

An order of worship for a service celebrating Frances Perkins and Faith

This can be adapted for holidays such as Mother's Day or Labor Day or Sunday nearest July 4th (Faith and Public Service)

Prelude

Land Acknowledgement

Use this one or one specific to your area

<https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/informational/land-acknowledgment>

We gratefully acknowledge the Native Peoples, on whose ancestral homelands we gather, as well as the diverse and vibrant Native communities who make their home here today.

(a moment of silence)

Call to Worship (responsively, leader and people) :

Marge Piercy, "To be of use" from Circles on the Water. Copyright © 1982 by Marge Piercy

The people I love the best
jump into work head first
without dallying in the shallows
and swim off with sure strokes almost out of sight.
They seem to become natives of that element,
the black sleek heads of seals
bouncing like half-submerged balls.

**I love people who harness themselves, an ox to a heavy cart,
who pull like water buffalo, with massive patience,
who strain in the mud and the muck to move things forward,
who do what has to be done, again and again.**

I want to be with people who submerge
in the task, who go into the fields to harvest
and work in a row and pass the bags along,
who are not parlor generals and field deserters
but move in a common rhythm
when the food must come in or the fire be put out.

**The work of the world is common as mud.
Botched, it smears the hands, crumbles to dust.
But the thing worth doing well done
has a shape that satisfies, clean and evident.
Greek amphoras for wine or oil,
Hopi vases that held corn, are put in museums
but you know they were made to be used.
The pitcher cries for water to carry
and a person for work that is real.**

Opening Prayer Episcopal Prayer, adapted for Feast of Frances Perkins: Social Reformer 1965

**Loving God, we bless your Name for Frances Perkins, who in
faithfulness to her baptism envisioned a society in which all
might live in health and decency: Help us, following her
example and in union with her prayers, to contend tirelessly for
justice and for the protection of all, that we may be faithful
followers of your calling; in your many names we pray. Amen.**

Hymn or Song

As We Come Marching, Marching (Bread and Roses)
Hymnal version #109 in Singing the Living Tradition (slightly different words)

As we go marching, marching, in the beauty of the day
A million darkened kitchens, a thousand mill lofts gray
Are touched with all the radiance that a sudden sun discloses
For the people hear us singing, bread and roses, bread and roses.

As we come marching, marching, we battle too, for men,
For they are in the struggle and together we shall win.
Our days shall not be sweated from birth until life closes,
Hearts starve as well as bodies, give us bread, but give us roses.

As we come marching, marching, un-numbered women dead
Go crying through our singing their ancient call for bread,
Small art and love and beauty their trudging spirits knew
Yes, it is bread we fight for, but we fight for roses, too.

As we go marching, marching, we're standing proud and tall.
The rising of the women means the rising of us all.
No more the drudge and idler, ten that toil where one reposes,
But a sharing of life's glories, bread and roses, bread and roses.

Modern Reading

Original Mother's Day Proclamation (Julia Ward Howe, 1870)

Arise, all women who have hearts, whether your baptism be that of water or of tears! Say firmly: "We will not have great questions decided by irrelevant

agencies, our husbands shall not come to us, reeking with carnage, for caresses and applause.

“Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn all that we have been able to teach them of charity, mercy and patience. We women of one country will be too tender of those of another country to allow our sons to be trained to injure theirs.”

From the bosom of the devastated earth a voice goes up with our own. It says, “Disarm, disarm! The sword is not the balance of justice.” Blood does not wipe out dishonor nor violence indicate possession.

As men have often forsaken the plow and the anvil at the summons of war, let women now leave all that may be left of home for a great and earnest day of counsel. Let them meet first, as women, to bewail and commemorate the dead. Let them then solemnly take counsel with each other as to the means whereby the great human family can live in peace, each learning after his own time, the sacred impress, not of Caesar, but of God.

In the name of womanhood and of humanity, I earnestly ask that a general congress of women without limit of nationality may be appointed and held at some place deemed most convenient and at the earliest period consistent with its objects, to promote the alliance of the different nationalities, the amicable settlement of international questions, the great and general interests of peace.

Contemporary Reading from *The Woman Behind the New Deal* by Kristin Downey p.381

“Remember...we are only day laborers in the vineyard of the Lord- we are not the architect- the planner- God is that. We are to do our daily stint faithfully and then leave it to the architect God- Lay our course of bricks and not worry about the total structure - that is God’s business. Also remember that Christ did his greatest work of Redemption when he hung helpless on the Cross. (notes by Frances Perkins)

Contemporary Witness - invite a local union leader, or person working for Living Wage, a recipient of Social Security or immigrant or immigrant advocate or LGBT Center or representative of Planned Parenthood/ reproductive freedom provider to speak for five minutes about how their lives are impacted by these issues close to Frances Perkins's heart

Scripture Reading from the book of Acts 4:32-37

32 All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. **33** With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God’s grace was so powerfully at work in them all **34** that there were no needy persons among them.

For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales **35** and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need.

Hymn the Frances Perkins Saint hymn, adapted. Tune at Episcopal Hymnal 1982 #231
Third verse optional

1. By all your saints still striving, for all your saints at rest,
your holy Name, O Jesus, for evermore be blessed.
You rose, our King victorious, that they might wear the crown
and ever shine in splendor reflected from your throne.

2.* Give thanks for Frances Perkins and her prophetic stand,
that gained social security for people of this land.
An advocate for justice, by Christian faith inspired,
she fought for human dignity with zeal that never tired.

3. Then let us praise Creator. and worship God the Son,
and sing to God the Spirit, eternal Three in One,
till all the ransomed number who stand before the throne
ascribe all power and glory and praise to God alone.

*Verse 2 written by The Rev. Byron Stuhlman

Sermon on Frances Perkins and Faith

Hymn
Let There Be Peace on Earth

Community Prayers: invite people to share their prayers aloud

Offering for Frances Perkins Center and group from which Contemporary Witness speaker is from

Anthem or solo Think outside the box

- Do a mini-history lesson. Frances Perkins embodied the ideals of First Wave Feminism.
- Talk about second wave feminism and perform a pop song like *I am Woman* (Helen Reddy): https://youtu.be/ZrVLL7soS1U?si=XvGI9_GnhW58Hilh
- or "9 to 5" film theme song by Dolly Parton:
<https://youtu.be/UbxUSsFXYo4?si=K8EyNFb9bRntzDla>
- or "*There's something about the women*" Holly Near:
<https://youtu.be/kSPvJ9lvpas?si=5cXq5WmNKSFVQwVk>

Litany of gratitude and closing prayers

Closing Song

Song for Equal Suffrage, Charlotte Perkins Gilman
Tune: Battle Hymn of the Republic

Day of hope and day of glory! After slavery and woe,
Comes the dawn of woman's freedom, and the light shall grow and grow
Until every man and woman equal liberty shall know,
 In Freedom marching on!

Woman's right is woman's duty! For our share in life we call!
Our will it is not weakened and our power it is not small.
We are half of every nation! We are mothers of them all!
 In Wisdom marching on!

Not for self but larger service has our cry for freedom grown,
There is crime, disease and warfare in a world of men alone,
In the name of love we're rising now to serve and save our own,
 As Peace comes marching on!

By every sweet and tender tie around our heartstrings curled,
In the cause of nobler motherhood is woman's flag unfurled,
Till every child shall know the joy and peace of mother's world—
 As Love comes marching on!

We will help to make a pruning hook of every outgrown sword,
We will help to knit the nations in continuing accord,
In humanity made perfect is the glory of the Lord,
 Together marching on!

Benediction

Postlude