Bible Studies

for

Week of Prayer and commitment

**THEME:** Theme: Christ is Calling Us: Participating in Suffering and Struggle

“Surprise us O Lord, with your presence; renew our sense of wonder and give us peace and courage to live as your people with a culture for justice and respect for the integrity of all your creation.”
Introduction

The week of prayer and commitment is a period set apart early in the year for Prayer, Bible Study and Reflection. We are called upon to come together in house groups or ward meetings for weekday meetings for Bible Study, fellowship and meditation on the suggested topics. The week's Bible Studies should lead to the Covenant and Commitment Sunday which falls on the first Sunday of February. This year we have chosen to focus on the UCCSA theme, “Christ is Calling Us: Participating in Suffering and Struggle”. We are also mindful of our transnational character as the UCCSA, hence the need to continue to pray for our member countries to strive for justice. The following six Bible studies should help us unpack the theme and lead us to the Covenant and Commitment Sunday. Each local church is encouraged to arrange daily Bible studies and prayers in order to re-commit ourselves for our challenges. We are offering this series of Bible Studies to assist in the process. We have prepared brief introductions for each session in order to allow the groups to spend more time in their own discussions. The intention is to have more in-depth engagement with the text of scripture. It is suggested that the Bible study facilitators should take note of the following points:

1. Begin the meeting with prayer.
2. Ask group members to take turns to read the text.
3. Explain, engage and wrestle with the text in the light of your context.
4. Use the given questions to assist the group in its discussion but do not limit yourselves to these.
5. Close the sessions with the prayer-focus for the day and include local concerns in your prayer.

DAY ONE

Text: Micah 6: 6 - 8
"With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (NRSV).

Overview:
The UCCSA theme is an invitation to a special journey. It is an “inward” journey leading to a re-discovery of our identity and calling. Faith should be expressed in the context of the community in which we live. The prophet Micah, a man who lived in the rural areas of Judea in the 8th Century BC, has a relevant message for us today. Micah’s call to do justice, love mercy and to walk humbly with the Lord, just about sums up how we should relate with one another and by so doing, show how we relate with God. Life is not just about observing certain religious rituals but it is about how we treat our fellow
human beings, especially those who suffer the injustices of this world. For Micah, as it should be the case for us, true religion is not about honouring a sacrificial system but it is about justice, mercy and walking humbly with the Lord God. Micah had witnessed how the sacrificial system in the temple in Jerusalem had been co-opted into the socio-political system and abused while posing as a religion. Micah had seen how the rich and famous of his day could ‘get away’ with anything as long as they came back to soothe their consciences by lavish ritualistic observation. The glaring injustice, having gone unchecked by the priestly system, could not escape the prophet Micah’s eye. He asks, with full irony in his question, with what shall I come before the Lord: sacrificial animals, oil and other expensive gifts, and even his own son? None of the commonly accepted symbols of worship could suffice as long as they were not backed by a culture of justice, mercy and humility. For faith to be true, it must result in a correlation with between one's words and social responsibility. “Thus true faith in God is inseparable from personal holiness and the search for social justice.” We need to audit our missional responsiveness regularly and ensure that we are not caught up in empty religion.

**Discussion Questions:**

1) What are your own reactions to the passage?
2) What do you find intriguing or challenging in the passage?
3) Discuss the “short comings” of our forms of worship today?
4) How does our worship hinder or promote a culture of justice in church and society?
5) What do the words **justice, mercy** and **humility** mean to you?

**Prayer focus: Botswana**

- Light a candle and place it on the map and say a prayer for Botswana.
- Think of the major challenges that a nation like Botswana faces today: a fair distribution of resources and the elimination of poverty.
- Pray also for a local cause, such as unemployment and loss of hope among many.
- Close the session with the Lord’s Prayer.

**DAY TWO**

**Text: Exodus 14: 9 – 22**

“The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh's horses and chariots, his chariot drivers and his army; they overtook them camped by the sea, by Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon. As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the LORD. They said to Moses, 'Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, 'Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." But Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the LORD will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to keep still." Then the
LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. But you lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground. Then I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and so I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots, and his chariot drivers. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gained glory for myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his chariot drivers." The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night. Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. (NRSV)

Overview:
Today we focus on the story of the departure of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage. The incident under review took place after Pharaoh's decision to re-capture the Israelites soon after realising the impact of his decision to let Israel go. Moses and his people were actually trapped between the Egyptian army and the impassable Red Sea. They protest in strong words, asking Moses, *Were there no graves in Egypt for him to have brought them to die in the wilderness?* Moses had a vision of a liberated people, and they were at last well on their way to the "Promised Land" when disaster struck. It is during times of crisis that one's true character emerges. The crowd proved fickle and not prepared to suffer and work for their dream. Their concern was to survive, even if under the indignity of slavery. The most painful form of oppression is the inability to have a reason for living, to the extent of remaining enslaved instead of struggling for liberation.

Discussion Questions:
1) What do you find striking from the passage?
2) What lessons can you draw from this story for your own journey of liberation?
3) How can you show the doubters that a better world/community is possible?
4) What do you think accounted for Moses' victory in this story and how can we use that in our situation?

Prayer focus: Mozambique

- Mozambique is said to be having “the fastest growing economy”! The economies of a few may have grown, but the majority of the people are sinking in abject poverty. Many risk xenophobic attacks in neighbouring states in order to find jobs and earn money for their families. Light a candle and place it on the map and say a prayer for Mozambique.
- Through your Region, consider forming a partnership with a sister church in Mozambique or any other part of the UCCSA.
- Close with the Lord's Prayer.
DAY THREE


“Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?” He asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.” Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” (NRSV)

Overview:
This is an amazing story about how two disciples, Cleopas and his unnamed friend experienced a great turn-around after a conversation with “a stranger” on their way home. The conversation began when the two were joined by Jesus who asked them what they were discussing as they walked. It was a shocking question enough for them to stand still, sad, and process what this might mean to meet someone who was so out of touch with current affairs. And they chastise this stranger for his ignorance but they were patient enough to update him. Their sorry situation is summed up in their own words, “but we had hoped”. They had been left hopeless after the catastrophe of the death of Jesus. Notice how they express their disappointment by saying “we had hoped”. In other words they were admitting that, as things stood, they had lost all hope. Hope is so integral a part of life that it cannot be left in the past. And Jesus, still a stranger to them, patiently works with them through the scriptures and this gradual revelation warms their hearts and their faith is restored. As they got home, with the
night upon them, they managed to persuade their “friend” to stay with them for the night. It was at supper that the ultimate revelation dawned upon them in the simple act of breaking the bread, blessing it and sharing it with them. From that transforming moment their hope was restored and they found enough courage to walk back to Jerusalem to share the news of their experience on the road. One of the most important gifts of life is the ability to converse. Human coexistence is built on conversation. One cannot imagine anything normal taking place without conversation. And wherever conversation has failed, strife and violence is the result. It is necessary to enter conversation about our disappointment and hurts as a church, family or in the community. Jesus approached this conversation with humility, asking questions and gradually gaining their trust and allowing them to make up their own minds. He did not come as a superior, All Knowing person! He did not impose himself on the people, but he walked in conversation with them.

Discussion Questions:
1) What are some of the causes of loss of hope among the young people, women, men, regions and even nations?
2) How can your church help with the “restoration of hope” in your context?
3) What are some of the topics that individuals, families, churches and communities are reluctant to talk about openly?
4) Suggest ways in which you can help this silence over the issues identified for each group in question 2 above.

Prayer focus: Namibia
- Light a candle and place it on the map and say a prayer for Namibia.
- Many families are split because of the need to search for jobs in towns and neighbouring countries. Some have to live in conditions that expose them to the danger of violence and rape. Pray for such families.
- Close with the Lord’s Prayer.

DAY FOUR

Text: 2 Samuel 13

Focus: Create a culture of Justice among children.

Today’s scripture tells of a sad incident that took place within the household of king David. This is the account of the events that led to the rape of Tamar by Amnon, one of her brothers. It also a story of courage by a young woman, Tamar, who stood for justice and in a way confronted the system. It is also about what can happen to a family when the values of justice, respect, human dignity and fairness have not been engraved into the character of a family and hence the nation.

Step 1: Read the text above and take note of any questions that might arise and discuss them.
Step 2: Take a closer and critical look at the roles played by the key characters in this story: David, Amnon, Jonadab, Tamar, and Absalom.

Step 3: What does this story teach us today as we seek to be “justice families/churches”?

Step 4: Discuss the injustices that children suffer in families and in society in your area?

Step 5: What can the church do to reduce and bring to an end, these injustices against our children?

Prayer focus: South Africa

- Light a candle and place it on the map and say a prayer for South Africa as she “hosts” many people from all over the world.
- Pray for refugees everywhere, that they may find welcoming homes, respect and dignity as they seek a place of safety.
- Close with the Lord’s Prayer.

DAY FIVE

Text: Ezekiel 37: 1 - 14

The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." Then he said to me, "Prophesy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD." So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude. Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD."

Overview:
One of the most amazing stories in the Bible is Ezekiel's valley of dry bones. Ezekiel worked during one of the most difficult periods in the history of Israel. Having been
taken into captivity in Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar in 597BC, Ezekiel did his prophetic work among his fellow exiles located along one of the tributaries of the Euphrates river. The message of this passage is relevant for many contexts of suffering and struggle that people encounter. Most of this pain, suffering, destruction and death is caused by injustice in the economic set up of our world. Many people are living in virtual slavery even in the land of their birth. The financial and political institutions which are supposed to guarantee justice and protect life, have failed and left people at the merciless hands of the powerful and faceless systems. It is in such a context that the prophetic word must break forth and bring hope to the people. In Ezekiel's vision of a valley of dry bones, life eventually comes when the life giving spirit has done her work.

Discussion Questions:
1) To what extent, on a scale of 1 to 10, would you describe your context as a valley of dry bones?
2) What message does this story convey for your context?
3) What do you think can bring life to our inner cities, townships, rural areas, farms or mining sectors of your community?

Prayer focus: Zimbabwe
- Light a candle and place it on Zimbabwe on the map and say a prayer for Zimbabwe.
- Pray for your local church leadership and mission programme.
- Close with the Lord's Prayer.

DAY SIX

Text: Acts 2: 42 - 47

“So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.”

Overview:
The book of Acts devotes a big portion to the origin and development of the church as an instrument for the Missio-Dei, Mission of God. The text we shall read gives us a window into the life of the Early Church. It depicts a community that was conscious about its identity and purpose in life. It may be a little bit idealistic but that is where the church today is supposed to be aiming at. One thing certain is that the Early Church was not an inward looking and parochial entity. It had internal issues but it never allowed itself to be bogged down at the expense of the mission agenda. Every internal act was not an end in itself but had a bearing on the mission task.
Discussion Questions:
1) Identify signs of your church’s parochial tendencies and suggest how you can deal with the problem of being inward looking?
2) Identify in the passage the key activities of the Early Church: Preaching, Teaching, Fellowship, Communion, Worship, Giving/Stewardship, Growth and Community Responsibility.
3) Make an assessment grid, based on the above mentioned actions, for your own church?
4) How can the Mission element or interest be revived in your church’s pursuit of the above cardinal activities for the church?

- Light a candle and place it on the spot that you would like to pray for on the map.
- Pray for the UCCSA President, General Secretary and Executive.
- Pray for our ecumenical partners such as the national councils of churches, Council for World Mission and Global Ministries.
- Pray for your local church mission programme as well as the UCCSA mission Council.

General Prayer
“O God, our faces are sometimes lined with worry, our days are full of stress and struggle, and we often face discouraging results. Yet we come today, grateful that in the midst of this crowded and troubled world, Jesus was born, lived and died full of grace and truth. We ask you Lord for a share of the same grace and truth as we seek to serve and worship you with justice for all people. Surprise us O Lord, with your presence; renew our sense of wonder and give us peace and courage to live as your people with a culture for justice and respect for the integrity of all your creation. Strengthen us to serve our fellow human beings, especially the poor, widows, refugees and aliens and the down-trodden people in this world until at last your reign of justice and peace has become a reality on this earth. May you be glorified in us as in Jesus Christ, in whose name and power we pray, Amen.”
ORDER OF SERVICE
FOR
COVENANT AND COMMITMENT
SUNDAY

3RD FEBRUARY 2013
ORDER OF SERVICE

Please choose your own hymns and choruses known to your congregation. Where necessary you may insert a space for a choir or other groups to participate.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN:

1. GREETING AND CALL TO WORSHIP  (inspired by Jeremiah 31:7-9)
   L. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
   P.  And also with you
   L. Come once more, with eager longing, to receive the promises of God. Sing aloud with gladness:
   P.  God is gathering the people!
   L. From the farthest parts of the earth we come:
   P.  All who struggle; all who labor with new life!
   L. Those who are weeping, God will console;
   P.  Those who get lost find a clear path home.
   L. Let us worship the God who gathers us!
   P.  Ever-calling God, We give thanks that you have gathered us into your church and graced us with your faithful presence. We ponder our history, ancient and still developing, and marvel at the many expressions of your church. Grant us the vision to be a part of a new community that will bring ever more joy and justice to the world. Continue to gather us, all of us, into Jesus’ vision and dream that your faithful people may be one in you. Amen

2. WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

3. PRAISE AND WORSHIP CHORUSES

4. PRAYER OF APPROACH AND CONFESSION.
   L. Gracious God our Father, we know that we can rely upon you as we come together in worship, fellowship and service. Living Christ, we know that we can place our trust in you for time and for eternity. Friendly Spirit, we know that you can fill us with hope to overcome every challenge we face in this life and the life to come. Help us to worship you, Father Son and Holy Spirit and to grow in confidence in your greatness and your goodness.
   P.  Lord of our yesterdays, todays and tomorrows, yet always the same, we confess that too often we live only for the present moment, and let our health, emotions and passions rule our lives. Grant us your Spirit to fill us with wholeness, to bring us under your control and cleanse us from our resistance to your power and presence. Help us not to be overtaken by events and prevent us from sinking into despair. Lift us out of the depths of our self-pity. Awaken us from our spiritual slumbers.
   L. We thank you Lord that we can meet with you as friends and hear the good news of your free and full pardon to all who truly turn to you in penitence and faith. Help us to believe the good news that in Jesus Christ we are
forgiven. Help us to live on the level of the Spirit and to keep a spiritual outlook which brings life and peace.

**P.** Dear Lord, deliver us from the fear of dying and death so that we may live freely the life of the Spirit, in obedience to your commands, and invigorated by the indwelling Christ so that we may set about accomplishing your purposes and so bring glory to your name, Amen.

5. HYMN OR CHORUS

6. SCRIPTURE READINGS:
   After OT and NT Readings:
   
   L. This is the word of the Lord. 
   P. Thanks be to God.
   After Gospel Reading:
   L. This is the gospel of our risen Lord. P. Praise be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

7. OFFERTORY

8. LITANY OF DEDICATION:
   L. O God the Father in heaven:
   **P.** Have mercy upon us.
   L. For your gifts of life, relationships and purpose, and for the abundant blessings which you continually bestow upon us:
   **P.** We praise you and give you thanks.
   L. A. For our redemption through Christ’s blood, for our adoption as children of God, for the holiness that you give us in baptism, and for the promise of eternal life:
   **P.** We praise you and give you thanks.
   L. Continue to lead and guide us, O Lord, along pathways of truth and righteousness.
   **P.** Lord, increase our faith.
   L. Groom us with your holy Word; love us with your life-giving Sacraments; teach us to find you in the depths of prayer; lift us with the songs of faith; and make us wholly yours.
   **P.** Lord, increase our faith.
   L. Help us to trust in you fully, so that we will give our lives, our loved ones, our cares, our resources, our church, and our mission entirely into your hands.
   **P.** Lord, increase our faith.
   L. Above all, use us, O God, as instruments of your love in the world.
   **P.** Use us, O God.
   L. Use our resources and our offerings to undergird and continually expand our ministry in our community, in our synod and in our world. Use our church as a place for all people, a refuge in the storm, a focus for faith, a house for worship, a portal of peace, a fountain of forgiveness, a school for learning, a resource for equippping, and a center for mission.
   **P.** Almighty and all-loving God, we are nothing without you and without your love. And yet with you, we have all that we need: for life, for love, for faith, for strength, for purpose, for mission. Because you have called us, loved us, and saved us through your Son, we are your Church in this place.
Guide and direct this, your Church, in your love. Bless our work to the increase of your kingdom. Work miracles among us and with us and through us, so that our ministry may continually grow, and so that many more may be called, loved, and saved through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

9. HYMN

10. SERMON

11. PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION.
   The leader invites a person to light a CANDLE and offer a prayer for each of the UCCSA Synods. Botswana; Mozambique; Namibia; South Africa and Zimbabwe

12. HYMN

13. COMMUNION

   13.1. COMMUNION LITANY:
   L. The peace of the Lord be with you.
   P. And also with you.
   L. Lift up your hearts.
   P. We lift them up to the Lord.
   L. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
   P. It is right to give him thanks and praise.

   13.2. EUCHARISTIC PRAYER
   L. Father, all powerful and ever-living God, we will always and everywhere give you thanks and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord. Out of love for sinners he humbled himself and became one of us. Born of Mary, he spent his days among us, laughing as we laugh, weeping as we weep. At the Jordan your Spirit descended upon him, anointing him to preach the good news of your kingdom. Anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power, he went among his people feeding the hungry, giving sight to the blind, curing the lame, and healing all who were under the power of the devil. Finally, in fulfilment of your will, he suffered death upon the cross to free us from unending death. Therefore with all the saints and with the angels in heaven we praise you, saying:
   P. Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest.

   L. Blessed indeed, Father, is the one who comes in your name. Blessed is your son, Christ Jesus, and blessed are they who believe in him and call on his name. Dying he destroyed our death, rising he restored our life.
L. Before he was given up to death, a death he freely accepted, he took bread and gave you thanks. He broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take this, all of you, and eat. This is my body which will be given up for you." When the supper was ended, he took the cup. Again he gave you thanks and praise, gave the cup to his disciples, and said: "Take this, all of you, and drink from it. This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of me."

P. When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus, until you come in glory.

L. Let us proclaim the mystery of our faith:

P. Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

L. Loving God, we pray that You send Your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this bread and this cup that they may be for us the body and the blood of your Son, Christ Jesus our Lord. Give us, as we eat and drink, the mind of Christ and help us to follow his example as we await his return in glory.

We ask it in his name, praying together as he taught us,  

Singing

P. Our Father...

13.3. THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS:

The bread and wine is distributed. We will eat and drink at the same time.

Minister:  

"Eat this bread, come to me and never be hungry.
Minister:  

Drink this cup; trust in me and you will not thirst."

14. HYMN

15. COVENANT RENEWAL:

L. And now as one people within the household of God, in the unity of the faith, in the communion of the saints, in love and goodwill to all, Let us in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, give ourselves afresh to the Lord and to one another in joyous covenant.

P. We believe in God our heavenly Lord; We confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour; We depend on the guidance of the Holy Spirit; We seek to live in God’s presence according to all that God has made known and will make known to us We covenant to worship, work and witness together in the fellowship of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa For the building up of the body of Christ and the manifesting of the reign of God on earth"

L. May Almighty God, guide and guard all your people, grant that the covenant we have made here today on earth be sealed in heaven, through our Lord Jesus Christ,

P. Amen.
16. OUR COMMITMENTS

- We, members of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, do commit ourselves to:
  - Continuously proclaim the Lordship and the love of Christ Jesus in Church and society
  - Be a welcoming, embracing, caring and inclusive church, never to discriminate, ignore, reject or undermine any person or group.
  - Pursue the fullness of life given by Christ Jesus
  - Fight all forms of corruption within the church and society
  - Re-reading the Bible in the light of our experience and mission
  - Journeying together in the search for transformation of the systems that deny justice, equality and human rights
  - Become what God wants us to be

17. DEPARTING HYMN.

18. DEPARTING PRAYER AND BENEEDICTION:

L. Let us pray:

  P  Lord, you have nourished us with the bread from heaven. We thank you and we bless your most holy name. Fill us with your Spirit day by day, and make us one in peace and love. Amen

19. COMMISSIONING AND BLESSING:

  The grace of God, deeper than our imagination; the strength of Christ, stronger than our need; And the communion of the Holy Spirit, richer than our togetherness; guide and sustain us today and in all our future. Amen.