

Opening Devotions: Solidarity With Cuba

Call To Worship

Leader: Rejoice, all the earth!
Rejoice, continents and numerous islands!
Rejoice, Cuba! God reigns!

People: We cannot help rejoicing in the celebration
because the powerful hand of God has been upon us
and has sustained and directed us through all our life.

Leader: The Lord rejoices in the work of God's hand.

People: And we rejoice in all the creation:
for the palm trees that stand tall in continuous worship,
for the birds that each new day sing a hymn of praise,
for the sun that warms and gives light to the just and
unjust,
for women, men, youth and children who daily live with
us and in one way or another serve us and in this way
speak to us of your daily love,
for the church that gathers together to worship and goes
out in joyful service,
for Christ who gives himself to us in bread and wine as a
symbol of unity, solidarity and liberation.
We rejoice and are glad in him. Halleluya!

Canto

Cántale a Dios tu risa y esperanza,
Cántale a Dios tu pena y tu sufrir,
Cantemos juntos al Dios de los cielos
Proque hoy El viene Aquí.

CANTALE A DIOS CON TODAS TUS CANCIONES,
CANTALE A DIOS CON SALMOS Y ORACIONES,
CANTALE A DIOS DE TODAS MANERAS
PORQUE HOY SE VUELVE A TI, SE VUELVE A TI.
CANTALE A DIOS CON TODA TU ALEGRIA,
CANTALE A DIOS DE NOCHE Y DE DIA
CANTALE A CRISTO, AL DIOS DE LOS CIELOS
PORQUE HOY ESTA AQUI.

Con gozo comencemos la mañana
y jubilosos demos el sudor,
que Cristo ayeda nos da en la faena,
porque hoy El viene aquí.

Cantad a Dios el pueblo reunido
libres del mal y libres de opresion;
ya no hay cadenas, las penas pasaron
porque hoy El viene aquí.

Litany

Leader: Isaiah said: "Behold, I create new heavens and new earth."

People: Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace. Shalom.

Leader: A Cuban teenager down the block from me asked his aunt with wonder if it were true that Cuban children used to run around ragged and barefoot and begging on the streets. Isaiah said: "The former things shall not be remembered or come into mind."

People: Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace. Shalom.

Leader: Isaiah said: "Be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for behold I create my city a rejoicing and her people a joy."

People: Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace. Shalom.

Leader: In the time and place of John Wesley—18th Century England—three out of every four infants died before reaching their first birthday, seven hundred and fifty died out of every one thousand born! In 1982, in the time and place of the Centennial of The Methodist Church in Cuba, the infant mortality rate of Cuban children was reduced to 17 per 1000, in 1983 and 1984, even lower. Isaiah said: "No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or old people who do not fill out their days.

People: All glory to God in the highest and on earth peace. Shalom.

Leader: Men and women who form the building micro-brigades and who compose the agricultural cooperatives, these persons can say in the present tense what Isaiah said thousands of years before as a promise for the future:

"They shall build houses and inhabit them. They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit."

People: Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace. Shalom.

Leader: Isaiah said: "They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat." This must be understood, not as a statement of selfishness, but rather from the perspective of a worker who like Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth, built houses for others and he himself had "no place to lay his head." Today, however, countries are building so that others may inhabit and are planting so that others may eat. Isaiah said: "They shall enjoy the work of their hands, they shall not labor in vain."

People: Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace. Shalom.

Leader: God heard the cries of the enslaved and oppressed children of Israel in Egypt and hears the cries of the enslaved and oppressed peoples of the world today. Isaiah said: "Before they call, I will answer. While they are yet speaking, I will hear."

People: All glory to God in the highest and on earth peace. Shalom.

Leader: Isaiah said: "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food." The wolf and the lion and the serpent may symbolize aggression, domination and treacherous attack. One day these animals in what they symbolize will completely change their usual ways, their habits and customs, rather than eating up each other, it will be possible for them all to sit down and eat together. Isaiah said: "They all shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain."

People: Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace. Shalom.

Leader: Jesus, in the synagogue of Nazareth, read the passage from Isaiah 61 and said; "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." Today, in this Colloquium on Theological Education at the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Matanzas, Cuba, we have read a passage from Isaiah 65 and we can say with thankfulness and hope: Today in many places in the world this scripture is being fulfilled.

People: Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace. Shalom.

Canto: Signs and Songs of The Kingdom

New heavens, new earth
These are the signs of the kingdom
New life and new people
Singing the songs of the kingdom

1. The past will not be remembered, nor come into mind.
The past will not be remembered, nor come into mind.
2. Rejoicing in the city, and great joy in the people.
Rejoicing in the city, and great joy in the people.
3. There shall be no more infants who die shortly after birth;
nor shall there be old folks who do not fill out their days.
4. They shall build houses, and inhabit them;
they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.
5. They shall not build, and someone else inhabit;
they shall not plant, and someone else eat.
6. They shall enjoy the works of their hands,
they shall not labor in vain.
7. Before they call, I will answer
While they are yet speaking, I will hear.
8. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together;
they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.

Words: Based upon Isaiah 65:17-25

Music: Lois C. Kroehler (1982).

Commitment

Committed? Deeply, til death do us part
I desire: all that is real that is lighted up!
If the future does not break through, there is no present.
If I don't want the miner, what good is the mine?

Militant? Without a doubt, from my forehead
to my heart the dawn dominates me!
Bitter, like the ocean, openly
I devote myself to the transparent battle!

I dedicate it to the light, I give it to the wind,
nothing belongs to me, not even an instant
that is not also the thought of everyone.

Justice is my desperate being,
which I never quite reach.
Unto death I feel that
I live and am in love, going forward!