



Created, Called, Loved

Installation Service for Presbyterian Women

BY CHERI HARPER

Call to Worship (Based on Isaiah 43:1–7)

One: The One who created and formed us tells us this:

All: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you.

One: The One who calls us by name tells us this:

All: I will be with you and you are mine.

One: The One who protects us from overwhelming waters and consuming fires tells us this:

All: I am the Lord your God. You are precious in my sight and I love you.

One: Let us take heart in the enduring presence of the One who calls us together.

All: We will not fear, for God is with us. Amen.

Hymn

“If Thou but Trust in God to Guide Thee” (GtG 816)

Prayer

One: Holy and gracious God, you have brought us together in this place and we are humbled to know that you love us, teach us and call us to serve in your name. You are our guide. Help us to listen for your voice and to trust that your Holy Spirit will move among your people and lead us to become the beloved community that you intend for all.

All: Amen.

Scripture Reading

1 John 4:7–21

Meditation

We live with so many fears these days, many of which are fears about what “they” might do to “us.” We fear that a shooter will burst into a public place and hurt us. We fear that undocumented immigrants will bring illicit drugs or violence into our community. We fear that we will suffer race- or gender-based violence. We fear that our neighbors of different races and creeds will threaten our way of life.

God did not create us to live in fear. God formed us to live in loving community. We are not meant to be bound together by mutual fear and disdain for one another. We are meant to abide in God, to be wrapped up in God’s embrace, and to share that absolute love with everyone we encounter. When we allow God’s love to cast out our fear, we are empowered to grow closer to one another—having real conversations with and learning from one another, and encountering the whole body of Christ. In the body of Christ, we can set aside both our fear and our biases that create a false “us” and “them.”

It takes courage to lead in times such as these, but we trust that God fashions leaders to guide us through the wilderness. It is our faith in God that assures us that our Creator will never abandon us, but will always provide. When we trust in God’s love, we are liberated from fear. We are free to love, serve, lead and be led by the Holy Spirit.

Hymn

“We Are One in the Spirit”/“They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love” (GtG 300)

Installation

PW Leader: As faithful Presbyterian Women, we know that we are called to respond to God's love for us by loving one another. We trust that we are equipped to serve and to lead without fear because God dwells within our hearts and compels us to act with perfect love. As a body of Presbyterian Women, let us now confirm our commitment to God and to each other by affirming together our PW Purpose:

All: Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves

- ♦ to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study,
- ♦ to support the mission of the church worldwide,
- ♦ to work for justice and peace, and
- ♦ to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.

Litany of Installation

Leader: Let us pray. Holy One, we give thanks that you lift up servants and send them to us when we cry out. We know that we need not fear this world because you have promised to love us, guide us and provide us with leaders who will heed your voice and follow your way. We give thanks for all those who serve on committees, search for volunteers, help raise funds for mission, widen the circle of God's love, and accept the call when they are asked to lead. Surround us with your powerful presence as we make our faithful commitments to you.

All: Amen.

Leader (to elected leaders): Will you be faithful to the PW Purpose and do your best to lead your fellow Presbyterian Women with the love, compassion and courage that we encounter in Christ Jesus?

Elected Leaders: We will be fearless, as God calls us to be.

Leader: Will you learn from those you are leading—being open to different or uncomfortable points of view—and respond with grace when disagreements arise?

Elected Leaders: We will be loving, as God calls us to be.

Leader: Will you motivate others to follow you, demonstrating the joy and enthusiasm that you receive from the Holy Spirit?

Elected Leaders: We will be inspiring, as God calls us to be.

Leader (to the congregation): Will you draw closer to these leaders whom God has raised up, offering them support and grace as they take on this task?

Congregation: We will be one, as God calls us to be.

All: As God's people, we will walk together in hope, loving one another as God calls us to do.

Declaration of Installation

(Presentation of tokens, if any)

Leader: (Name of each new officer), you are duly installed leaders of Presbyterian Women for this (circle/congregation/presbytery/synod). As we are reminded by the words of 1 John, may you be bold in your leadership, because God is love and you abide in God. You can trust that as you abide in God, you abide in love and God abides in you. You have nothing to fear as you lead, for perfect love casts out fear.

All: We love because God first loved us. We will support your calling to lead and will follow God's commandment to love God, and all our siblings, as well.

Hymn

"Called as Partners in Christ's Service" (GtG 761)

Sending

Installed PW Leader: As we go forth, may we remember to work together, knowing that God has created us for joyful ministry to this world, Christ has freed us to serve our neighbors without fear, and the Holy Spirit blows through us with the power of unquenchable love. Presbyterian Women are a courageous bunch. Let's go out and love fearlessly and fiercely! 🍷

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Note

*GtG: *Glory to God* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2013)