

Strength of Women

- Leader:** Praise to One who has heard the cry of the poor,
- All:** Who has lifted up the weak and given them strength.
- Leader:** Praise the One who has fed the hungry and satisfied the longing of those in need.
- All:** Who has held with tenderness the orphan and widow and given the stranger a land and home.
- LS:** My spirit takes delight in the presence of our God; my heart is filled with laughter and my words fall short of the truth I long to express.
- RS:** For the One whom I love is faithful: our ancestors have known compassion throughout the ages and, this day, mercy is given us.
- LS:** Holy is the love and sacred is the place where we meet. We are in awe of the gift that is ours.
- RS:** The powerful have stumbled and the rich are burdened and fall. The proud are alone in their confusion.
- LS:** While before our eyes, the weak are upheld in kindness. The poor are called by name; the hungry are nourished with bread that never grows old.
- RS:** The promise endures. The One whom we love is faithful and life gives birth to beauty and truth.
- All:** Our spirits take delight in the wondrous presence of our God. Holy is this love
- Hymn:** “Wherever You Go” BB # 668
- Reader:** Today we are asked to look at our lives, personally and corporately, and to renew life, to nurture life, to share life in ways we have not done before. We are called to root ourselves more deeply in God, to reach within ourselves to take new risks and perhaps, as in the book of Ruth, to give up our homeland – the way things have been, the way we have always done things. We are called to love who we are in God so much that we have no alternative. In doing this, we will discover a new future, a new life, because we have become fertile again.
- All:** Loving God, we celebrate Your faithfulness and love, and praise You for the wonders You have worked through women and men of faith throughout history. Your presence within us enables us to claim our own strength and our need, and to take risks in the service of Your people.
- Continue to root us more deeply in love that any life that results from our efforts might be an expression of Your truth and love. We ask this through Your child, Jesus, Your own word and gift of love. Amen.
- Hymn:** “Only a Shadow” BB # 444