

This worship service was created by the Gathering Worship Resource Team for use by General Council commissioners and United Church congregations in engaging with the work of GC45. The **General Council Prayer Resource**, containing more worship material and reflections for each day of General Council will be available as a download through UCRDstore.ca

Vision and Dreams: Resources for a Worship Service  
about GC45

*The work of General Council is an investment in the entire church, a rich resource that each community of faith is an integral part of and benefits from.*

*Thank you for joining the church across the country in praying for General Council. We invite you to draw on the ideas and prayers provided below. If you are using this service while community members are at General Council, consider naming and praying for the commissioners from your community by name. When using these worship materials, please give credit to the writers.*

# Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge with respect the history, spirituality, and culture of the peoples with whom treaties were signed and we commit to live out right relations as Treaty peoples. Across Canada, we live, work, and play on lands cared for by Indigenous peoples for millennia. We honour the heritage and gifts of Indigenous Elders, youth, children, parents across this land. (Please name the territories and treaties from which you are joining today.) May these lands continue to inspire dreams and visions of peoples and creation.

# Call to Worship

As sunlight dazzles on lakes and sunsets blaze through the sky,  
**let the brilliance of our Creator God’s love guide us to discover God’s way for us.**

With the cry of a loon rising up into the dusk or the shouts of children playing in a field,  
**let the melody of God’s love sung through Jesus help us to receive God’s word for us.**

Like granite running jagged through the hills or creeks flowing from source to sea,  
**let the presence of God’s Spirit ground us so we may know God’s strength within us.**

***Gill Le Fevre,*** *Walton Memorial U.C., Oakville, Ont. From Gathering Pentecost 1 2024*

# Opening Hymn (*hymn suggestions below*)

# Opening Prayer

O God, who to an expectant and united church didst\* grant at Pentecost the gift of the Holy Spirit, and hast wonderfully brought into one fold those who now worship thee here: grant us the help of the same Spirit in all our life and worship, that we may expect great things from thee, and attempt great things for thee, and being one in thee may show to the world that thou didst send Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

*from* **The Service Book for the Use of the People** *(The United Church of Canada, 1969), p. 249  
\*Adapt to suit contemporary language, if you wish.*

# Prayer of Confession

O God, help us to be like Jesus:  
to be brave when there are difficult things to do;  
to be honest even when it’s safer to be quiet;  
to be kind even when people are unkind to us;  
to know you are with us even when we are by ourselves.  
(*a time of silent reflection*)  
All praise be to you, O God in three persons. Amen.

***Marilyn Leuty,*** *then at Walter’s Falls U.C., Ont. From Gathering Lent-Easter-Pentecost 2001.*

*or*

Jesus, you and you alone are our Lord\* and Guide, our Hope and Inspiration.  
Strip away our inflated values.  
This is a time for honesty as we prepare for the future.  
Heavenly Father,\*we are here as your people;  
much has happened to us since we were last together.  
But the past is behind us and you offer us the supreme gift of your promised future.  
Stir us from our moments of complacency and grip us with a zest for adventurous and energetic living as we step into your promised future.  
Support us as we blaze new trails to your presence.

***Major R.S. Wood,*** *Chaplain, Canadian Forces Base Baden-Soellingen, Germany. From Gathering Lent-Easter 1974.  
\*Adapt images for God as needed.*

# With Children (or the whole congregation)

*Show the 45th General Council logo. Share the theme and the description of the symbols and colours. You may also want to introduce the* [*Moderator nominees*](https://generalcouncil.ca/councils/general-council-45/moderator-nominees-gc45) *or the newly elected Moderator (e.g., where they are from and their vision for the church) and pray for them.*

# Scripture

*Theme Scriptures:*Joel 2:28  
Acts 2:14–17  
*Also:*Isaiah 40:28–31  
Isaiah 41:10  
Isaiah 43:18-19  
Ephesians 3:20–21

# Hymn (*hymn suggestions below*)

# Sharing Your GC45 Message

*What are your dreams for the church 10 years from now? What can we do now to work toward this dream? Invite a diversity of people to reflect or share testimonies on their dreams for the church (and for your church).*

*If you were a Commissioner and are sharing this after General Council, take time to reflect on your experience. What did you learn? What was your personal experience? Who was the person or people who inspired you the most? How will the decisions made affect you? How might they impact your community of faith? Where did you notice God’s Spirit moving at GC45? What visions and dreams, shared at GC45, inspired you the most?*

*You may also wish to play the flourishing video:* [*Vision and Dreams : (Re)Generate*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oq64yKOaig8)*.*

# Hymn (*hymn suggestions below*)

# Introduction to Offering

Let our giving of both time and talent reflect the desire of our hearts for justice, kindness, and humility. Let us share our treasure with all those who need it, in our community and, through Mission and Service, in the church and in the world.

*Or play the video* [*Mission and Service – 100 Years of Service*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lHYh0I188l0)*.*

# Prayer of Dedication

All-embracing God, we praise you for the blessings of love and care that we have received. You do a new thing in each of us. Your Spirit enables us to do more than we can possibly imagine. So as we offer our gifts, we ask that you bless them in Jesus’ name, that others may understand and believe. Amen.

*Or choose from the stewardship prayers available through the United Church* [*Stewardship in Worship*](https://united-church.ca/worship-theme/stewardship-worship) *page.*

# Pastoral Prayers

Loving and Gracious God, we thank you for the gift of today, the gift of learning and imagining together about your call to us, to this church, and to your world in this time and space.

Just as you sent your Spirit across generations, across time, filling people with dreams and visions, we ask you to visit us, filling our hearts and minds and whole bodies with dreams and visions so that we might serve as bold and daring disciples of Jesus, witnessing and celebrating your presence.

Send your love to the people and places we name now out loud in our homes and churches, in the chat, and in the silence of our hearts, as we pray for

people and places crying for justice…  
 people and places celebrating with joy…  
 people struggling in body, mind, and spirit…  
 your worldwide church…  
 and for the communities close to our hearts…

God, we know you are with us, listening to even those sighs too deep for words.

Continue to be with us and accompany those traveling as we prepare to meet. Inspire our hearts and spirits with dreams and visions, and ready us to speak and act boldly with love and justice.

In Christ’s name, we pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us, in the language of our hearts.

**Miriam Spies**, *Chair, General Council 45 Worship Committee*

# The Prayer of Jesus

# Hymn (*hymn suggestions below*)

# Commissioning

As you go from this place of worship, prepare yourself.   
Get ready.  
Be open to dream dreams and experience visions of what God would have us be doing in this congregation and as The United Church of Canada.  
Prepare yourself.   
Get ready.   
Be open.   
Don’t be afraid.  
God is working with us and among us.  
And we are blessed!

***Susan Lukey,*** *High River U.C., High River*

# Hymn Suggestions

VU 372 “Though I May Speak”  
VU 374 “Come and Find the Quiet Centre”  
VU 375 “Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness”  
VU 642 “Be Thou My Vision”  
VU 713 “I See a New Heaven”  
MV 84 “In You There Is a Refuge”  
MV 142 “Oh a Song Must Rise”  
MV 150 “Spirit God, Be Our Breath”  
MV 156 “Dance with the Spirit”  
TLUS 73 “Open my heart”

TLUS 103 “Bambelela”

TLUS 126 “The lion and bear”  
TLUS 138 “Let’s go together”

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