

PRAYERS AND DEVOTIONS

The following meeting devotions were written by the Rev. Dr. Thomas M. Richard, executive secretary of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. Included in the following pages are two sample devotions, which can be used as models for constructing your own devotions.

Devotions for Church Council (A)

Opening Reading: Mark 8:31-38

Thoughts for Reflection

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

A Moment of Silent Prayer

Unison Prayer (Thomas A' Kempis)

Grant to us, O God, to know what we ought to know, to love what we ought to love, to praise what delights Thee most, to value what is precious in Thy sight, to hate what is offensive to Thee. Amen.

Responsive Litany (S.D. Phelps, adapted)

L: Savior, Thy dying love Thou gave us

P: Nor should we aught withhold dear Lord from Thee

L: In love our souls would bow, our heart fulfill its vow

P: Some offering bring Thee now something for Thee

L: At the blest mercy seat pleading to Thee

P: Help us the cross to bear, Thy wondrous cross declare

L: Some song to raise or prayer, something to Thee.

Closing Prayer (Rob and Michael Benson, adapted)

Lord God, you give to us with lavish hand, you do not withhold from us your great grace and mercy. Let us live and serve you also with a generous heart, in the name of your Son, who gave us his all, Amen.

Devotions for Church Council (B)

Opening Reading: Jeremiah 31:7-9

Thoughts for Reflection

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

A Moment of Silent Prayer

Unison Prayer

Almighty God, we sometimes feel like Jeremiah of old, who prophesied the return of the Hebrews from exile. This month we are calling our own people back to faithful commitment to their Church. Many of our members are inactive in their religious life - for them we pray, as we pray for all those who are continuing to be blessed by your word and our life together. Help us to speak a word to all, in Christ's name, Amen.

Responsive Litany (William Williams, adapted)

L: Guide us O thou great Jehovah pilgrims thru this barren land

P: We are weak but Thou art mighty hold us with Thy powerful hand

L: Open now the crystal fountain whence the healing waters flow

P: Let the fiery cloudy pillar lead us all our journeys through

L: Bread of Heaven feed us til we want no more

P: Feed us til we want no more

L: Strong deliverer be Thou our strength and shield

P: Strong deliverer be Thou our strength and shield

Closing Prayer

Almighty and powerful God, direct, demand, suggest and control every move we make. Especially we ask that you would bless us and help us not to shrink from the awesome task before us. The stewardship of our Church, built for the edification of all people and to worship you, depends upon our faith in you. In Christ's name, we pray Amen.