

CORC Worship Resources for  
**Ending Child Homelessness Sabbath, January 19-21, 2018**

The Revised Common Lectionary for Jan 21, 2018, isn't particularly helpful for this topic. But the lectionary from our 2017 Ending Child Homelessness Sabbath (February 5, 2017), was great.

**The Revised Common Lectionary for February 5, 2017**

*Psalm 112:1-10* (Happy are those who fear the Lord. They are a light. They have distributed freely to the poor.)

*Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12)* (esp. 58:6-12—The fast I choose is to share bread with hungry and bring homeless poor into your house. When you do this, your light shall rise in the darkness and you shall be called the restorer of streets.)

*1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16)* (We come not with our own wisdom, but God's wisdom and power. We have received gifts from God's Spirit. We have the mind of Christ.)

*Matthew 5:13-20* (You are the salt and light of the world. I have come to fulfill the law.)

**A Call to Worship (based on Psalm 112)** (the Rev. Kim James version ☺)

*L: Happy are those who praise and fear the Lord!*

**P: Happy are those who delight in God's commandments!**

*L: Wealth and riches are in their houses.*

**P: Their righteousness endures forever.**

*L: They are gracious, merciful, and righteous.*

**P: Life goes well for those who are generous and just.**

*L: Their hearts are secure in the Lord.*

**P: Their hearts are steady and unafraid.**

*L: They distribute freely to the poor.*

**P: Their righteousness endures forever.**

**More scriptures about God's expectation that people of faith will help the poor (a brief sampling):**

Deuteronomy 24:21—"When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow."

Ezekiel 34:16—"I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak . . . I will feed them with justice."

Galatians 2:10—"They asked only one thing, that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do."

James 1:27—"Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world."

James 2:15-17—"If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,' and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that?"

**From the Apocrypha**

2 Esdras 2:15-32—"Mother, embrace your children; bring them up with gladness . . . Do not fear . . . I will send you help . . . Give to the needy, defend the orphan, clothe the naked, care for the injured and weak . . . Protect the old and the young within your walls . . . My power will protect you, so that your children may not see hell (Gehenna) . . . Embrace your children until I come, and proclaim mercy to them; because my springs run over, and my grace will not fail."

## **Prayers for the Poor and Homeless**

### **Episcopal Prayer for the Poor and the Neglected**

Almighty and most merciful God,  
we remember before you all poor and neglected persons whom it would be easy for us to forget:  
the homeless and the destitute,  
the old and the sick, and all who have none to care for them.  
Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy.  
Grant this, Father, for the love of your Son, who for our sake became poor, Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen. *(Source: 1979 Book of Common Prayer)*

Lord God,  
You came to give honor to the least, those forgotten, overlooked and misjudged.  
You came to give first place to the last, those left behind, misunderstood and undervalued.  
You came to give a warm welcome to the lost, those who are orphaned, abandoned and destitute.  
Help us to be your ears to listen to their cries.  
Help us to be your voice speaking out love and acceptance.  
Help us to be your feet walking beside those in need.  
Help us to be your hands to clothe, feed and shelter them.  
You came for the least, the lost and last of this world.  
Lord, hear our prayer.  
Amen.  
[http://www.lords-prayer-words.com/topics/prayer\\_for\\_the\\_poor.html#ixzz4UMrpCLSI](http://www.lords-prayer-words.com/topics/prayer_for_the_poor.html#ixzz4UMrpCLSI)

Dear God,  
Watch over your children,  
Especially those with no homes to return to at the end of long and weary days.  
Protect them from all harm and keep them from despair.  
Open the hearts and eyes of those of us with blessings to share.  
Unite our voices in a call for justice:  
So that no man need ever lay down for the night on a wooden park bench because he has no home;  
So that no woman need ever tuck her children into the backseat of her car because she has no home;  
So that no child need ever wonder, "Where will I feel safe?" because he has no home;  
So that all those who wander and all who are in need, find the shelter and the peace they seek.  
Remind us, O God, that we cannot rest fully secure in our homes each night until all your children  
are, at last, home.  
*Amen.*  
~ Rabbi Andrea Goldstein, Congregation Shaare Emeth

The above prayer is one of nine prayers for the homeless found on this website:

<http://www.roomstl.org/prayers-for-the-homeless-2011>

We give thanks that you meet our daily needs of food, shelter, companionship. We pray for those who go hungry and without a home. We will not abandon our neighbours who struggle. We will not revile them. We will not blame people for their poverty. We stand alongside them. We know that you are with us, as we give, as we act and as we pray for justice. Amen.

The above prayer is in a document of good resources used in England for a Poverty & Homelessness Action week. See this link: <http://www.lovesouthampton.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Prayers-for-Homelessness-Sunday.pdf>

God of compassion,  
 your love for humanity was revealed in Jesus,  
 whose earthly life began in the poverty of a stable  
 and ended in the pain and isolation of the cross:  
 we hold before you those who are homeless and cold  
 especially in this bitter weather.

Draw near and comfort them in spirit  
 and bless those who work to provide them  
 with shelter, food and friendship.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/topical-prayers/prayer-for-the-cold-and-homeless.aspx>

### **Prayer of Confession**

God, our help in every age, help us now. We admit we are afraid to practice the hospitality and welcome you expect of us. When someone in need approaches, we shrink away. Is it fear? Is it guilt? Or is it that all of a sudden our own neediness is awakened? Help us to cultivate that place inside each of us where we remember our home is with You—a home that is warm, where things always work out in the end, and where love has the final word. We want to share your grace with others. Help us to be the bearers of your grace in every act of care, in every act of welcome.

Amen.

(from the National Council of Churches' "Poverty March 2003," [www.nccusa.org/poverty/povmarch-2003-week-4.html](http://www.nccusa.org/poverty/povmarch-2003-week-4.html) )

### **Litany for Homeless People**

We pray for peace and justice, mercy and forgiveness

Open our eyes that we may see.

We pray for an end to homelessness and hunger, unemployment and illness.

Open our ears to the cries of pain.

We pray for those living on the streets, huddled in overnight shelters and living too many to a room.

Move us to serve these our sisters and brothers.

We pray for the refugees in the world; those gathered in tent cities, walking the face of the earth and without a country to call home.

May we welcome them with open arms.

We pray for communities and people that serve the homeless and refugee. We give thanks to God for their ministry.

May we support their ministry in deed and prayer.

(Adapted from a litany of the CWS Minn-Kota Regional Office with Minnesota Refugee Services,  
<http://www.ichicago.org/getinvolved/christian/Litanyforhomelesspeople.pdf> )

### **Responsive Reading**

For every child who is sick or dying because her family has been denied medical care,  
 God in your mercy, hear our prayer for health care.

For every child who calls the streets his home because no public housing is available,  
 God in your mercy, hear our prayer for housing.

For every child who is taught by the lack of text books and crumbling public schools that her mind and  
 her dreams count for nothing,  
 God in your mercy hear our prayer for quality education.

For every child who this day is taking care of his younger siblings,  
 God in your mercy hear our prayer for affordable childcare.

For every child who is scared because her dad and mom do not earn enough to pay the bills,  
 God in your mercy, hear our prayer for jobs at a living wage.

We know that you do not forget us, God,

God in your mercy, hear our prayer and come quickly to save!

Amen.

(from the Rev. Noelle Damico, Catalyst, School of Theology, University of the Poor,  
[www.universityofthepoor.org](http://www.universityofthepoor.org) )

### *Suggested Hymns for Affordable Housing*

**The Day is Near**--*Gather Hymnal (Catholic)* 136

**Hope of the World**--*United Methodist Hymnal* 178

*Lutheran Worship* 377

*Presbyterian Hymnal* 360

*The Hymnal (1982)* 472

*Chalice Hymnal (Disciples of Christ)* 538

*New Century Hymnal (United Church of Christ)* 46**the World**

**Lord, Who Left the Highest Heaven**--*Moravian Book of Worship* 692

**Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service**--*Chalice Hymnal (Disciples of Christ)* 461

*Moravian Book of Worship* 688

*The Hymnal (1982)* 610

*Presbyterian Hymnal* 427

*United Methodist Hymnal* 581

*Gather Hymnal (Catholic)* 681

### **Quotes about Affordable Housing**

Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to be free, The wretched refuse of your  
 teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

*Emma Lazarus, poem inscribed on the Statue of Liberty*

Homelessness is not just an isolated social evil. It is the catalyst and the breeding ground for other  
 problems such as marriage difficulties and family breakup, stress, unemployment and alcoholism.

*Eva Burrows*

The works of mercy are the opposite of the works of war: feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, nursing the sick, visiting the prisoner.

*Dorothy Day*

In a rich society, no one should be allowed to suffer from deprivation such as homelessness, starvation and illness. This ideal is essential, not simply as a matter of human good, but as the price we pay for a measure of domestic tranquility.

*John Kenneth Galbraith*

The hope of the whole world rests on the shoulders of a homeless man.

*Rich Mullins*

The above quotes and many other excellent resources (some in need of updating) can be found at <https://www.ncchurches.org/lectionary-archive/year-c/affordable-housing-proper-8/>