Week 1 Worship Resources: In Times of Grief[[1]](#endnote-1)

**Call to Worship**

Christ the Lord has risen today!

**Alleluia! This is Good News for those who believe!**

People of God: Stop your running and catch your breath.

**When we are overtaken with grief, God reveals the Resurrection.**

And because He lives,

**We will roll back the grave stone and see for ourselves: Christ is alive forevermore!**

**Unison Prayer**

Life-giving God, we come to hear a story too good to be true, yet we believe. Resurrected Christ, the news that you overcame death takes our breath away.

Hope-filling Spirit, we feel the power of the Resurrection.

We are grateful to be your People, we are grateful to know death has been swallowed up in victory, we are grateful to praise you with our Alleluias and Amens. Alleluia and Amen.

**Offertory Prayer**

You have given us the proof of your power over death, the Good News of the Resurrection, and the hope of eternal life. There is no way to fully express our thanks. With humility, we offer you our hearts and our gifts. May both be used to help the world catch their breath and find their hope in you. In the powerful name of the Living Christ we pray, Amen.

**Music Suggestions (Traditional)**

Christ the Lord is Risen Today, UMH #302

Up from the Grave He Arose, UMH #322

He Lives, UMH #310

**Music Suggestions (Contemporary)**

Resurrecting, CCLI #7051507

Christ the Lord is Risen Today (He is Not Dead), CCLI #7019316

Living Hope, CCLI #7106807

Glorious Day, CCLI #7081388

**Preaching Resources**

A great resource for this week is Present Over Perfect by Shauna Niequist.

Prepare to use folding chairs in the sermon to demonstrate the different commitments (chairs) in your life and the chaotic mess it can become.

Week 2 Worship Resources: In Times of Fear

**Call to Worship** *(voices come from different places in the Sanctuary)*

Leader: Behind closed doors, we hide in fear.

Voice 1: Am I good enough? Will they accept me?

Voice 2: Can I overcome my addiction? Will the abuse continue? Can I pay all my bills this month?

Voice 3: Is the world dangerous? Will I be hurt? Will my children be safe?

**The voice of God says “Peace be with you”**

Leader: When fear takes our breath away,

Voice 1: I catch my breath and know God’s peace.

Voice 2: I catch my breath and know God’s peace.

Voice 3: I catch my breath and know God’s peace.

**When the world presents us with fear, we catch our breath and know God’s peace.**

**Unison Prayer**

It is easy to stay closed off and live in fear. The news is filled with reasons to be afraid, yet we serve a God who invites us to touch him and believe. This season we pray that the peace of the Holy Spirit will wash over us and give us hope! In our believing, may we find new life! Amen.

**Offertory Prayer**

We, like Thomas, can be filled with doubt. We, like the disciples, can live in fear. Give us faith in our unbelief and hope in our fear. When the realities of our world steal our breath away, fill us again with the Breath of God, the Holy Spirit and give us strength. We give today because we do believe. We give today because we do have hope and faith that we need not be afraid. Receive our offerings and use them to do your work in the world. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

**Music Suggestions (Traditional)**

Breathe On Me O Breath of God, UMH #420

Let There Be Peace on Earth, UMH #431

O Breath of Life, UMH #543

**Music Suggestions (Contemporary)**

Great are You Lord, CCLI #6460220

I Have This Hope, CCLI #7071188

Call Upon the Lord, CCLI #7051501

Week 3 Worship Resources: In Times of Exhaustion

**Call to Worship**

Go faster. Do more. BE more.

**Come to me all who are weary, and I will give you rest.**

Work harder. Make ends meet. Deadlines are looming.

**Be still and know that I am God.**

Sun up to sun down, the world asks us to give, give, give. But God says:

**My presence shall go with you and I shall give you rest. Catch your breath and rest in Me.**

**Unison Prayer**

We get tired God. We work hard in our jobs, in our service to you, in our families, in our communities. Today we ask that you nourish us. Help us to pause, savor the feast you have prepared for us, and just be still in your presence. Give us the rest that we need so that we can go out into the world refreshed and renewed for service. In Christ’s holy name we pray. Amen.

**Offertory Prayer**

After a long night of work, you had the fire ready with fish and bread to nourish the disciples. Today, after a long week of work, you have the fire of the Holy Spirit ready for us at the Communion table. Just as the fish and bread nourished the disciples, now, we pray that the bread and cup will nourish us on our journey. We offer our gifts to you as a sign of our thanksgiving. Amen.

**Music Suggestions (Traditional)**

The Risen Christ, Worship and Song #3179

Come and Find the Quiet Center, The Faith We Sing #2128

Be Still My Soul, UMH #534

**Music Suggestions (Contemporary)**

Come As You Are, CCLI #7017790

In You I Rest (Be Still My Soul), CCLI #6534077

Here for You, CCLI #5925649

In the Hands of God, CCLI #5438019

Week 4 Worship Resources: In Times of Doubt

**Call to Worship**

Jesus loves me this I know.

**Wait. Do I KNOW that? I have questions and I have doubts.**

For the Bible tells me so.

**Wait. Do I believe in what this ancient book has to say? I have so many questions and so many doubts.**

God invites you to bring your deepest questions and doubts.

**But if you see God working in the world, then you are challenged to believe.**

God invites you to bring your deepest questions and doubts.

**But know that the flowers fade and the grass withers but the Word of God will stand forever.**

**Unison Prayer**

Almighty God, it is a confusing time and a confusing world. We wonder where science and faith meet. We question authority and like to pick and choose what we believe according to what best fits us. We pray that in the moments when we are overwhelmed with doubts and questions that you will help us catch our breath. Help us catch our breath and find our faith. Help us so to believe even where we have not yet seen. We pray this in the all-powerful name of Jesus. Amen.

**Offertory Prayer**

Bless the giver, bless the gift, bless our questions, and bless our faith. We ask for and receive your blessings this day, use us that we may bless others. Use our time, talents and tokens to be blessings for others. Use our questions, doubts and fears, to be blessings for others. Use our faith, belief and trust to be blessings for others. This we pray in the name of the one who is big enough to let us ask our deepest questions. Amen.

**Music Suggestions (Traditional)**

Hymn of Promise, UMH #707

Faith of our Fathers, UMH #710

Through it All, UMH #507

Rock of Ages Cleft for Me, UMH #361

**Music Suggestions (Contemporary)**

100 Billion Times, CCLI #7084123

We Believe, CCLI #6367165

Who You Say I Am, CCLI #7102401

**Preaching Resources:**

Prepare a piece of paper and pen for each worshiper. You will ask them to write down the big faith questions they wrestle with.

Week 5 Worship Resources: In Times of Loneliness

**Call to Worship**

We all come hungry, with an empty lunch box.

**Looking to be filled with hope, love, acceptance and support.**

God uses each one of us to fill one another’s empty box.

**Together, in this sacred space, we share the gifts we each bring.**

So that we all leave this place knowing that no one goes through life alone.

**We gather together to have our lunchbox be filled, to be fed by God’s Good News and to deeply know the important role we have within the body of Christ.**

* Creative element: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2y6bfiv7beE> The Lunchbox by Leo Burnett. Begin worship with the video and connect it to the call to worship.

**Unison Prayer:**

God of the Resurrection and New Life, we are grateful for the hope your Resurrection has provided us. We only wish you could have walked beside us longer. Often we wish you were tangibly present with us as we journey through this life. Knowing you would be with us only a short while, you called us to love one another. When we feel lonely, let the love of your people become your love for us. When we love others, let them know it is your love being poured out. Amen.

**Offertory Prayer:**

Generous God, whether our lunchbox is full or empty, you provide exactly what we need. We pray that as we offer our gifts of time, talent and token to You, that you will use them to fill the lunchboxes of all your children. May the small gifts we can give individually be combined with the gifts of others to bless those in need and bring hope to those who are empty. In Christ’s holy name we pray. Amen.

**Music Suggestions (Traditional)**

We are One in the Spirit, The Faith We Sing #2223

Jesus, Lover of My Soul, UMH #479

What a Friend We Have in Jesus, UMH #526

**Music Suggestions (Contemporary Songs)**

I Need You to Survive, Hezekiah Walker

Reckless Love, CCLI #7089641

One Thing Remains, CCLI #5508444

**Preaching Resources**

The Lunch Box: A video from Leo Burnett

Week 6 Worship Resources: In Times of Suffering

**Call to Worship:**

Come you who are sick.

**Come you who are hurting.**

Come you who are suffering in any way.

**Come all who want to be made well:**

And let Christ make you well!

* Creative Element: Suggest having a time of anointing with oil or possibly a small pool outside for people to ritually step in and out of as an act of healing.

**Unison Prayer:**

God of Miracles, we know that our world is filled with suffering. Suffering of physical pain, spiritual emptiness and emotional sorrow. You alone are the One who can bring healing and end our suffering. Come Lord Jesus, come. Clear the path to the pool and heal our suffering once more. When the news of present suffering takes our breath away, empower us by your Spirit to catch our breath and know your healing powers.

**Offertory Prayer:**

Great Physician, when others pass us by you see us. You see our deepest needs and know our deepest wounds. Even when the world looks away you call to us by name and invite us into the healing waters of your love and grace. May the tokens we present this day be an act of our thanksgiving. May the faith we have be a sign that we give you our very lives. In Christ’s healing name we pray. Amen.

**Song Suggestions (Traditional)**

He Touched Me, UMH #367

Take Me to the Water, Worship and Song #3165

There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy, UMH #121

**Song Suggestions (Contemporary)**

I Am Free, CCLI #4220974

Lord, I Need You, CCLI #5925687

Pour Out Your Spirit, CCLI #7088306

Stand In Your Love, CCLI #7107801

Week 7 Worship Resources: In Times of Division

**Call to Worship:**

I am a Republican. I am a Democrat. I am black. I am white.

**We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord.**

I like the way things were. I want things to change.

**And we pray that our unity will one day be restored.**

While the broken world divides us and rips us apart:

**May the world know we are Christians by our love.**

Brothers, sisters breathe in God’s Spirit of unity as we worship the Resurrected Christ!

**Opening Prayer**

All praise to you Father, from whom all things come, all praise to Christ Jesus, God’s only Son, and all praise to the Spirit, who makes us one. All praise and glory to God who is three and yet one. All praise for this body of Christ who, though many, are one in Christ Jesus. May we be strong than our differences, celebrate our diversity, and be unified in our love! Amen.

**Offertory Prayer**

We present our tithes and offerings as a sign that we have been strengthened to walk with each other, to walk hand in hand. We present these gifts so that as the body of Christ we will walk together to spread the news that God is in our land. We offer these to you, O God, so that the work we do hand in hand will guard human dignity and save human pride. Bless them and multiply them that the world will know us by our love. Amen.

**Song Suggestions (Traditional)**  
They’ll know we are Christians by our Love, The Faith We Sing #

One Bread One Body, UMH #

Bind Us Together, UMH #

**Music Suggestions (Contemporary)**

Hold Us Together, CCLI #5553657

Glory to God Forever, CCLI #5384338

Our God Saves, CCLI #4972837

For Everyone Born, General Board of Global Ministries

1. Worship Resources by GNJ pastors Jessica Campbell, Jessica Naulty, and Jill Hubbard-Smith. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)