

To Be Made Well

Pool of Bethesda

John 5: 1-9

Compiled by Pastor Veronica Flemming

Calls To Worship

L: Come, Holy Spirit, come.

P: Come to comfort us in our suffering;

L: Come to cheer us in our sorrow;

P: Come to encourage us in our failings;

L: Come to persuade us in our doubting;

P: Come to exhort us in our waning zeal;

L: Come to urge us forward in following Christ.

All: Renew our strength, O God, as we wait upon you; Fill us with the abounding hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Cartwright, Colbert S., and Harrison, Cricket, O.I. 1997, Chalice Worship. Chalice Press.

L: God is our constant companion.

P: There is no need that God cannot fulfill.

L: When our pain is severe, when our burden is heavy, when our depression darkens the soul, when we feel empty and alone,

P: God fills the aching vacuum. We trust in God's promises. God will not let us go.

Cartwright, Colbert S., and Harrison, Cricket, O.I. 1997, Chalice Worship. Chalice Press

L: Come to this place of prayer; God is calling us. Come, all who are burdened; there is healing here.

P: We have come to hear the word of God. We have brought with us all that weighs us down.

L: Loud voices of praise greet the one who calls us. Be glad together and sing for joy.

P: Our hearts respond with hope for a new day. Our voices join and thankful prayers and praise.

L: God reigns among us and fills the world with light. We are invited to make our home with the living God.

P: May God's ways be known within and among us. May God guide all nations in ways of peace.

Bayler, Lavon. 2001, Gathered By Love; Worship Resources for Year C. The Pilgrim Press

L: God welcomes those whose hearts are sick. God's invitation comes to people whose joy is gone.
P: Why is the health of God's people not restored? Why must we weep day and night for those we have lost?

L: There is a balm in Gilead. There is a physician who heals. Jesus Christ is our mediator, healer, and savior.

P: We bring all our pain and unresolved anger. We come in all our confusion to seek answers.

L: Bring all your urgent prayers and honest laments. God is eager to offer salvation and open us to truth.

P: We cry out to God for deliverance from our sin. We cry out for relief from our suffering.

Bayler, Lavon. 2001, Gathered By Love; Worship Resources for Year C. The Pilgrim Press

L: Come to the place of longing, where hope has waited.

P: We come carrying our aches, our weariness, and our questions.

L: Jesus asks, "Do you want to be made well?"

P: We want healing, even when we are unsure how it will come.

L: Jesus says to rise. Not when the water is stirred but when grace speaks.

P: We rise in faith, trusting the One who makes all things new.

L: Come, for God's mercy is present here.

P: We come to worship the Healer of body, mind, and spirit.

Written by Rev. Jeff Lathrop

Opening Prayers

Like the sun that is far away and yet close at hand to warm us, so God's Spirit is ever present and around us. Come, Creator, into our lives. We live and move and of our very being and you. Open now the windows of our souls. Amen.

Cartwright, Colbert S., and Harrison, Cricket, O.I. 1997, Chalice Worship. Chalice Press

O God, in mystery and silence you are present in our lives, bringing new life out of destruction, hope out of despair, growth out of difficulty. We thank you that you do not leave us alone but labor to make us whole. Help us to perceive your unseen hand in the unfolding of our lives, and to attend to the gentle guidance of your Spirit, that we may know the joy you give your people. Amen.

Cartwright, Colbert S., and Harrison, Cricket, O.I. 1997, Chalice Worship. Chalice Press

Maker of all things, Ruler of all peoples of the earth, We bring our prayers of Thanksgiving and praise. You have provided the water of life for our baptism. You have fed us with the fruits of the earth and nourished us through your Word. Meet us again in the joyous encounter of worship, lest we forget the source of all we have and all that we are. Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you! Amen.

Bayler, Lavon. 2001, Gathered By Love; Worship Resources for Year C. The Pilgrim Press

On this holy day, we come together to make sense of our lives. We look to your word, O God, as a source of understanding. Revive our souls that our hearts may rejoice in your presence. Cleanse and enlighten us with your truth. Liberate us from self-imposed limitations. Let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our heart be acceptable in your sight, O God, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

Bayler, Lavon. 2001, Gathered By Love; Worship Resources for Year C. The Pilgrim Press

Healing God, we gather beside the pools of our own lives, places where we have waited, struggled, and hoped. We confess that sometimes we have grown comfortable with our brokenness, too afraid of change. Yet you meet us where we are and ask us if we desire new life. Speak your word into our waiting. Lift us from despair, loosen what binds us, and teach us to walk in trust and gratitude. Make us instruments of your healing love, so that others may rise and know your mercy through us. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who heals, restores, and calls us forward. Amen.

Written by Rev. Jeff Lathrop

Children's Message Idea

Idea comes from <https://sermons4kids.com/sermons/you-are-a-changed-person>

Click on the link and read all about presenting the message.

You Are a Changed Person

Theme - No more excuses--we can live a new life when we accept Jesus' healing.

Object - Band-Aid with "Jesus Saves" written on it

Scripture - Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, "See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you." John 5:14 (NIV)

Can you proudly talk about the good things God has done for you? If you know Jesus, you are a new person. You don't have to live like you used to and make excuses or blame others. That's what this bandage is all about. It says, "Jesus Saves." Check it out the next time you get injured. Put it on a wound and then look at the new skin that grows underneath--skin that's free of the old germs, like making excuses and blaming others.

Pastoral Prayer

Prayers For All People

Aware of God's gracious love for all creation, let us pray for Christ's Church, the world, and all who stand in need. I bid you pray in silent meditation your deepest concerns to God as directed.

Let us pray for the church around the world: that its communities of faith may proclaim your good news and bring reconciliation and healing to this earth. Pray for the church.

Pray silently

Let us pray for all Christians: that each may know the power of the living Christ and serve in faithful discipleship filled with grace and love and peace. Pray for one another.

Pray silently

Let us pray for our country: that its leaders may govern wisely and with compassion; that its citizens may act responsibly towards one another with fairness and for the common good. Pray for this country.

Pray silently

Let us pray for all nations: that all peoples shall know peace with justice; that together they recognize their common interdependence in sharing earth's resources. Pray for the nations.

Pray silently

Let us pray for the ties that bind us to one another: that *marital partners love and respect one another with tender care; That children are **raised with a sense of basic trust in the goodness of life; that relations between friend and friend be open and loving honesty.

Pray silently

Pray for the strengthening of our human relationships. Let us pray for those who are in trouble or danger: that regardless of circumstance they may find hope and release; That they may know they are not alone but abide in you. Pray for those weighed down by life's burdens.

Pray silently

Let us pray for the spread of God's good news to all the world: that people shall increasingly seek to know God and find their rest in the one who has befriended them in Christ. Pray for all who witness to God's love in Word and deed.

Pray silently

O God you know the deepest yearnings of our hearts. Take them and use them to work your perfect will in the life of the world. Shape our lives according to our prayers. In Christ's name we pray. Amen

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** changed 'husbands and wives' to marital partners*

***changed 'reared' to raised*

Prayer of Confession

Almighty God, we have wandered far from your love. We have neglected your Word in the torrent of words that we hear and read every day. Our hearts are troubled amid the conflicts and violence of our world. Sometimes we find it easier to withdraw from everything, to resist change, lest it require more of us. We know you are reaching out to heal us; help us to respond. We know we are surrounded by your love. Let us feel it deep within, that we may reflect that love you all we meet. Amen.

Bayler, Lavon. 2001, Gathered By Love; Worship Resources for Year C. The Pilgrim Press

Words of Assurance of Forgiveness

Jesus invites us to stand, to feel our own strength, to understand our own power, to sense the changes that love is accomplishing within us and among us. The Holy Spirit has come to teach us all that we need in order to be faithful. We are loving servants of God, who claims us and sends us on a journey of peace. Praise God, who has blessed and forgiven us.

Bayler, Lavon. 2001, Gathered By Love; Worship Resources for Year C. The Pilgrim Press

Offertory Prayer

For the hospitality of your good earth, for the people you have given us to love, for the tasks you have called us to do, we give thanks, gracious God. Our offerings are a measure of our faith and an evidence of our gratitude. We dedicate ourselves with our gifts, that your reign of light may be realized in the places where we live and work and far beyond our personal reach. Amen.

Bayler, Lavon. 2001, Gathered By Love; Worship Resources for Year C. The Pilgrim Press

We give, loving God, because of your generosity to us. We share because this is your will for us. In faithfulness to your call, we seek to manage the resources you provide for the greatest benefit to humankind. May they bring a bit closer an awareness of your intentions for us and your rule among us. We worship and serve you with all we have. Amen.

Bayler, Lavon. 2001, Gathered By Love; Worship Resources for Year C. The Pilgrim Press

O God, the source of all good things, we bring to you our gifts. Enable us, with our earthly things, to give you the love of our hearts and the service of our lives; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen

Cartwright, Colbert S., and Harrison, Cricket, O.I. 1997, Chalice Worship. Chalice Press

Benediction

Go. Serve the Lord. You are free.

Cartwright, Colbert S., and Harrison, Cricket, O.I. 1997, Chalice Worship. Chalice Press

The excuses are many. The struggles are hard. Have faith we are never alone. Today we Friends, stand up, be well, and go into the world to love and serve the Lord.

Written by Pastor Veronica Fleming

Song Suggestions

UMH 452 My Faith Looks Up To Thee

UMH 474 Precious Lord, Take My Hand

UMH 354 I Surrender All

UMH 398 Jesus Calls Us

UMH 375 There Is a Balm In Gilead

UMH 467 Trust and Obey

TFWS 2162 Grace Alone