Worship Resources for The Altogether Christian

UMH = *The United Methodist Hymnal*

THE WESLEY COVENANT PRAYER
UMH #607
Consider using this historic prayer as an Affirmation of Faith or Statement of Commitment during this sermon series.

I am no longer my own, but thine.
Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.
Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,
exalted for thee or brought low for thee.
Let me be full, let me be empty.
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.
I freely and heartily yield all things
to thy pleasure and disposal.
And now, O glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.
And the covenant which I have made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION
By Safiyah Fosua
Quoted from Worship Any Time or Place, Nelson Cowan, editor.
Suitable for any Sunday in the sermon series.

Gracious God, though we live in a culture that is reluctant to admit guilt, assume responsibility, or ask for forgiveness, we are so bold as to pray the words of the psalmist who said,

> Search me O God and know my heart;
> test me and know my thoughts;
> see if there is any wicked way in me,
> and lead me in the way everlasting. (Psalm 139:23-24)

Search us, O God, and reveal anything in our lives that stands between us and your love. Search us, O God, and show us our sins so that we might confess them.
Search us, O God,
> **and show us places where we have neglected Christian responsibility,**
> **and then teach us how to live on this earth with each other.**

Search us, O God, and show us the faces of those we have wronged,
> **so that we might seek their forgiveness.**

Time of silent confession

Words of Assurance:
We have not been called to this hour of worship to wallow in sin and self-pity. God has promised to forgive our sins when we confess them and to cleanse us from all manner of unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9) Rise from your knees as children of God, forgiven from sin and empowered to lead holy lives. **Amen.**

The Altogether Soul

Theme: God is the source of our soul, our very being. What would it be like to open our being, our breath, our life-force to the fullness of God's presence?

Scriptures: Genesis 2:7 • Psalm 42:1-2 • Luke 1:46-48

Biblical witnesses who exhibit an altogether soul:
Mary (mother of Jesus, *theotokos*), Jesus at his baptism or transfiguration

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CALL TO WORSHIP OR ANTIPHONAL PRAYER 1
By Nelson Cowan
Quoted from Worship Any Time or Place, Nelson Cowan, editor.

One:
Receive these words of invitation:
God has created the world and called it "good."
God has created each of us in God's image and called us "good."

All:
The rocks cry out to the living God.
The mountains bow down before God.
The rivers and streams proclaim God's handiwork.

One:
And it is *this* God who welcomes us today-
who meets us where we are and proclaims that we are God's beloved.

All:
Let us sing, rejoice, rest, and be glad in that profound identity today. Amen

CALL TO WORSHIP OR ANTIPHONAL PRAYER 2
Come, Holy One by Lisa Degrenia, revlisad.com
Inspired by Psalm 51:10

One: We gather in thanksgiving and hope.
All: Come, Holy One. Create, renew, and transform.

One: We open ourselves to the fullness of You. Breathe into us the breath of new life.
All: Renew a right spirit within us, so we may love You with our whole soul.

UNISON PRAYER 1
By Nelson Cowan
Quoted from Worship Any Time or Place, Nelson Cowan, editor.

God of reminders and gentle nudging, we know we're competent and called, and that you have equipped us for all that is before us. We know this well. And yet, we still doubt our abilities. We compare. We contrast. We draw lines in the sand. Remind us of your faithfulness that we've witnessed. Instill within us what we already know, but often refuse to believe: that we are yours - beloved and known. We ask this in the name of Jesus, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

UNISON PRAYER 2
From the Iona Community
Quoted from Earth Gospel, A Guide to Prayer for God's Creation by Sam Hamilton-Poore

Bless to us, O God, the moon that is above us, the earth that is beneath us, the friends who are around us, your image deep within us, Amen.

OFFERTORY PRAYER
By Brian Wren
Quoted from Worship Any Time or Place, Nelson Cowan, editor.

Loving God, faithful and gracious forever,
You love us more than we love ourselves.
You believe in us more than we believe in ourselves.
You call us to walk with Christ, and be more than we ever thought possible.
Take our gifts. Receive our thanks. Accept our praise; through Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE
Broken and Beautiful by Bailey Schreiner

Gracious and Holy God, we are your people – gathered in your presence, held together by your grace. You are the One who formed us, who knows us completely, and who has placed Your image within each of us.

You are our Creator, and we are stained glass: broken and beautiful. We come in many different shapes, colors, and sizes. We go to different schools. We have different jobs. We speak different languages. And yet, despite our jagged edges, You bring us together. You shine the light of Christ through us, and You tell a powerful story.

Gracious God, help us to love people who are not like us. We confess how often we forget this stained-glass truth. We focus more on the cracks in others instead of the light within them. We reduce people to labels or past hurts, instead of seeing them as Your beloved creation – broken and beautiful, just like us.

Open our eyes, O God. Teach us to see others the way You see them – not as enemies to be defeated, but as windows through which Your light can shine. Give us grace to honor the beauty in others, even when it is hard to see. And remind us that Your light is strong enough to shine through every fracture, every flaw, every fear.

Lord, in this moment, we bring before You the people we struggle to love – the ones whose brokenness feels sharp, whose actions have wounded, whose differences divide. In the quiet of our hearts, we name them before You now.

The congregation is invited to add their own petitions silently or aloud.

God of mercy, meet us in this silence. Heal what is broken within us and in our world. Soften what has hardened. Where love and compassion have been withheld, or used as a weapon, let Your healing, merciful light shine.

Piece us together into a people who reflect Your grace – who see beauty in the brokenness, who extend compassion where others expect judgment, and who trust that Your image is present in every person we meet. As we hear Your Word today, let Your light shine through it and through us. Transform the way we see, the way we love, and the way we live.

We pray this in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray, saying:

Close with The Lord's Prayer

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 2

By Kenji Marui

Quoted from Worship Any Time or Place, Nelson Cowan, editor.

Dearest loving beautiful God, creator of all; We give thanks for the allure and attractiveness of every single one of us. We are created in your image, created in beauty and power and promise. Help us recognize with our minds, and our hearts, and our spirits, what is truly gorgeous and glorious.

Open us to respond to the inner beauty that resides within, resisting the myths of our superficial culture. May we find within ourselves confidence in our being. May we understand that cosmetics do not define normalcy, that aesthetics are an addition and not the core of who we are.

Help us, O God, to find beauty within ourselves. Liberate us from the norms of what is desirable and attractive. Shallow standards hold us captive, by limiting imagination and connection, by reinforcing contemptible stereotypes and detracting from our collective humanity.

Release us from the prisons of preference and privilege that condemn through physical appearance. Let us love ourselves so that we may love our neighbors. Attune us to all forms of beauty in this wonderful world, within and around us. May we be your beloved and beautiful people. In Christ, we pray, Amen.