families of the peoples ascribe glory and strength to God our Maker and Healer.

**Congregation:** Great is God and greatly to be praised!

**Leader:** We bow down before our loving God who is present in every sphere of our lives. God touches and heals us and invites us to become healers of our broken world and broken communities. Let the heart of those who seek God rejoice in our life together in common witness to God's love through transforming mission.

**Congregation:** As we celebrate Asia Sunday, enable us to discover ways to heal our broken world and all of God's creation. Enable us to see the plight of the least of our brothers and sisters.

**All:** Make us Healers, O God.

### Invocation:

O God you created the universe and all that is within it. We are grateful to you for creating us, redeeming us, and comforting us. If you, O God, should mark iniquities, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with you so that you may be revered. You are our hope O God so that out of the depths of our despair in our Asian situation, we could find hope and act according to your will. Encourage, equip, and accompany our churches in Asia to engage in prophetic, compassionate, healing and reconciling ministries for the realization of justice and equality for all. Lead us O God and direct our paths as we worship you together in different parts of Asia. Amen.

### Opening Hymn and Offering of Symbols:

To the One Creator of All, *Sound the Bamboo*, p. 75.

The Holy Bible, flowers, oil, healing leaves, health books, medicines, red ribbon, stethoscope, bread and wine for the Holy Communion, and other items brought to the altar while the hymn is being sung.

*At the end of the hymn, the Pastor blesses the offerings and present them to the congregation saying:*

These are some of the God-given resources for healing and wholeness.

### Church Concerns

#### Act of Confession

**Leader:** We remember communities in many parts of Asia that experienced natural calamities like floods; cyclones; tsunamis, earthquakes; volcanic eruptions; mudslides; landslides; soil erosions, rising of sea level threatening the disappearance of some of our islands and nations. These disasters come to us because we have sinned against your creation. Our common sins have caused deaths, internal displacement, disease, hunger,



growing poverty and corruptions. Some of our islands are even disappearing due to rise in sea level. We are facing ecological refugees.

**Priest/Pastor:** O God, You are our maker. You came that we may have life in all its fullness. Forgive our foolish ways. Heal us and make us aware that we can be healers.

**Congregation:** Make us Healers, O God.

**Leader:** We are aware that many of the diseases in Asia are preventable but people get sick of tuberculosis, vector borne diseases, water borne diseases, cancer, cardiovascular and metabolic disorders, HIV and AIDS. We have contributed to the ecological imbalance of creation and disharmony within our bodies. Health is merely rhetoric during elections but not a priority in governance. Health budget is very low in most countries of Asia. Health education is less emphasized and more dependence on pills for every ill is the norm. Health insurance does not cover many illnesses. We have become faithless. We have not prayed well enough to believe your healing presence in our lives, O God.

**Priest/Pastor:** O Christ, your will for all people is health and salvation. Forgive our unbelief. Forgive us, O God for not asserting our rights to health and for not recognizing that we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. We live to the Lord and we are accountable to one another.

**Congregation:** Make us Healers, O God.

**Leader:** Holy Spirit, you are our Comforter. Out of the depths, our people are crying and are bent over. We remember the migrant and domestic workers coming from different places of Asia to work in different countries within and outside of Asia. We hear stories of their oppression, abuse, and exploitation. But do we really care to look, listen, give comfort and care for our brothers and sisters who are in need, abused, and in despair?

**Priest/Pastor:** O God, you came that we may have life in all its fullness. Forgive our weaknesses as Church communities. Enable us all to provide safe spaces for the sharing of stories and to develop support groups for people who need healing and loving care. Let us remember before God, those for whom we offer our prayers.

**Congregation:** Grant your healing grace to all people who are sick, injured, disabled, abused, lonely, rejected, stigmatized, discriminated against, anxious, and despondent. Mend our broken world and communities. Use us, O God, as channels of your healing mercies. Bless the physicians, chaplains, pastors, deacons, elders, nurses, and other trained health workers who minister to the suffering people. Bless us O God and make us realize that we too can participate in healing others. Make us Healers, O God.

**Anointing of Oil** (Elders and priest/pastor anoints oil to the sick in the congregation and to those who want to participate in healing and reconciliation)

### **Passing of the Peace**

**Hymn:** Christ is Our Peace, *Sound the Bamboo*, p. 261

**Pastoral Prayer** (end this with the Lord's Prayer)

### **Scripture Readings**

### **Anthem or special Hymn**

**Sermon/Homily****Celebration of the Holy Communion**

(The Holy Communion is regarded as related to healing and wholeness inviting us to remember the Body and Blood of Christ.)

- **Hymn During Communion:** Christ is All to Me, *Sound the Bamboo*, p. 55.
- **Prayer After Communion**

**Offering of Resources and Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**Closing Hymn:** Deep in the Human Heart, *Sound the Bamboo*, p. 248

**Benediction**

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Prepared and compiled by:

Hope S. ANTONE  
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## SUGGESTED HYMNS AND SONGS

## God Calls Us All

Luna L Dingayan

Pearl Dingayan



1. God calls us all to pro - phe - sy to the peo - ple of our time Call them
2. God calls us all to re - con - cile and to live in u - ni - ty, Let us
3. God calls us all to heal and love and to res - tore bro - ken lives. Let us



to re - pent and to change their ways and to walk in righteousness. Though our voice of pro - phe - cy ignored and we may learn to love and to pray for those we re - gard as e - ne - mies. Let us all up - root the roots that make for a break the walls of hosti - li - ties that di - vide commu - nities. Let us build commu - ni - ties of peace where God's



live in pain or die. God our hope of ge - nuine peace and life un - to us al - ways a - bide. con - flict to e - xist. Let our lives be changed and be re - newed by the grace of God of peace. love and jus - tice reign. Let us come and ce - le - brate our life and God's love that makes us whole.

ECUMENICAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
Baguio City, PHILIPPINES  
Luna & Pearl, October 31, 2009

## ALLELUIA AND DOXOLOGIES

104

## Praise the LORD

( Indonesian: Halleluya, Puji Tuhan )

(♩ = 90-120)

\*Pu - ji Tu -  
Ha - le lu - ya, Pu - ji Tu -

Drum

han Pu - ji Tu - han.  
han Ha - le - lu - ya, Ha - le - lu - ya, Pu - ji Tu - han.

\* Praise the LORD

Words: Traditional

Music: Seram Island traditional melody, Indonesia; adap. Christian I. Tamaela

## Christ Is All to Me

(Thamilz: Yellaam Yesuvee)

(♩ = 120)  
Refrain



Ye-l-laam Ye - su - vee ye - nek kel - laam Ye - su - vee.  
Christ is all to me, Je - sus Christ is all to me.



Thol - lei mi - gu yi - vu - le - gil Thu - nnei Ye - su - vee.  
Since my days are full of af - flic - tions, I place my trust in you.



1. Aa - ye - num se gaa - ye - num nee - ye - num u - baa - ye - num  
2. Than - dhei - thai yi nem je - nem pan - dhu - llor si - nee - gi - dhar  
1. You are shepherd, com - fort - er, friend, and counsel in my life.  
2. You are fa - ther, bro - ther dear, you the soul of kith and kin.  
3. In dis - tress, my source of joy, in the darkness, watch - man true.



naa - ye - num ye - nek - kan baa - ne gna - ne - me nne vaa - lle - num  
san - dho - de sa - ge - le - yo - ge sam - bu - re - nne bak - ye - man  
You are my in - tend - ed, you are my be - lov - ed, you are mine.  
Hap - pi - ness and blessings tru - ly I en - joy be - cause of you.  
In ill - health of mind or bod - y, you're phy - si - cian, heal - er too.

## Christ Is Our Peace

262

(♩ = 108)

1. Christ is our peace, Christ is our health,  
 2. Peace in your mouth, peace in the hands  
 3. Who work for peace find the true wealth,

he the true Word, his the true wealth —  
 o - pen to truth, to love's de - mands;  
 who heal the hurt find their own health —

gifts to be shared by the sim - ple and poor:  
 those who would go with Christ al - so must bleed —  
 peace will flow on through the hearts that be - lieve:

peace in your land, peace at your door.  
 bright is the flower, burst is the seed.  
 this may we know, thus may we live.

Words: Shirley E. Murray, New Zealand  
 Music: SAM-KIAP; I-to Loh, Taiwan

Ephesians 2:14; Matthew 16:24-25

## Deep in the Human Heart

248

With Vigor (♩ = 76)



1. Deep in the hu - man heart the fire of jus - tice burns;  
 2. This is our task to - day to build a world of peace;  
 3. We take the step of faith, and leave the past be - hind,



a vi - sion of a world re - newed through rad - i - cal con -  
 a world of jus - tice, free - dom, truth, where kind - ness will in -  
 and move in - to the fu - ture's world with o - pen heart and



cern. As Chris - tians we are called to set the cap - tives free,  
 crease; a world from hun - ger freed, a world where peo - ple share,  
 mind. By grace we work with Christ, as one com - mun - i - ty,



to o - ver - throw the e - vil powers and end hy - po - cri - sy.  
 where ev - ery per - son is of worth and no one lives in fear.  
 to bring new hope and full - er life to all hu - man - i - ty.

Words: Bill ( W.L. ) Wallace, New Zealand

Music: PATATAG; Francisco F. Feliciano, Philippines

Luke 4:18-19



269

## HONOR THE EARTH

(♩ = 132)

Unison

1. God of the gal - ax - ies spin - ning in space,  
 2. Care - less and cov - e - tous, gross are our greeds  
 3. For - ests and riv - ers are rav - aged and die,  
 4. Let there be beau - ty and let there be air  
 5. Life is a ho - ly thing, life is a whole,

God of the small - est seed our liv - ing source:  
 tak - ing the rich - es the gar - den pro - vides,  
 raped is the land till it bleeds in its clay,  
 fra - grant with peace, nev - er poi - soned with fear,  
 link - ing each crea - ture and bless - ing us all,

yours is the gift of this beau - ti - ful place -  
 wast - ing its good - ness, for - get - ting its needs,  
 si - lenced the bird - song and plun - dered the sea -  
 freed from the plagues of pol - lu - tion and war,  
 mak - ing con - nec - tions of bod - y and soul,

Refrain

Let us care for your gar -

den and hon - nor the earth.

Words: Shirley E. Murray, New Zealand  
 Music: *HONOUR THE EARTH*; Douglas Mews, New Zealand

Genesis 1:27-31

JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

Hope for the Children

260

Gm Cm Gm Dm Gm Eb Cm D

1. Hope for the chil-dren in our midst, fac - ing a world that's con - flict torn.
2. Rumours of war sound ev - ery - where, won - der - ing if there's chance for peace.
3. Peace is the goal of all we do. Love leads to jus - tice on the earth.
4. Hope for the chil-dren yet to be. Pray they may find years free from war.

Gm Cm Gm D Cm Adim. D7 Gm

All that they ask is time to grow, and live the years for which they're born.  
 Yet for all chil-dren that we love, we will not yield 'til hate shall cease.  
 Let jus-tice flow like wa-ters clear, so we may see the world's re-birth.  
 Let us make plow-shares of all swords, har-vest-ing life healed ev - er - more.

Refrain

D Gm Adim. D7 Eb D7 Cm7 D

Hope for the chil-dren ev - ery where, we'll build with them a world of peace.

Words: Douglas Clark, USA  
 Music: *BKL*; I-to Loh, Taiwan

Matthew 5:9; Mark 10:14-16