

**DISCIPLES WOMEN  
GENERAL PROGRAMS**

**Date: 2010**

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# Awake to Break the Chains - Installation Service



**HYMN:** “GATHER US IN” (verses 1, 2) (Chalice No. 284)

**ACTIVITY:**

Give each woman a strip of colored paper or card stock (1.5” x 8.5”) and pen/colored fine-line marker. Ask each person to write a “key word” that reflects their response to or with God (i.e., faith, hope, perseverance, trust, love, etc.) in the center of their strip of paper. Then, on the opposite side of the paper, ask each to write the word or words that reflect their “gift” that they can share with other women of the church/women in ministry (i.e., friendliness, baking skills, creativity, writing talent, organizational skills, etc.). (Hold; sharing will come later.)



**SCRIPTURE:** 2 PETER 1: 5-8

*“...make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness.. kindness; and to.. kindness, love... For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

**RECOGNITION OF PAST LEADERSHIP:**

Recognize the leaders from the past year and share appreciation for their service.

**MEDITATION:**

We certainly appreciate the gifts and talents of those who have taken on leadership

roles within the church, either as recipients or as co-workers. All should be supportive, as we are able, adding at the very least our prayerful support. We should also remember that being in leadership can seem oppressive at times, frustrating, difficult, unappreciated, challenging, but also rewarding and fun.

Do you recall that list of attributes in 2 Peter that we are all to possess: faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, kindness and love? Talk about oppressive! –challenging! Anyone have them all, all the time?! God does not expect perfection with the total list, but God does want us to strive to share our strong points and to work on our weak areas, faithfully and lovingly.

Sometimes we women fail to recognize pain and suffering caused by circumstances and low self-esteem. Some women have become caught up in life's extreme tangles that leave them vulnerable and afraid, lonely and self-absorbed, feeling helpless and hopeless, victimized and chained to those persons or addictions or circumstances that are stronger than they are. And, lest we forget that we all witness our faith as mentors and examples to others, even when we are unaware of it, let us also remember that we should be watchful of the young women and girls in our midst, helping them remain strong against the chains that try to capture or tempt them, victimizing them in today's trafficking, drugs, and other temptations. We should strive to recognize signs of the chains of circumstances in which others, young or old, are vulnerable and afraid and need assistance in breaking free. We should keep our eyes and ears and hearts open to the needs and silent cries for help around us.

In PSALM 10: 16-18, we read:

*“The Lord is King for ever and ever;  
the nations will perish from his land.  
You hear, O Lord, the desire of the afflicted;  
you encourage them, and you listen to their cry,  
defending the fatherless and the oppressed...”*

There is also a Cheyenne saying that states:

*“A people is never defeated until the hearts of the women are on the ground.”*

The verses of 2 PETER ended with:

*“...if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive...”*

Perhaps as women of faith, serving Christ, we must loosen our own chains of doubt and insecurity and go forth on paths of justice-building and love-sharing with those who are afflicted, vulnerable, defenseless and oppressed. Perhaps we should do what we can to bring aid, freedom from bondage, and justice into our world. Perhaps, on a more personal scale, we need to be more loving, more caring, more aware of those around us, less judgmental, more forgiving, less closed-minded, and more welcoming. Perhaps we need to check what chains are holding us back from being more faithful servants.

Eleanor Roosevelt once stated:

*“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”*

Let us believe in ourselves as women who *can* make a difference in this world through the sharing of our own gifts and supporting one another’s efforts, and through seeking to uplift those who are held by the chains of their circumstances and life’s entanglements, and seeking to help others know the love, grace and promises of the God we love and serve.

## **INSTALLATION OF NEW LEADERSHIP:**

Call the new leaders forward by office.

L: As servant leaders, do you accept the responsibilities of your office?

If so, answer: “With God’s guidance, I will serve.”

Address the entire body of women present.

L: As women of faith and sisters in Christ, do you offer your support to these leaders? If so, answer: “In Christ’s love and service, we do.”

**PRAYER:** (in unison)

Gracious and loving God, we seek your grace and guidance as together we strive to awaken our spirits, to break the chains of ignorance and injustice in our midst, to “act justly and love mercy and to walk humbly” with you, O God. Be with us and let us honor you in all we do. In Christ’s holy name, we pray. Amen.

**ACTIVITY:**

Invite each woman, beginning with the newly-installed leaders, to share the key word and gift as written on their strip of paper. Each will then add their “link of chain” to the others, forming a chain (use tape, paper clips or glue) to be held by the newly-installed officers as they remain standing together. Ask the new officers to continue holding this “chain of faith and support,” forming it into an unending circle, and invite the previous leaders to stand with them as a sign of their continuing support, during the singing of the closing hymn.

**HYMN:** “WE, YOUR PEOPLE, GOD, CONFESSING” (verses 1, 2, 4)

Chalice No. 356

Prayer hand-out is on follow page.

## INSTALLATION OF NEW LEADERSHIP:

New leaders come forward as called by office.

*Leader:* As servant leaders, do you accept the responsibilities of your office?

If so, answer: “With God’s guidance, I will serve.”

For the body of women present.

*Leader:* As women of faith and sisters in Christ, do you offer your support to these

leaders? If so, answer: “In Christ’s love and service, we do.”

### **PRAYER:** (in unison)

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