Resources for Developing a Worship Service with a Bioethical Emphasis

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Project for Bioethics and Human Dignity
BIO 780

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Resource 1:

Worship Service
for
Sanctity of Life Sunday or Sanctity of Life Month
Project for Bioethics and Human Dignity
BIO 780

Luci Gunderson, student
April, 2006

The order of service presented here is a suggested template for one or more services focusing on the sanctity of human life. The focus of the service(s) should be as sensitive as possible to all people who might be attending the service(s). This would include young people; young adults; the single and the married; those with children and those who wish to have children but perhaps cannot; the healthy and the disabled; those with chronic illness; people facing choices involving biotechnology; non-Christian visitors; and the elderly. This is no small task! However, a loving presentation of God as creator of life, sustainer of life, Savior, and His promise to be present in all circumstances may enable people to focus on trusting in the Lord regardless of individual situations.

To enhance the service, people of various ages (and perhaps disabilities) could participate in the readings or the music. Pictures representing various people and circumstances could be projected on a screen or posted on the side walls of the sanctuary. These could include premature infants, children, young adults, the disabled, the elderly, the lonely, or others as appropriate.

This service may touch individuals in very personal ways. It would be helpful to have resources available after the worship service(s) such as prayer support for individuals, information regarding Christian counseling, and support groups. It may be helpful to offer a separate healing service at another time for those not only with disabilities and illnesses, but also for those desiring healing and forgiveness for past behaviors that were not God-honoring.

There may be additional ways to use this service. It may serve as an introduction to a series of Bible studies focusing on bioethical issues. Written and visual resources on bioethical topics should be displayed and available. (The Center for Bioethics & Human Dignity [CBHD] has excellent, easily readable resources focusing on bioethical topics. The BioBasic Series consists of 6 booklets each with a specific topic presented in question and answer format. They have additional resources as well, such as information and forms for Advance Directives for Health Care. Focus on the Family also has resources for life issues, including videos, CDs, and suggested sermons.) People who attend services such as these should be guided to connect their faith to topics in bioethics.
Opportunities for service to others may also be incorporated. Perhaps donations could be collected to give to a local Life Care Center, a Crisis Pregnancy Center, or a local health clinic that serves those without jobs or health insurance.

Hopefully, a service (or services) such as this will help people connect their faith to bioethics, and their concerns and questions to appropriate biblical resources. The goal of such Christian worship should be to encourage loving sensitivity to those who are experiencing painful dilemmas related to life and death concerns, and point them to biblical principles to guide their decisions.

Note: A paraphrase on Psalm 139 is suggested as a handout to be provided along with the written order of worship. See Leslie Brandt, *Good Lord, Where Are You?* 1967. pp. 63-64. St. Louis, MO. Concordia Publishing House.
Worship Service
Sanctity of Life Sunday
(Suggested hymns / songs are from the attached list of resources)

Preparation for Worship

Introductory Worship Songs

This is My Father’s World
Immortal, Invisible
When Morning Gilds the Skies
I Will Serve Thee

Welcome

Scripture Reading #1
Genesis 1:26 – 31

Worship in Song
All Creatures of Our God and King
Father, I Adore You

Confession of Sin
Dear Lord, in humility of heart we offer our worship to You on this Lord’s day. We worship You as the Creator of every living thing. You give life, You sustain life, and You take life, all in Your time. By Your sovereign will, You even create us human beings in Your image. “Your image”...that is more than we can comprehend! We confess to You that we often forget that we are bearers of Your image. We are easily tempted to put self-will above honoring Your will. Forgive us, Lord. We often dishonor Your image in our lives by what we eat, how we behave, and the choices we make. In Your mercy, please forgive our self-centered lives and give us Your Spirit to help us live God-centered lives. We present to You, our loving Lord, the whole of our lives – our joys and sorrows, our successes and failures, our health and our disabilities, our hopes and our fears. In the precious name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Worship in Song
O How He Loves You and Me
Great is Thy Faithfulness

Scripture Reading #2
Genesis 2:21 – 24
Matthew 19:6

Worship in Song
Circle of Two (duet)
As Man and Woman We Were Made

Scripture Reading #3
Genesis 3:1 – 19
Prayer
Lord, You not only created us in Your image, but You redeemed us from our sins of disobedience. In Your perfect plan, the blessings of new life would have no heartaches. But in our now fallen and imperfect world, we experience heartache, pain and suffering. We want children and may not be able to. We have problems with pregnancy and childbirth. And the life that You give is only loaned to us until Your appointed time for death. We need Your loving presence in every situation. Lord, be with us. Amen.

Worship in Song
People Need the Lord
Children of the Heavenly Father

Scripture Reading #4
Psalm 139

Worship in Song
The Greatest Thing
I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry
I Was Created

Confession of Faith in The Nicene Creed
I believe in one God,
    the Father Almighty,
    maker of heaven and earth
    and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
    the only-begotten Son of God,
    begotten of his Father before all worlds,
    God of God, Light of Light,
    very God of very God,
    begotten, not made,
    being of one substance with the Father,
    by whom all things were made;
    who for us men and for our salvation
    came down from heaven
    and was incarnate by the Holy spirit of the virgin Mary
    and was made man;
    and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
    He suffered and was buried.
    and on the third day he rose again
    according to the Scriptures
    and ascended into heaven
    and sits at the right hand of the Father.
    and he will come again with glory to judge
    both the living and the dead,
    whose kingdom will have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together
is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Offering

Take My Life and Let it Be
Change My Heart, O God

Prayer

O Lord, Provider and Creator of all, we humbly offer to You this day a portion of the many blessings You provide. Bless these gifts to be used for Your glory. Help us also to remember that we are to offer to You our lives as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to You. As we prepare our hearts to hear Your Word today, guide our thoughts and actions so that we wholeheartedly strive to make our lives a living sacrifice. In the name of our living Lord we pray, Amen.

Message

“Begotten, Not Made”
(suggested sermon outline)

I. Created in God’s image (begotten, not “made”)
II. Man and woman created to be in relationship with God and with each other (procreation vs. reproduction)
III. Effects of sin on marriage and the family (procreation includes blessings as well as heartaches, including infertility) (Testimony as appropriate)
IV. The everlasting and always present love of our Creator (Our sovereign God is in control of life from conception until God’s appointed time for death)

Time for Silent Confession

Closing Prayer

Awesome Creator God, in Your sovereign plan You created us in Your image. You have given us life, human love, and Your redeeming love. Help us to be obedient and honor You above all. As Your Word says in the book of Romans, “not one of us lives for himself, or dies for himself; if we live, we live for the Lord; if we die, we die for the Lord; whether we live or die, we are Yours.” Thank You for speaking to us from Your Word this day and send Your Holy Spirit to help us be faithful in following You. Humbly, in Your name we pray, Amen.
**Closing Song**  
Find Us Faithful  
Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name

**Benediction**  
May the Father who created you, the Son who redeemed you, and the Holy Spirit who promises to be with you always, enable you to follow Him so that you may enjoy the blessings promised to those who are obedient and faithful. Go in peace and serve the Lord.

(Note: This suggested worship service outline could also be divided into 4 separate services with the appropriate Scripture readings and related sermon topics. This could then provide the framework for a “Sanctity of Life” month. Parts of this service could also be used for a special “healing service,” perhaps to be held on a Sunday evening.)

Service designed to honor our Almighty Creator.  
To God be the glory!
Resource 2:
Hymns and Worship Songs
Suitable for Topics in Bioethics

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Written sources for hymnals and songbooks with acronyms include:

CH  Covenant Hymnal
GL  Great is the Lord
HFG  Hymns for the Family of God
HWC  The Hymnal for Worship and Celebration
LBW  Lutheran Book of Worship
LH  The Lutheran Hymnal
LW  Lutheran Worship
MC2  Master Chorus Book II
MG  Moments of Grace
MP  Maranatha Music Praise Chorus Book
SBH  Service Book and Hymnal

(Note: Only one written source for these hymns and songs is listed even though they may be found in various sources. Songs without written sources were heard on CDs or tapes.)

For trust and guidance in facing difficult choices

Abide with Me! Fast Falls the Eventide    LW
All Depends on Our Possessing        LW
Because He Lives by Wm. Gaither    MP
Be Still, My Soul                LW
Breathe on Me, Breath of God    CH
Cares Chorus by K. Willard       MP
Gentle Shepherd by Wm. Gaither  GL
Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah   LW
Have No Fear, Little Flock        CH
He is Able by R. Noland & G. Ferguson  MP
He Leadeth Me, O Blessed Thought  HFG
His Eye Is on the Sparrow by C. Gabriel  GL
I Am Jesus/ Little Lamb            LW
I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus    LBW
I Need Thee Every Hour            HFG
I, the Lord of Sea and Sky       MG
If Thou but Suffer God to Guide Thee   SBH
In His Time by D. Ball            GL
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Title</th>
<th>Composer(s)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I Walk in Danger All the Way</td>
<td>LW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus, Lead Thou On</td>
<td>LW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus, Priceless Treasure</td>
<td>LW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Faith Looks Up to Thee</td>
<td>SBH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O Love That Will Not Let Me Go</td>
<td>HFG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh, that the Lord Would Guide My Ways</td>
<td>LW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our God, Our Help in Ages Past</td>
<td>LW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise</td>
<td>LW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(close of service)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us</td>
<td>HFG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek Ye First by K. Lafferty</td>
<td>GL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(quiet and meditative)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Step by Step by D. Strasser</td>
<td>MC2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There Is a Balm in Gilead</td>
<td>MG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They That Wait upon the Lord by S. Hamblen</td>
<td>HFG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thou to Whom the Sick and Dying</td>
<td>SBH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Through It All by A. Crouch</td>
<td>GL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust in the Lord With All Your Heart</td>
<td>CH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus by H. Lemmel</td>
<td>MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What a Friend We Have in Jesus</td>
<td>SBH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What God Ordains is Always Good</td>
<td>LW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Is the World to Me</td>
<td>LW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When in the Hour of Deepest Need</td>
<td>LBW</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Focus on God as provider of life**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Creatures of our God and King</td>
<td>CH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Things Bright and Beautiful</td>
<td>CH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As Man and Woman We Were Made</td>
<td>CH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crown Him with Many Crowns</td>
<td>CH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the Beauty of the Earth</td>
<td>HWC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands</td>
<td>CH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise</td>
<td>HFG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Sing the Mighty Power of God</td>
<td>HWC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Was Created by B. &amp; D. Funk (goes well with Ps. 139)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry</td>
<td>CH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Will Serve Thee by Wm. Gaither</td>
<td>GL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let All Things Now Living</td>
<td>CH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People Need the Lord by G. Nelson and P. McHugh</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Way I Was Made by E. Cash, J. Reeves, C. Tomlin</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>This Is My Father’s World</td>
<td>HFG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Give Thee but Thine Own</td>
<td>HFG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What God Ordains Is Always Good</td>
<td>LW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You Do All Things Well by J.M. Clement &amp; J. Reeves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focus on life in worship
Choose Life by B. Batstone & S. Wiggins
Father, I Adore You by T. Coelho 
(quiet and meditative)
Find Us Faithful by J. Mohr 
(for close of service)
Lord, Be Glorified by B. Kilpatrick 
(quiet and meditative)
Now Thank We All Our God
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
Shine, Jesus, Shine by G. Kendrick 
(commitment to radiating God’s truth)
The Greatest thing by M. Pendergrass 
(quiet and meditative)
They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love
When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

Focus on God’s love for children
Away in a Manger
Children of the Heavenly Father
Jesus Loves Me, This I Know
Jesus Loves the Little Children
Roses by F. MacKrell and P. Naish

Surrender to God’s will
Cast Thy Burden Upon the Lord
Change My Heart, O God by E. Espinosa 
God in Heaven (Prayer for a New Year) by P. Lessard
Have Thine Own Way, Lord!
He Giveth More Grace
If You Will Only Let God Guide You
I Give You My Heart by R. Morgan
I Will Follow by J. & A. Barbour
Search Me, O God by J. & D. Hunt
Spirit Song by J. Wimber
Take My Life, and Let It Be Consecrated
Thy Way, Not Mine, O Lord
Trust and Obey
Your Will, Not Mine by R. & C. Harris
**Confession and Grace**

Alas, My God, My Sins Are Great  
Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound  
And Can It Be?  
Just as I am, without One Plea  
Kyrie by S. Amerson & B. Cantos  
My Hope is Built on Nothing Less  
O How He Loves You and Me  
Today Your Mercy Calls Us  

**When facing fears and/or death**

Asleep in Jesus! Blessed Sleep  
Because He Lives by G. & Wm. Gaither  
For all the Saints Who from Their Labors Rest  
Gentle Shepherd  
He Who Began a Good Work in You by J. Mohr  
If You But Trust in God to Guide You  
I’m But a Stranger Here  
It Is Well with My Soul  
Lord Jesus, Think on Me  
My Shepherd Will Supply My Need  
Nearer, My God, to Thee  
On Eagle’s Wings by M. Joncas  
Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven  
Precious Lord, Take My Hand  
Rock of Ages  
Safely Home by J. Mohr  
Shepherd’s Song by S. Amerson & L. Alexander  
The Lord’s My Shepherd, I’ll Not Want  
The New 23rd by R. Carmichael  
We Cannot Measure How You Heal  
You are My Hiding Place by M. Ledner  

**Christ’s victory over death**

Awake, My Heart, with Gladness  
Christ the Lord Is Risen Today; Alleluia!  
I Know That My Redeemer Lives  
Jesus Lives! The Victory’s Won!  
With High Delight Let Us Unite  
Thine Is the Glory
Reminders of God’s love

A Mighty Fortress is Our God   CH
God Will Take Care of You   HWC
Great Is Thy Faithfulness   HFG
He Hideth My Soul by F. Crosby
How Deep the Father’s Love for Us by S. Townend
How Great Th Art   CH
Oh, How He Loves You and Me by K. Kaiser   GL
(quiet and meditative)

Who Am I? by M. Hall

Resources

CH   The Covenant Hymnal
     1996, Covenant Publications, Chicago, IL

GL   Great is the Lord
     1984, Pilot Point Music, Lillenas Publishing, Kansas City, MO

HFG   Hymns for the Family of God
       1976, Paragon Associates, Nashville, TN

HWC   The Hymnal for Worship and Celebration
       1986, Word Music, Waco, TX

LBW   Lutheran Book of Worship
       1978, Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship,
       Augsburg Publishing, Minneapolis, MN

LH   The Lutheran Hymnal
     1941, Concordia Publishing, St. Louis, MO

LW   Lutheran Worship
     1982, Concordia Publishing, St. Louis, MO

MC2   Master Chorus Book II
      1994, Lillenas Publishing, Kansas City, MO

MG   Moments of Grace
     2002, Wheat Ridge Ministries, Creative Communications for the Parish, Fenton, MO
MP  Maranatha Music Praise Chorus Book, 2nd ed.
    1990, Maranatha! Music, USA

SBH  Service Book and Hymnal
    1958, The Commission on the Liturgy and Hymnal,
    Augsburg Publishing, Minneapolis, MN