Katrina’s Dream welcomes you to St. Stephen’s and the Incarnation Episcopal Church. God has brought all of us together today. You are welcome to participate fully in this worship experience as much or as little as you feel called to do.
Welcome

Opening Prayer

Person: God, open our lips.
All: And our mouths shall proclaim your praise.

All: Glory to the One, and to the Child, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen

First Reading: The Color Purple by Alice Walker

“The world is changing, I said. It is no longer a world just for boys and men. Our women are respected here, said the father. We would never let them tramp the world as American women do. There is always someone to look after the Olinka woman. A father. An uncle. A brother or nephew. Do not be offended, Sister Nettie, but our people pity women such as you who are cast out, we know not from where, into a world unknown to you, where you must struggle all alone, for yourself.
So I am an object of pity and contempt, I thought, to men and women alike.
Furthermore, said Tashi’s father, we are not simpletons. We understand that there are places in the world where women live differently from the way our women do, but we do not approve of this different way for our children.

But life is changing, even in Olinka, I said. We are here.
He spat on the ground. What are you? Three grownups and two children. In the rainy season some of you will probably die. You people do not last long in our climate. If you do not die, you will be weakened by illness. Oh, yes. We have seen it all before. You Christians come here, try hard to change us, get sick and go back to England, or wherever you come from. Only the trader on the coast remains, and even he is not the same white man, year in and year out. We know because we send him women.

Tashi is very intelligent, I said. She could be a teacher. A nurse. She could help the people in the village.

There is no place here for a woman to do those things, he said.
Then we should leave, I said. Sister Corrine and I.

No, no, he said.

Teach only the boys? I asked.
Yes, he said, as if my question was agreement. There is a way that the men speak to women that reminds me too much of Pa. They listen just long enough to issue instructions. They don’t even look at women when women are speaking. They look at the ground and bend their heads toward the ground. The women also do not “look in a man’s face” as they say. To “look in a man’s face” is a brazen thing to do. They look instead at his feet or his knees.”

Meditation


[38] As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. [39] She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. [40] But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

[41] "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, [42] but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

Meditation


Women have equal rights with men upon earth; in religion and society they are a very important element. As long as women are prevented from attaining their highest possibilities, so long will men be unable to achieve the greatness which might be theirs.

Meditation
Fourth Reading: Sukta 30 of Chapter Three – Atharva Veda.

O members of humanity! Be engaged in works of common interest. O well-wishers of equality! You all should sit together to have common dishes of food and drink. This thread of love binds you all to live together.

Meditation

Fifth Reading: Surah Ali ' Imran 3:195 The Quran

And their Lord responded to them, "Never will I allow to be lost the work of [any] worker among you, whether male or female; you are of one another. So those who emigrated or were evicted from their homes or were harmed in My cause or fought or were killed - I will surely remove from them their misdeeds, and I will surely admit them to gardens beneath which rivers flow as reward from Allah, and Allah has with Him the best reward."

Meditation
After four days they saw the White Buffalo Calf Woman approaching, carrying her bundle before her. Her wonderful white buckskin dress shone from afar. The chief, Standing Hollow Horn, invited her to enter the medicine lodge. She went in and circled the interior sunrise. The chief addressed her respectfully, saying: "Sister, we are glad you have come to instruct us."

She told him what she wanted done. In the center of the tipi they were to put up an owanka wakan, a sacred altar, made of red earth, with a buffalo skull and a three-stick rack for a holy thing she was bringing. They did what she directed, and she traced a design with her finger on the smoothed earth of the altar.

She showed them how to do all this, then circled the lodge again sunrise. Halting before the chief, she now opened the bundle. The holy thing it contained was the chanunpa, the sacred pipe. She held it out to the people and let them look at it. She was grasping the stem with her right hand and the bowl with her left, and thus the pipe has been held ever since.

Again the chief spoke, saying: "Sister, we are glad. We have had no meat for some time. All we can give you is water." They dipped some wacanga, sweet grass, into a skin bag of water and gave it to her, and to this day the people dip sweet grass or an eagle wing in water and sprinkle it on a person to be purified.

The White Buffalo Calf Woman showed the people how to use the pipe. She filled it with chan-shasha, red willow-bark tobacco. She walked around the lodge four times after the manner of Anpetu-Wi, the great sun. This represented the circle without end, the sacred hoop, the road of life. The woman placed a dry buffalo chip on the fire and lit the pipe with it. This was peta-owihankeshni, the fire without end, the flame to be passed on from generation to generation.

She told them that the smoke rising from the bowl was Tunkashila's breath, the living breath of the great Grandfather Mystery.

The White Buffalo Calf Woman showed the people the right way to pray, the right words and the right gestures. She taught them how to sing the pipe-filling song and how to lift the pipe up to the sky, toward Grandfather, and down toward Grandmother Earth, to Unci, and then to the four directions of the universe.

"With this holy pipe," she said, "you will walk like a living prayer. With your feet resting upon the earth and the pipe stem reaching into the sky, your body forms a living bridge between the Sacred Beneath and the Sacred Above. Wakan Tanka smiles upon us, because now we are as one: earth, sky, all living things, the two-legged, the four-legged, the winged ones, the trees, the grasses.

Together with the people, they are all related, one family. The pipe holds them all together.

Meditation
Seventh Reading: Lotus Sutra Chapter 12 - Dragon Girl

At that time Shariputra said to the dragon girl, "You suppose that in this short time you have been able to attain the unsurpassed way. But this is difficult to believe. Why? Because a woman's body is soiled and defiled, not a vessel for the Law. How could you attain the unsurpassed bodhi? The road to Buddhahood is long and far-reaching. Only after one has spent immeasurable kalpas pursuing austerities, accumulating deeds, practicing all kinds of paramitas, can one finally achieve success. Moreover, a woman is subject to the five obstacles. First, she cannot become a Brahma heavenly king. Second, she cannot become the king Shakra. Third, she cannot become a devil king. Fourth, she cannot become a wheel-turning sage king. Fifth, she cannot become a Buddha. How then could a woman like you be able to attain Buddhahood so quickly?"

At that time the dragon girl had a precious jewel worth as much as the thousand-million-fold world which she presented to the Buddha. The Buddha immediately excepted it. The dragon girl said to Bodhisattva Wisdom Accumulated to the venerable one, Shariputra, "I presented the precious jewel and the World-Honored One accepted it - was that not quickly done?"

They replied, "Very quickly!"

The girls said, "employ your supernatural powers and watch me attain Buddhahood. It shall be even quicker than that!"

At that time the members of the assembly all saw the dragon girl in the space of an instant change into a man and carry out all the practices of a bodhisattva, immediately proceeding to the Spotless World of the south, taking a seat on a jeweled lotus, and attaining impartial and correct enlightenment. With the thirty-two features and the eighty characteristics, he expounded the wonderful Law for all living beings everywhere in the ten directions.

At that time in the saha world to a the bodhisattvas, voice-hearers, gods, dragons and others of the eight kinds of guardians, human and non-human beings all from a distance saw the dragon girl become a Buddha and preach the law to all the human and heavenly beings in the assembly at that time. Their hearts were filled with great joy and all from a distance paid reverent obeisance. Immeasurable living beings, hearing the Law, understood it and were able to reach the level of no regression. Immeasurable living beings received prophecies that they would gain the away. The Spotless World quaked and trembled in six different ways. Three thousand living beings of the saha world remained on the level of no regression. Three thousand living beings conceived a desire for bodhi and received prophecies of enlightenment. Bodhisattva Wisdom Accumulated, Shariputra and all the other members of the assembly silently believed an accepted these things.
Meditation

Closing Prayer

All:  
Om Ma-ni Pad-me Hum.
Om Ma-ni Pad-me Hum.
Om Ma-ni Pad-me Hum.

GUIDELINES FOR WALKING THE Labyrinth

The labyrinth is not a maze. There are no tricks to it and no dead ends. It has a single circuitous path that winds its way into the center. The person walking it uses the same path to return from the center and the entrance then becomes the exit. The path is in full view, which allows a person to be quiet and focus internally.

Generally there are three stages to the walk: releasing on the way in, receiving in the center and returning when you follow the return path back out of the labyrinth. Symbolically, and sometimes actually, you are taking back out into the world that which you have received.

There is no right way or wrong way to walk a labyrinth. Use the labyrinth in any way that meets what you need while being respectful of others walking. You may go directly to the center to sit quietly -- whatever meets your needs.

To prepare, you may want to sit quietly to reflect before walking the labyrinth. Some people come with questions, others just to slow down and take time out from a busy life. Some come to find strength to take the next step. Many come during times of grief and loss.

Children enjoy the labyrinth and we ask that parents supervise their young children so all may enjoy the meditative aspects of the walk.

There are many ways to describe a labyrinth. It is a path of prayer, a walking meditation, a crucible of change, a watering hole for the spirit and a mirror of the soul.

Retrieved from www.veriditas.org
THREE STATES MORE
What is the three state strategy to pass the Equal Rights Amendment?

ERA added to the U.S. Constitution

Three more states ratify total of 38

Congress removes deadline

80% Americans think the Constitution guarantees equality to both men and women

0% U.S. Supreme Court Justices who agree

Days to Ratify an Amendment

74,003

16,356

617

27th (Congressional Raises) 20th (Income Tax) Average for all Amendments ERA as of 2016

SOURCE: Congressional Research Service Report R43287 (September 30, 2016)

HOW TO AMEND?

Article V describes how to amend the U.S. Constitution. Congress passes a joint resolution by 2/3s vote. Then 3/4s of the states must vote to ratify the resolution. The documents are certified by the Federal Register and held until there are 38.

Time is never mentioned in Article V, but deadlines became customary in the last century. For the ERA, the deadline is in the proposing clause, instead of the body of the Amendment. Therefore, Congress retained its authority to change the deadline, and already did so once in 1978.

Alice Paul first wrote the "Women's Equality Amendment" in 1923. It now reads:

Section 1. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

Section 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

Section 3. This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.
Uplifting the Voices of Women

Thanks to the late Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) champion, Congresswoman Bella Abzug, on Monday, August 26, 2016, there will be observances commemorating Women’s Equality Day all across our nation.

First memorialized in 1971 after Abzug’s Joint Congressional Resolution proclaiming August 26 of every year Women’s Equality Day passed, the day is a tribute to the 1920 ratification of the 19th Amendment—guaranteeing American women the right to vote—calls on the President of the United States to issue a Proclamation on this historic date every year and until the ERA is ratified, is meant to serve as a reminder of the continued struggle to obtain full equality under national law.

This year, ERA Advocates across the country are joining together to view Equal Means Equal a groundbreaking exploration of gender inequality in the USA" and to send a collective message to our elected officials: "we no longer want nor will we accept a meaningless “day” - we want actual equality."

On the ground here in Washington, DC this year, ERA Activists will also march, rally and visit the offices of the Congressional Judiciary Chairs to insist hearing be held on SJR15 and HR51. In conjunction ERA Action is spear heading a Thunderclap calling on Americans across the nation to urge our US Congress to hold hearings on the Equal Rights Amendment. Make your voice hear and join the Thunderclap. Click here to join.

Please help strengthen the message by joining your voice with ours to demand #ERANOW!

Call-Email-Tweet

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goodlatte.house.gov, @RepGoodlatte
conyers.house.gov @RepJohnConyers

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