

Welcome to Sacred Time Content, a virtual space dedicated to allow room for refreshing, reflection, and centering during General Synod.

You might begin your day with a brief devotional or guided meditation to ground you in the moment. After a workshop or committee session, you spend some time reflecting upon what you've learned, what still needs pondering, and what God is calling you to do in response by utilizing a directed journaling process. You need refreshing after a plenary session or the hard work of committee and find a song that sings.

You freely share the experience of synod with your congregation or faith community through any of these resources, "Rooted in Love."

And, you conclude each evening with a prayer found on social media (look for #UCCSynod #SacredTime or #UCCSynod #Prayer) reflecting the needs, hopes, and spirit of the day.

Breathe,
Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay (lindsayc@ucc.org)
General Synod Sacred Time Content Coordinator
Sermon Seeds Writer and Editor

Beatitudes of the Roots -- Maren C. Tirabassi

Jesus opened the psalms and looked ahead to our days, then began to speak, teaching people so far in the future there were places called "churches," saying ...

Blessed are the roots of the Spirit, for they are churches deep in the dirtiest dirt of the world.

Blessed are water roots, for they are churches that sustain those floating on tears..

Blessed are creeping roots, spread wide and planted shallow, churches that support transitions, not traditions.

Blessed are the roots that feed the hungry of the earth, the carrot and yam, potato and red radish churches, for their own hearts will be nourished.

Blessed are healing roots, ginger and ginseng, turmeric and ashwagandha, for they are churches of where everyone ... everyone receives compassion.

Blessed are the taproot churches, that keep people anchored, even when God seems invisible because of the canopy of busyness or pain or injustice.

Blessed are the leafmakers, for they don't need to see the sun to believe in the photosynthesis of the Holy Spirit. Churches full of elders trust that God's light touches a five-year-old's face, God's breath becomes the carbon dioxide for an adolescent's oxygenated call for justice.

Blessed are those who have been rootbound by a church in the past too small hearted to love them, for their re-potting will be planted in the realm of God.

Blessed are you when you feel like your faith home has tossed you out like last year's Christmas tree, withheld the compost of kindness, left you unwatered in a long drought of caring. Rejoice and be glad, for God alone holds the trowel and you will be deeply rooted in love.

Prayers for Synod written by Rev. Michelle L. Torigian

A Prayer for Our Siblings Feeling Dehumanized During Synod

Holy Branches of Care-

Even as we meet in this forest of support, a tempest approaches beyond your limbs:
Squalls of arrogance, hate, and ignorance.

As some sign sweet songs of love and justice,

A cacophony raises its noises of dissonance, denying humanity and the song of our neighbors.

And how much we want to run from this forest, God!

Yet you have called us here for a time such as this.

May your unfailing breeze carry us forward.

May the gentle winds of the Holy Spirit protect us from the storms streaming from unkind minds.

May your divine leaves block the harmful rays of hate and the misuse of your Holy Name.

Amen.

A Prayer at the Beginning of the Day

Divine Light of Dawn,

As you give birth to this day and all its possibilities,

Allow our bodies to be revived by your Spirit.

May our aches drift into the wind

And our fatigue soaked up by your strong soil.

We inhale your strength and courage.

We exhale grace and love.

As the sun continue to rise in the Eastern sky

May we see the possibilities of justice in the hours ahead of us.

Allow our senses to absorb the stories of our siblings.

Awaken us to the reality of our neighbors.

Fill our minds with focus and our hearts with compassion.
Amen.

A Prayer for Conflicting Opinions

Holy Bridge of Love,

As we approach a conflicting resolution,

We acknowledge your beloved children think differently than we do.

Oh, how can we build a world of justice

And still see our objecting neighbors as your beloved?

Tensions rise - even in virtual spaces.

With a loud or silent "ugh," we pray for your wisdom.

Direct our attention on the needs of others.

Open us beyond our current state.

And may we remember that the ones who dissent are still your children. Amen.

A Prayer for Moving Forward Beyond Synod

God of the Present, God of the Future,

What wonderful seeds were planted here today!

And as the seeds sprout, and roots take hold,

May your wisdom fill us with possibilities.

Allow these new plants to inspire us in our congregations

To work for justice, to continue the education process.

The labor is rigorous. Our work calls us to trek uphill.

But someday into the future, we will see your beautiful, rich forest of equity.

Amen.

A Prayer for Prioritizing Needs

Spirit of Protection-

As we learn, as we pray, as we decide, our hearts are still thinking of our own best interest,

On our own survival when anxieties plague our thoughts.

The "what ifs" begin to overtake our minds.

Will this be safe for our family?

Will this be safe for our church?

But the "what ifs" aren't always rooted in reality.

Fear overtakes our hearts.

We rely on institutions and weapons to calm our fears.

Turn our weapons into plowshares
And our fears into peace.
On this day, lead us to make decisions that bring healing to all
And allow all our neighbors to find wholeness and strength.
May our anxieties be whisked away by your winds
And replaced by concerns based in reality.
Amen.

A Prayer for the End of the Day
God of the Virtual Spaces,
My senses are Zoomed out.
Instead of being able to connect in person-
One on one conversations after a long day-
We connect only by camera.
My energy is depleted.
I am left wanting.
But even in these most unique circumstances,
I know we are fulfilling the work of the Church.
In these hours of rest,
Refill my cup.
Refresh my soul.
Restore my senses.
Amen.

A Prayer During Times of Tempermental Technology
God of New Means and Pathways,
You've created online routes to communications
And minds who made the screens.
For all of the technology we possess,
We give much thanks.

But when the computer crashes and freezes,
And we keep asking over and over again
"Are you there?"
Frustration builds.

My God, My God, why has technology forsaken me?

We live in a human world with imperfect tools.
For the tools we have, we share our gratitude, God,

For the moments they work, we give our thanks.

For the times when technology tumbles,
Forgive our groans... our screams...our cursing.
Give us patience, Holy One.

Amen.

An invocation! A proclamation! Or maybe it's just a summer's day - Maria Mankin

The air is already sweltering by the time
I rise to pray. I step outside to see
the first moments of the sun's journey
today and recall the start of spring –
the trees I know so well beginning
to push buds, tightly curled leaves
dotting the trees an optimistic green.

The birds were ravenous at the feeder,
and when I took my sons on a walk,
we watched a pair of ducks guarding their eggs.

The earth was gently waking, shaking
herself from a winter's fitful slumber.

It seems extraordinary, as I sweat
and struggle through each new day,
that the trees should blossom,
sink their taproots down to give us
the strength we need to face the summer.

Shroud -- Maria Mankin

I'll bury myself here in this new budded
tree, allow myself to lay still, camouflaged
by the life shifting all around me. I will still
this wildly beating heart and the fears
that surge up and close my throat.
I will soften my body until my bones

melt into branches and my fingers
stretch green as the leaves shivering
in the wind. This will be my quiet place,
my prayer place, my coming to You
place where I can pour out my heart.

It is here I will learn again how to be brave
enough for this new life, here where I will
crack open my ribs and fill up with truth.
You may whisper in my ear how much
it is going to hurt, and I will believe You
because you are the One
and it will still surprise me when the pain
is more than I can bear. In that hour,
I will pry open my mouth, push love
through my clenched teeth, spit out
the truths that still feel true and grind
into dust all that does not serve You.

“Roots and Walls” -- Janeen Adil

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cr5cFZn7v-T1uJdz87dXy2O2Fc6kBg5p/view?usp=sharing>

“Roots and Stars” -- Janeen Adil

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KY5TebShNQTVTiH3i5NG4S6yeM86SSNy/view?usp=sharing>

Workshop and Committee Directed Journaling -- Cheryl Lindsay

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QrmCWQ6xbET32tkzm0_IH8j5rbdxsqHL/view?usp=sharing

Soil | Rootedness

- “Be Rooted in Hope” -- Paul Vasile

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1719u0WNNTFoGQRRdsdwqDCiqqZ0LbJ32/view?usp=sharing>

***waiting on recording

- “Taproot” -- Tena Nock

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/19SlfFuDhOEz3g5EhaQ6jL83iG9bE0Y6v/view?usp=sharing>

- “Shadow and Doubt” -- David Long-Higgins

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_2DschurbSZbs-5xqAhidvAH3oEe9378/view?usp=sharing

- Body Meditation --Henry Schoenfield

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/0kepbrnm38zu38d/Body%20Meditation.mov?dl=0>

<https://youtu.be/DritcobxN4M>

- “We Will Rest”

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ksDBiZzRQ1fILkyK5XtUdnO9CMdC39zf/view?usp=sharing>

- “Dovesong Round” -- Tom Ryberg

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FD6hzxMgZcaj4AzdD3v5TLdrcpmyBhH2/view?usp=sharing>

Water | Resilience

- “Like a Tree” -- Richard Bruxoort Colligan

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/15Vuy1Jx1DuqAqH540oNIFBn1t7HXmAKo/view?usp=sharing>

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BdWqHJvkJbOHJPpsaBWQGJxldYoR_MEN/view?usp=sharing

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GTzxXDxmF_HzcyT_oGxOD771uUcacA8/view?usp=sharing

- “Rooted and Grounded in Love” -- Barbara Hamm

***waiting on updated content

- “Please Wait Here” -- David Long-Higgins

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rf-2D5nn-HcSGzBympb-V_19GkFgGJlb/view?usp=sharing

- “The Storm Will Soon Be Over” --Dan Doty

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2M20OSiKlKE>

- Tonglen --Henry Schoenfield

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/1f533tir0glk9uf/tonglen.mov?dl=0>

<https://youtu.be/Hil6wjhJnLU>

- “Be Not Afraid” -- Tom Ryberg

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1msoFFsTrsFxfqHB1by8hZezWRGE39yTB7/view?usp=sharing>

- “Above All Else” --Amanda Udis-Kessler

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/19KoDXOyupW1lkemzdl9FgpiScRSDmfka/view?usp=sharing>

<https://youtu.be/xaBOVf9Ppig>

Air | Resurrection

- “Barely Breathing Poem” -- Karen Georgia Thompson and Keon Heywood

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_YkteF9Jb43LOodS4fHvaUDsMULYR8IS/view?usp=sharing

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QpuBnwcV07Yu_C1QK3mUBTwUnqAifFGi/view?usp=sharing

- “A Meditation for Caregivers” -- Deborah Dee Brayton

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sWh04MqoqlL6lmMcK-REpl590TdKVO9Z/view?usp=sharing>

- “How Great Thou Art” -Dan Doty

<https://youtu.be/hYuap5Sqr7g>

- “A Rooted Sanctus” - Connie Borchadt

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Jcf2qVQcLiLb8IB9x4bpi156R_Zyno_l/view?usp=sharing

- Centering Prayer --Henry Schoenfield

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/uc9vk10gs4vqpf/centering%20prayer.mov?dl=0>

<https://youtu.be/aOwnkwmLBlo>

- “Remember You” -- Tom Ryberg

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XEmfXXGnTuMaiaPFrxsWGUiYRYCTBqWy/view?usp=sharing>

- “We Will Rest” -- Amanda Udis-Kessler

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1etsTiDK0PG3BYwMd9dhAYcsZCN-ov1FR/view?usp=sharing>

<https://youtu.be/hC9eE72BCqs>