

Full Service – A Celebration of Spiritual Friendship

Tables near the front hold a guest register or other means for attendees to mark their presence. A second table holds a central candle, lighted, and many unlighted tea lights with matches to light them from the central candle, and perhaps a symbol of friendship.

Prelude

During the prelude, guests are invited to come forward to sign the register and to light a candle for friends who are not present or who have died.

Welcome

Call to Worship

*All: How good it is, and how lovely
when friends live together as one.
How lovely the home where your presence dwells,
God of all creation.
Happy the people you have inspired,
who journey through life, with you in their heart.
Who have known both sadness and tears,
and covered them with blessings,
like springs of water.
They go from strength to strength,
until they appear before God in Zion.
For God withholds no good,
from those who walk in honesty.*

Cloud of Witnesses

The friends who are to take vows of friendship, come forward to light candles and name those particularly dear to them who are unable to be present or who have died.

Gathering Song

Here in this Place

Scripture

John 15:12-17

Thoughts on Friendship

Song

Will You Let me be Your Servant

Storytelling

Sharing Memories and Dreams

The friends who are to take vows, share brief memories and hopes for the future of their friendship.

Blessings of Friendships

Pledges of Continuing Friendship by [Names here]

Those pledging special friendship exchange their vows.

Pledges of Support

Those present silently offer their pledges of support.

Litany of Friendship

Pastor: Holy God, Friend of All Peoples
We praise you for making us your friends

All: We return our love to you, Divine Friend

Those taking vows: We give you thanks for these our friends

For our families--the friends of our origins and birth

For friends in spirit now added to this spiritual family

All: We give you thanks for [Names here of those taking vows]

For their love toward us

For being a part of our spiritual family

Pastor: Holy God,
Friend Who Undergirds the World, we thank you:

All: For friends who have loved us

For friends who have laughed with us

For friends who have played with us

For friends who have worked with us

For friends who have cried with us

For friends who have shared wisdom and guidance

For friends who have struggled together for justice

For friends of the past

For friends of the present

For friends yet to be known

For friends who are children

For friends who are adults

*For friends who dream with us
For friends who build the future with us.*

Pastor: Prayer of blessing for friendships concluding with:
Bless our circle of companionship,
those present and absent, in this world and beyond,
as we raise before you the names of our friends:

All: *Simultaneously all present may name out loud
the friends for whom they ask God's blessing.*

Pastor: Holy God, Sealer of Friendships,
we renew our covenants of friendship with you and with each other

All: *Ignite us with the fire of your love
as we now pledge our love and support to you and to each other.
Amen.*

Parting Song

Lead On, O Cloud of Yahweh

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