

## Finding the Center Youth Service

In a world that demands so much of our time, so much of our attention, this worship service is meant to feel like a breath – a moment of rest. And in a culture that demands so much from our youth (deciding what career they want to pursue, where they want to go to school, excelling in grades and extracurriculars, etc.), this worship is meant to be a reminder that God wants our heart. God provides. God has claimed us and named us all GOOD.

To prepare and plan for this worship, spend time listening to the song “Centering Prayer” by The Porter’s Gate. Do an exercise of listening and being curious about what images and phrases come to mind. Let the rhythm of that song help to shape the rhythm of worship.

**Theme:** Finding the Center

**Inspired by:** Joel 2:12-13

Yet even now, says the Lord,  
return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
13 rend your hearts and not your clothing.  
Return to the Lord your God,  
for God is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love,  
and relenting from punishment.

### Song Suggestions:

- “Centering Prayer” by The Porters Gate
- “Forgive Us” by The Many
- “All Belong Here” by The Many
- Taizé songs to keep with a rhythmic and repetitive movement of worship.
- Idea! Let each youth pick one of their favorite hymns as a suggestion to add to the worship.
- Please note:
  - This service will require verification of a license to use song suggestions in worship.
  - This service is designed to be used in a setting where a youth group or music ministry can offer music OR it can be used in any setting using video and audio recordings of suggested songs.

## Call to Worship

Inspired by the refrain of “Centering Prayer” by The Porter’s Gate.

One: As we journey from the getting here to the being here,

**All: We want to be where our feet are.**

One: As we prepare our hearts and minds for worship,

**All: We want to be where our feet are.**

One: God help us to be present to the ways you are working in and through us as we worship you.

**All: We want to be where our feet are.**

# Naming the Ways We Have Hurt One Another

Inspired by the lyrics of “Forgive Us” by The Many.

God, we do not always know what to pray or what to say. And God we have failed to love you, to love ourselves, and to love others. We do not do it on purpose, the world is full of messages telling us that hate and division are easier. We hear that loving material things, money, power, and status are the ways to be “successful,” but we know that chasing all that will leave us tired and empty. God, help us return to you – help us to rest in you. In your steadfast and unrelenting love, forgive us and draw us back to you.

# Reminder of Your Beloved-ness

Inspired by “We Are Enough” by The Many.

Siblings in Christ, hear this good news: love gets the final word. Even in all the ways we fall short, we are enough. God loves us, God claims us, and there is nothing we can do to be beyond the love and grace of God. Rise up and know that we are holy, we are called good, and we are loved.

# Prayer for Illumination

Inspired by the lyrics of “Centering Prayer” by The Porter’s Gate.

God, as we hear your word read and proclaimed, help us to hear your word for us today as close as the beating of our own heart, in rhythm with your time. Amen.

# Creative Scripture Reading

A reading from Joel 2: 12-13 interwoven with lyrics from “Centering Prayer” by The Porter’s Gate.

One: Yet even now, says the Lord,  
return to me with all your heart,

with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;

Many (*sung or spoken*): I chase my worries, I chase my sorrows...and what you give me is now.

One: Rend your hearts and not your clothing.

Many (*sung or spoken*): So, take my burdens and my tomorrows, I want to be where my feet are.

One: Return to the Lord your God,

for God is gracious and merciful,

Many (*sung or spoken*): I run to capture the next horizon, and what you give me is here.

One: Slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love,  
and relenting from punishment.

Many (*sung or spoken*): I get no farther and still I find you.

**All: The ground below me is how you hold me. I want to be where my feet are. (Repeat)**

**Author:** Pepa Paniagua

**Project Manager:** Gina Yeager-Buckley

