

**International Women's Day of Prayer
Program Packet for March 2, 2002**

Fill My Cup, Lord

by

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and

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**for the General Conference
Department of Women's Ministries**

Theme for 2002: United in Worship of God

The theme for this year in the worldwide church is "United in Worship of God." As much as possible, refer to that theme in your presentations. It has not specifically been written into this material so you can make it fit your local situation. In your choice of participants you can particularly model the united concept. The special Prayer/Songfest is certainly a time of worship also and again the theme of United in Worship of God works very well there.

Our prayer focus for this year is in two sections. First, we would like for you to remember all the Women's Ministries leaders at the local church level. Many are new; others face opposition; almost all of them are busy women already; many have had no opportunity yet for training or access to resources. Let us especially pray for them.

The other group that we would like to remember in prayer is the women in three divisions and their division directors. The work in these divisions varies greatly from place to place as well as the individual challenges the women face. Let us pray for these women and their leaders;

Inter-American Division:	Waveney Martinborough (since 1995)
South Pacific Division:	Joy Butler (since 2000)
Southern Asia Division:	Hepzibah Kore (Since 1998)

How to Use This Packet

This packet, which includes a suggested order of service, a responsive reading and a sermon, is a resource for you if you wish to use them. If you desire to create your own special program for the International Women's Day of Prayer, please feel free to do so.

Likewise, if you would like to modify any portion of the program or sermon, you are welcome to do that also. It is especially helpful if you can insert illustrations or experiences from your local area.

If you are unable to have an International Women's Day of Prayer on March 2, 2002, it is our hope you will have it on another Sabbath so your church may be blessed by its women and learn of some of the things that are happening in Women's Ministries in your local church.

May the Lord bless you as you experience this special worship opportunity.

About The Authors

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She is also the Shepherdess Director. In her earlier career she was a teacher and headmistress at an elementary school in India. She has a major in history.

She and her husband have two grown children. Hepsi enjoys reading, listening to music, writing, and gardening in her free time.

Louise Driver is the professional assistant to GC Women's Ministries Associate Director, Lynnetta Hamstra, a position she has held since November 1997. She and her husband pastor a church in Maryland. They have three sons and four precious grandchildren.

She has her degree in elementary education and has taught for many years. Louise has years of experience with children's ministries in the local churches and conferences holding workshops and leadership training. For the past twelve years she has worked with Women's Ministries on the various levels from committee planning to presentations and speaking.

Music is a big part of her life and she enjoys gardening, skiing, traveling, and reading.

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Suggested Order of Service

Come Before God's Throne

Welcome and Invocation Prayer

Responsive Reading: Psalm 145:1- 9; Praise to God (See Appendix)

Praise Song: "Praise to the Lord," Hymn #1

Thanksgiving and Praise to God

Children's Story

Tithes and Offerings

Praise Songs (10 min)

Listening to God

Special Music: "Broken and Spilled Out"

Scripture: II Timothy 2:20, 21

Sermon: "Fill My Cup, Lord"

Response of Commitment

Sing: "Fill My Cup, Lord," Hymn #493

Sermon Outline

I. Introduction:

II. Our Condition

- A. Bankrupt by sin
 - 1. All have come short Romans 3:23
 - 2. No one is righteous Romans 3:10, 12, 13
 - 3. Heart is deceitful Jeremiah 17:9

III. Our Response

- A. To be faithfully obedient
 - 1. Collected every jar available
 - 2. Went inside and shut the door
 - 3. Filled the jars with oil
- B. To be fully receptive
 - 1. Ability to receive is limited by the capacity to receive
 - 2. Divine power motivates a useful life

IV. Our Supplier

- A. Grace pays our debt Romans 5:20
- B. Full restoration is available Phil. 4:19

V. Conclusion:

- A. God needs empty vessels
- B. Illustration of C. H. Spurgeon story: Bring Empty Baskets
- C. God wants our emptiness

Fill My Cup, Lord *Hepzibah Kore*

I. Introduction

A husband and wife lived a very happy married life with their two sons. The father was a God-fearing man and nurtured his family in the fear of the Lord. He did everything possible to keep his family happy and well provided for. Unexpectedly, the husband died. The wife, who depended on her husband for every little thing, became a total wreck. She was left lonely, empty, and found no reason to live.

How would she earn money to feed her children? She was helpless and did not know what to do. To make the situation worse, a moneylender came to her home one day demanding she repay what her husband had borrowed. She did not want to be a laughing stock in the neighborhood. She sold every little thing she had in the house. It was not enough to clear the debt. So the creditor gave her a deadline and threatened to take away her sons as slaves if she did not repay by then.

What would you do if you were in her shoes? Where would you go? Whom would you go to? In desperation she cried out to the Lord, "Lord! You alone can save me from this situation! Oh, Lord, who else can help me but You?"

She heard the Lord say, "Rise up, go to my representative. He will help you."

Immediately she rose up and went in search of the man. Fortunately, he was at home. She poured out all her troubles to him. The man listened patiently. You and I would expect the man to give her some money to clear her debt because, that is what you and I would do to help someone who owed money. But this man was different. He was none other than the prophet, Elisha.

We find the story recorded in II Kings 4:1-7. He asked the widow, "What do you have in your house? Do you have anything at all?" She didn't have to think deeply to recollect all that she had in the house because she only had "a little oil" (NIV); "pot of oil" (KJV) "jar of oil" (NRSV). What the prophet Elisha asked her to do was something strange. He said, "Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few. What does that mean? Collect as many as you possibly can. Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side."

I imagine her sons went from house to house and collected all the empty jars, vessels, and pots available in the whole neighborhood. Then the woman shut the door as she was instructed.

As I meditated upon this miracle, based on the theme, I could draw several important lessons that will fill our spiritual vacuum. I find this miracle to be a symbol of the inexhaustible divine grace or power of God. All of us are in the same condition of the poor widow. We are

destitute. We are empty and void. But God is eager to fill us with His power. He is far more tender and considerate of us than even Elisha was of the widow.

II. Our Condition

- A. Humanity is reduced by sin to a state of spiritual bankruptcy and ruin.
1. Like the poor widow, we are hopelessly immersed in debt, and we have nothing with which to clear our debts. Romans 3:23.
 2. The more we yield to sin or indulge in sin the greater the moral ruin. Romans 3:10,12,13.
 3. The more the moral ruin is, the more we are spiritually indebted. Jeremiah 17:19.

III. Our Response

- A. Faithful obedience is demanded in order to receive an ample supply of Divine grace or power. The widow not only sought Divine help, but also implicitly obeyed all the instructions.
1. She and her sons went around to collect all the empty jars available—not just a few until there were no more. She asked and she received. We do not have because we do not ask enough of God. God expects us to treat others as if they are empty vessels for us to use, so as to glorify God in their salvation. The fact of bringing empty vessels into the house implied that she has something with which to fill them.
 - It may not be my time;
 - It may not be your time;
 - But yet in His time the Lord will provide.Waiting in faith is a high form of worship.
 2. She went inside and shut the door. I wonder why Elisha asked her to go inside and shut the door. Could it be because she was going to begin a new life and every new life begins in darkness—like the germination of seeds in the soil and the babes of the animal kingdom in the mother's womb? Or could it be she might be more free to pray and act undisturbed, unburdened by the unbelief of others? Or could it be so no one would think the oil was brought by someone and secretly conveyed into the house to them?
 3. Poured the oil into the jars. Without the slightest moment of hesitation the widow took the jar in her hands, tilted it over the first empty jar, and the oil flowed out of it, filling the jar. She brought the jar to the upright position. The jar was full again. As she continued pouring the oil kept flowing. Imagine the look of astonishment on her face. The human mind cannot comprehend how the oil was multiplied. The poor widow's faith and implicit obedience triumphed over all difficulties.

- B. The supply of divine power is only limited by the capacity of the receiver.
1. Every available empty vessel was filled with oil. The oil flowed as long as an empty vessel was available. When there were no more empty vessels the oil stopped. God's power is inexhaustible. It is not limited in itself, but by the capacity of the individual receiver. To a certain extent it may be true that the power of God enlarges the vessel, which enriches with its blessings. The enjoyment of spiritual goodness increases the desire for more. If only we have the feeling or want and desire for God's help, that very want or desire will be to us what the pot of oil was to the widow—the source of an abundant supply of all we need.

It was the vessels that were exhausted, not the hand of God that was emptied. It is never God who fails but always the man who comes to the end of his capacity. In Ps 81:10 we read, "Open your mouth wide and I will fill it." This is a good emblem of the power of God. As long as there is an empty, longing heart, there is a continual overflowing fountain of God's power. If we find in any place, or at any time, the oil ceases to flow, it is because there are no empty vessels there; no souls hungering and thirsting to be filled with God's power.

2. The reception of Divine power furnishes the highest motives for an upright and useful life. Go, sell the oil and pay the debt. You and your sons can live on what is left. One of the first and simplest principles of true religion is honesty—it teaches a man or woman to pay his/her debts. The obligation to our neighbor should be our first priority before we enjoy God's blessings.

IV. Our Supplier

- A. Every provision has been made by Divine grace or power to restore humanity to his/her original righteous state.
1. God, the Father, sacrificed His Son to restore and redeem fallen humanity. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Romans 5:20.
- B. This reveals the fact that restoration is possible even to the most abandoned. Someone has said that heaven itself is too narrow for the full display of Divine goodness. Its streams flow down to bless and replenish the neediest on earth. Philippians 4:19.

V. Conclusion

- A. All the miracle needed was empty vessels. Full vessels were of no use. Many do not receive God's power because they have no empty vessels. These vessels are full of their own self-righteousness, intelligence and strength; something that is utterly useless and shuts out the power of God from their hearts. God wants to fill our emptiness with His power. The shape and size of the vessel does not matter as long as it is empty, open and

ready to be filled. We, the empty vessels, are created to be filled with His power or else the purpose of creation is lost.

(Presenter may want to suggest ways people, especially women, are “empty” in that area and how Women’s Ministries could feel them. Emphasize prayer.)

- B. C. H. Spurgeon, the famous preacher, illustrates this need to fill empty vessels thus: “Do you see that beautiful tree in the orchard loaded with fruit? It is a pear tree. From the top to the bottom it is covered with fruit. Some boughs are ready to break with the luscious burden. As I listen to the creaking boughs, I can hear the tree speak. It said, “Baskets, baskets, baskets, bring baskets.” Now then who has the baskets? “I have one,” says yonder friend, “but it is of no use, for there is nothing in it.” “Bring it here, man; that is the very basket the tree wants.” A person over there says, “Oh, I have a basket, a splendid basket. It is just the thing. It is full from top to bottom.” “You may keep the basket to yourself. It is of no use to my loaded tree...” What the Lord Jesus wants is my empty vessel and your empty vessel to be filled out of the fullness God has treasured up in Him. Full vessels are of no use. Many do not receive God’s power because they are not empty vessels.
- C. God wants our emptiness.

This is a suggested program that can be used on a Friday evening, Sabbath afternoon for AYA or vespers. Remember the theme of “United in Worship of God.”

Prayer /Songfest Service

Welcome guests

Introduction: We have gathered here today to spend some special time with the Lord. He has promised that where two or three are gathered in His name, He will be in the midst of them.

Pray: *Lord, today we claim this comforting promise. Even though it was written long ago, we know You are still true to Your word. We ask for Your presence here in a special way. Thank You for listening and answering our prayer.*

Sing: "Oh, The Glory of Your Presence" *

Read: Ps. 139:17, 18 TLB; "How precious it is, Lord, to realize that You are thinking about me constantly! I can't even count how many times a day Your thoughts turn toward me. And when I awaken in the morning, You are still thinking of me!"

Sing: "As We Come to You In Prayer," Hymn 671

Pray: Get into groups of three. Please focus your prayers on God's names; thank God for who He is and that He cares so deeply for us. (You can actually put a "time" on each of these prayer sessions).

Read: Ps. 32:7, 8 NIV; "You are my hiding place; You will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance. I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you."

Sing: "Lord, In The Morning," Hymn 39

Alternate Song: "You Are My Hiding Place" *

Responsive Reading: Psalm 95:1-7; 1 Chronicles 16:25-29, 34; John 4:19-24. (See Appendix)

Sing: "We Bring the Sacrifice of Praise" *

Read: Ps. 100:4; "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him and bless His name."

Read: Ps. 16:9-11; "Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body will also rest secure.... You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."

Pray: Before the program, choose four ladies to pray for the congregation. Remind them to pray specifically in thanks to God for His presence and fullness of joy promised in His word.

Sing: "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee," Hymn 12

Read: Ps. 5:11-12, “But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in You. For surely, O Lord, You bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield.” NIV.

Pray: Pray together in groups of two that the Lord will surround you with His shield of protection: physically, mentally and spiritually. Give them three-four minutes.

Responsive Reading: Prayer; Luke 11:1-13; John 14:13, 14. (See Appendix)

Sing: “Seek Ye First” *

Pray: Pray in groups of four asking God to help you put Him first in your life; above family, friends, job and *self*. After about 5 minutes begin quietly singing the next song.

Sing: “I Need Thee Every Hour,” Hymn 483

Sing: “Jesus, Name Above All Names” *

Alternate Song: “Take the Name of Jesus With You,” Hymn 474

Pray: (To be emptied of self and filled with Christ) Groups of two. [Begin singing the following song after a certain time].

Sing: “Create In Me A Clean Heart” *

Read: “In calling God our Father, we recognize all His children as our brethren. We are all a part of the great web of humanity, all members of one family. In our petitions we are to include our neighbors as well as ourselves. No one prays aright who seeks a blessing for himself alone.” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 267

Pray: Gather in a group of three or four people and pray for Women’s Ministries leaders in the local churches, friends and family, rulers, missionaries, co-workers, former church members, enemies. Begin singing when time to move on.

Sing: “I Need the Prayers,” Hymn 505

Read: Romans 8:26, 27 NIV; “In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself, intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express...the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.”

Sing: “What a Friend We Have In Jesus,” Hymn 499

Pray: *Lord, this is the confidence we have in approaching You: that if we ask anything according to Your will, You hear us. And if we know that You hear us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of You. Thank You, for this promise given to us by the pen of*

John, Your faithful scribe. Help us to be patient and wait for the answer on Your time schedule. We love You, Lord. Amen. (A paraphrase of 1 John 5:14-15)

*The praise songs are found in the Praise, (purple) Maranatha Music Chorus Book; Expanded 2nd Edition, Maranatha Music 1990

Prayer Suggestions

(See Appendix: “A Prayer for Life” and “Uncover the Word”).

These two prayers can be used as you see fit for the special day of prayer. Where the word “Filipinos” is mentioned in the prayer you could put your own cultural group.

You may find other prayers you would like to use, as many beautiful prayers have been written and published. Feel free to use the prayer as is or with adaptations.

Appendix

A Prayer For Life

O God, Source and Fountain of Life,
You are the Mother and Father of all living beings.
It is your essence within us we desire to touch;
We desire to receive blessings from Your will and plan
for humanity and creation.

May we fulfill it with a relentless quest.
This day, let food be shared
with all people of all nations.
Let justice and equality be lived by us.
Forgive us the times we have hoarded wealth
and refused to share with others.
In moments of temptation to dominate
or to be sluggish, alert us.
Free us from a selfishness and fear,
make us grow in compassionate love
so we can build a violence-free world
in the communion of all persons and creation. Amen.

Author Unknown, India

Of Rolling Waters And Roaring Wind, edited by Lynda Katsuno-Ishii and Edna J. Orteza p. 104

Uncover The Word

Layer after layer
the cloth covers the Scripture
like the coming of the Word to us Filipinos—
 covered by the perception of the West,
 covered by the perceptions of men
 covered by the perceptions of authorities,
 the theologically trained.

I want to read the Word
with you
that my experience of reality
may be in dialogue
with biblical experience
 for enlightenment,
 for strength
 for affirmation
 for hope
in the midst of disempowerment,
that together we may form a community of faith.

But first,
Uncover the Word!
Remove the cloth that hides it from my understanding,
that keeps me from reading it
with the eyes of my experience.

Uncover the Word
for the reading with new meaning.
Uncover the Word
Uncover the Word.

Dora Tabing-Reyes, Philippines

Of Rolling Waters And Roaring Wind, edited by Lynda Katsuno-Ishii And Edna J. Oeteza p. 35

Responsive Reading: Psalm 95:1-7; 1 Chronicles 16:25-29, 34; John 4:19-24.

Oh, come, let us sing to the Lord!

Give a joyous shout in honor of the Rock of our salvation!

Come before Him with thankful hearts. Let us sing Him psalms of praise.

For the Lord is a great God, the great King of all gods.

He controls the formation of the depth of the earth and the mightiest mountains; all are His.

He made the sea and formed the land; they too are His.

Come, kneel before the Lord our Maker,

For He is our God. We are His sheep and He is our Shepherd.

For the Lord is great, and should be highly praised; He is to be held in awe above all gods.

The other so-called gods are demons, but the Lord made the heavens.

Majesty and honor march before Him, strength and gladness walk beside Him.

O people of all nations of the earth ascribe great strength and glory to His name!

Yes, ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name! Bring an offering and come before Him; worship the Lord when clothed with holiness!

Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love and His kindness go on forever.

“Sir,” the woman said, “you must be a prophet.”

“But say, tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim it is here [at Mount Gerazim], where our ancestors worshiped?”

Jesus replied, “The time is coming ma’am, when we will no longer be concerned about whether to worship the Father here or in Jerusalem. For it’s not where we worship—is our worship spiritual and real?”

“Do we have the Holy Spirit’s help? For God is Spirit, and we must have His help to worship as we should. The Father wants this kind of worship from us.”

Responsive Reading: Prayer; Luke 11:1-13; John 14:13, 14.

Once when Jesus had been out praying, one of his disciples came to him as he finished and said, “Lord, teach us a prayer to recite just as John taught one to his disciples.”

And this is the prayer he taught them: “Father, may your name be honored for its holiness; send your kingdom soon. Give us our food day by day.

“And forgive our sins—for we have forgiven those who sinned against us. And don’t allow us to be tempted.”

Then, teaching them more about prayer, he used this illustration: “Suppose you went to a friend’s house at midnight, wanting to borrow three loaves of bread. You would shout up to him, “A friend of mine has just arrived for a visit and I’ve nothing to give him to eat.”

“He would call down from his bedroom, “Please don’t ask me to get up. The door is locked for the night and we are all in bed. I just can’t help you this time.”

“But I’ll tell you this—though he won’t do it as a friend, if you keep knocking long enough he will get up and give you everything you want—just because of your persistence.”

“And so it is with prayer—keep on asking and you will keep on getting; keep on looking and you will keep on finding; knock and the door will be opened.”

“Everyone who asks, receives; all who seek find; and the door is opened to everyone who knocks.

“You men who are fathers—if your boy asks for bread, do you give him a stone? If he asks for fish, do you give him a snake? If he asks for an egg, do you give him a scorpion? [Of course not!]

“And if even sinful persons like yourselves give children what they need, don’t you realize that your heavenly Father will do at least as much, and give the Holy Spirit to those who ask for him?”

“You can ask him for anything, using my name, and I will do it, for this will bring praise to the Father because of what I, the Son, will do for you.”

“Yes, ask anything, using my name, and I will do it!”

Alternate/Additional Responsive Reading: Psalm 145:1-9

Praise to God

Praise You, my God and King,
and bless Your name
each day and forever.

**Great is Jehovah! Greatly praise Him!
His greatness is beyond discovery!**

Let each generation tell its children what
Glorious things He does.

**I will meditate about Your glory,
Splendor, majesty and miracles.**

Your awe-inspiring deeds
shall be on every tongue;
I will proclaim Your greatness.

Everyone will tell about how good You are,

and sing about Your righteousness.

Jehovah is kind and merciful,
slow to get angry, full of love.

He is good to everyone

**and His compassion is intertwined
with everything He does.**