

To Be Made Well

Bent Over Woman

Luke 13:10-17

Compiled/written by Bri Heida

Calls To Worship

L: Beloveds of God, listen! For our God is doing a new thing.

P: We lift our eyes to the heavens and wait with eager hearts!

L: Lay down your burdens, all who are weary and troubled.

P: We rest here, in the presence of our Lord.

L: Take delight in the workings of our great and gracious God!

P: Our God cares for us and has prepared the way ahead of us!

L: My friends, enter this place knowing that you are loved beyond measure.

P: Lord, have mercy on me.

L: Feel the invitation to lay your troubles down and open your hearts to our God.

P: Christ, have mercy on me.

L: Let your heart be lightened knowing that God is always working on your behalf!

P: Lord, have mercy on me.

L: Find relief in the arms of a God who loves without limits, forgives without end, embraces without hesitation.

P: Christ, have mercy on me.

L: Come, all who are weary and weighed down.

P: We come, carrying burdens seen and unseen.

L: Jesus notices the one bent low, the one long overlooked.

P: We come, trusting that Jesus sees us as we are.

L: With a word of compassion, Jesus calls her forward.

P: **We step into God's healing and freedom.**

L: Stand tall, for the grace of God is at work.

P: **We rise to worship the One who restores our dignity and joy.**

Written by Rev. Jeff Lathrop

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, we come into this space carrying all the burdens of life. Teach us to lay them at Your altar, to let your Spirit wash away the everyday grime of sorrow, of shame, of fear. Open our hearts to see Your will and not our own, to embrace Your plans and not ours, to want Your kingdom and not settle for anything less. We pray with voices united in hope,

Amen.

Liberating God, we confess that there are times we live bent over by pain, by fear, by injustice, by the weight of many years. We confess that we sometimes fail to see those around us who are bowed low or we allow rules and routines to overshadow compassion. Call us forward. Lay your healing hand upon our lives. Straighten what has been bent by hurt or neglect, and restore in us the joy of standing fully in your grace. Free us to live as your people, released from what binds us and committed to lifting others with love. We pray in the name of Jesus, who heals, restores, and sets us free. Amen.

Written by Rev. Jeff Lathrop

Children's Message Idea

Object: Pipe cleaners, bent and twisted into different shapes

Lesson: (*Hand the bent and twisted pipe cleaners to several children.*)

Does anybody know what these are? (*Wait for answers*)

Pipe cleaners! We use these for crafty things, right? Now, what if I wanted to use these as flower stems? What do we need them to look for? (*Wait for answers*) They need to be straight!

How can we make that happen? Can we tell them to straighten out? Can we get them to straighten each other out? Nooo, that won't work! Any other ideas? (*Wait for answers*)

We can straighten them out! (*Demonstrate and let the kids try.*)

Now, there are a lot of times in our lives when we end up like these bendy pipe cleaners. Maybe we get sick, or get injured. Maybe our feelings are hurt, or we have hard things going on in our lives. Maybe we lose a friend or must move away. We can't really fix ourselves when these things happen – but God can. God can straighten us out. But it doesn't always look the way we think it might. (*Twist two pipe cleaners together into a stem.*) Like maybe God knows you need someone else to make you an even stronger stem! If we have our mind fixed on a single straight stem, we might miss something else God has in mind for us.

Prayer:

Dear God,

Help us to keep our eyes on You instead of on our ideas of how to fix our problems.

Help us to see what You want to do in us and through us.

Help us to know when we need Your help to straighten us out, so we don't miss the miracles You want to do in our lives. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer

God of mercy, of mystery and wisdom, draw near.

Take us in the shelter of your arms in the midst of our pain and suffering
and guide us to release our own expectations of You.

Teach us to watch with humble curiosity to see the work you're doing in our lives.

We may think we know how the healing should look, we may have our own terms we want to see You meet, but remind us, loving God, that Your way is greater than our way. Turn our gaze from our own will to Yours, that we might joyfully and enthusiastically become a sign of Your miracles, a beacon proclaiming Your Kingdom here on Earth. We ask this in Your holy name.

Amen.

Offertory Prayer

Gracious and generous God, You offer an improbable hope to us – a hope that sustains, a hope that carries, a hope that endures. This hope doesn't require pretense or falsehoods, but holds weight even in the face of suffering. It dares us to find joy where there is sorrow, to find comfort in the darkness. It is in this hope that we bring this offering to you today, to proclaim that even when we are wanting, we have much to give. For our generosity of spirit is merely a reflection of the lavish gifts You pour out on us. In the name of the One Who Heals, Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Benediction

May it be that this week we have eyes to see and ears to hear all the ways in which our God is working miracles in our lives, even if they don't follow our rules, even if they come in unexpected forms. For surely, we are covered in the love of God who redeems, Christ Jesus who heals, and the Holy Spirit who uplifts. Go in peace and let the love of God shine through you. Amen.

Suggested Hymns

UMH 451 Be Thou My Vision

UMH 377 It Is Well With My Soul

UMH 265 O Christ, the Healer, We Have Come

UMH 420 Breathe on Me, Breath of God

UMH 348 Softly & Tenderly Jesus is Calling

UMH 261 Lord of the Dance

UMH 382 Have Thine Own Way Lord

UMH 132 All My Hope on God is Founded

Contemporary Songs

“Come As You Are” Crowder

“Healing Begins” Tenth Avenue North

“Power to Redeem” Lauren Daigle

“It Is Well”

“From the Inside Out” Hillsong

“Called Me Higher” All Sons & Daughters

"I Don't Wanna Go" Chris Renzema
"Make Room" Meredith Andrews
"A Thousand Hallelujahs" Brooke Ligertwood
"Little Miracles" Elevation Worship