



# BIRTHDAY OFFERING

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

## DEDICATION SERVICE

2007

BY A. VANESSA HAWKINS

### CALL TO WORSHIP

One: God is our shepherd; therefore, want has no place in our lives.

**All: For I will be with you all the days of your life.**

One: Promises of peace and restoration reveal God's desire for all of God's creation.

**All: For the One who has called us is the Source of all that is pleasant and tranquil. Let us worship the One who protects, sustains and guides us.**

### HYMN SUGGESTIONS

PH #387 "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us"

PH #351 "Give to Me, Lord, a Thankful Heart"

### PRAYER

One: Dear God of living waters, who sprinkles us with peace and love, who graciously offers us shelter and protection, hear our words of petition this day. Through the stirring of your Spirit, empower us to be Christ-like in the world, offering hospitality and rest to the weary and providing refuge and hope to those seeking freedom and a new life.

**All: May your goodness and mercy pursue us all the days of our lives.**

One: Clean water nourishes, enlivens and restores! We pray for mission teams working with families who need clean water so that they may be free from disease and hunger.

**All: May your goodness and mercy pursue them all the days of their lives.**

One: Providing patient care involves more than medical procedures. The presence of loved ones is crucial also. We pray for hospitals seeking to care for patients' psychological needs, as well as physical healing, by providing shelter for their relatives who accom-

pany them to the hospital.

**All: May your goodness and mercy pursue them all the days of their lives.**

One: Rehabilitation improves the quality of a person's life. We pray for patients who are physically disabled and have limited access to a rehabilitation center.

**All: May your goodness and mercy pursue them all the days of their lives.**

One: All children deserve to feel safe and secure. We pray for faithful servants working to rebuild and renovate old buildings into educational facilities.

**All: May your goodness and mercy pursue them all the days of their lives.**

One: Although our desire for independence is an innate desire, freedom, or lack of freedom, is implanted in us by our societies. We pray for organizations that assist resettlement of families crossing national borders.

**All: May your goodness and mercy pursue them all the days of their lives.**

**Amen.**

### SCRIPTURE AND MEDITATION

#### *Psalm 23*

There are two dominant metaphors for God in this psalm: shepherd and host. As the Shepherd, God provides the necessities of life for those under God's care. Food, water, shelter and protection from danger are promises hidden within the images of green pastures, still waters and right paths. As we move from the shepherd image to that of host, we find God providing the same necessities for the guest (food/*table*, drink/*cup* and protection/*house*). All of these actions demonstrate the character of God. The psalmist understands that what God provides is done so because of who God is and for no other reason.

All of creation belongs to God. God is the source of all food, drink and security, even when provisions do not

appear to be readily available. For many people living in poverty, even the basics of life are not readily available. For this reason, the 2007 Birthday Offering of Presbyterian Women is important. Birthday Offering grants will enable five organizations to provide access to life's necessities for persons who are, for various reasons, denied access to these necessities. As the people of God, we are called to struggle with the reality of want that others contend with daily, to provide access, to advocate for change and to pursue righteousness in the same manner that God pursues us.

### OFFERING

We have a God who equips us for mission, unifies us with a cause and restores hope in our world through this offering. Let us give generously to the Birthday Offering, for the men, women and children whose lives will forever be transformed by our contribution.

### PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Spirit of the living waters, fall afresh on us. Revive a spirit of giving within us and encourage us to generously share with others as you have graciously shared with us. Accept these gifts for your use, this day and forever more. Amen.

### HYMN SUGGESTIONS

PH #354 "Guide My Feet"

PH #367 "Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love"

### CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Know that we serve a loving and gracious God, who pursues us daily with love, kindness and mercy. Let us celebrate that pursuit with shouts of joy and gladness! Amen.

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