



CHURCH WOMEN UNITED HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

January 10, 2024

HELP OTHERS AT ALL TIMES

ANCHOR VERSE: Psalm 82:3 (NLT)

Give justice to the poor and the orphan; uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute.

WORDS OF WELCOME: Unit President and Host Church Representative

HISTORY OF CWU: Since 1941, women of the Church Women United (CWU) movement have held a vision of Christian unity and prayerful action. CWU was founded as a racially, culturally, theologically, inclusive Christian women's movement to celebrate unity and diversity and work for peace in the world.

At its founding, the movement was named the United Council of Church Women (UCCW). Women of faith from three interdenominational women's groups representing 70 denominations convened in Atlantic City, New Jersey in December 1941 as bombs were being dropped while the world was at war. The United Council of Church Women's first action was to circulate a petition signed by 84,000 church women urging the United States at the signing of the United Nations Charter to join and take full responsibility in a world organization.

The action received wide publicity in the media, and Eleanor Roosevelt later involved the UCCW in a conference at the White House on "how women may share in post war policy making." Such action remains typical for CWU today, as its quest for information and prayerful action continues. Women of the movement affirm that prayer and action are inseparable and that both have immeasurable influence in the world.

OUR MISSION:

Church Women United is an inclusive ecumenical Christian women's movement celebrating unity in diversity and empowering women to work towards a world of peace and justice.

OUR VISION:

Women of Faith cultivating Love, Hope and Peace for all Creation.

OUR CORE VALUES:

FAITH

We are visible witnesses to God's love and draw upon the power of the Spirit.

SERVICE

We serve our neighbors near and far for the common good.

EDUCATION

We enlighten ourselves to grow and share with others through engagement across cultures.

ADVOCACY

We act to empower women of all ages and to influence decision makers.

DIVERSITY

We welcome, respect, and appreciate others and their God-given gifts.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

We work for a fuller implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

HISTORY OF HUMAN RIGHTS DAY:

Church Women United must remember and respect that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms... without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (Excerpt taken from the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” written by the United Nations in 1948)

These words should be in the forefront of our minds as we support, work towards, and fight for human rights of all people. This is the same message that Jesus gave to his followers: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength and love your neighbor as you love yourself. He did not mean for us to love just some people. He truly meant for us to love everyone. This has been the message of CWU since our inception in 1943 and will continue to be one of the pillars that supports and drives our movement.

PROGRAM ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE MUSIC:

OPENING PRAYER: (by Rev. Billie J. Simmons)

God of justice, in your wisdom you create all people in Your image, without exception. Through your goodness, open our eyes to see the dignity, beauty, and worth of every human being. Open our minds to understand that all your children are brothers and sisters in the same human family. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

**OPENING SONG: OPENING SONG: Ecumenical Choir & Congregation
CWU NATIONAL SONG: O CHURCH WOMEN UNITED**

(Tune: The Church's One Foundation by Samuel S. Wesley, 1864)

1. O Church Women United, we work and pray as one. With hearts and hands together, until our task is done. Our purpose, love unbounded, our aim to follow you. Our lives of living service, we dedicate anew.
2. We come with hearts united, our race and creed as one. Our friendship and our witness have only just begun. To spread across this nation in reconciling love. The peace that we are sharing comes only from above.
3. We celebrate together, we work for unity. We pray that all your people from hunger will be free. For justice for your people, for peace and harmony. O God bind us together in one community.

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY LITANY: (by Deacon Antonia H. Daniels)

Leader: Thank you, God for allowing us to see your new day.

People: Thank you God for your continued grace and mercy.

Leader: Today we are concentrated on your word that we must be kind and generous to all in our small world and the larger world as well.

People: We are your people and we want to be at service.

Leader: As we look in our own backyards, help us to be kind to those who don't look like us or dress like us or talk like us or not as financially stable as we are. Homelessness should not be considered hopelessness. Poverty is not a sin.

People: We will strive to be kinder and release our prejudices. They have no place in God's family.

Leader: As the world leaders continue to bring war, strife, hunger, pain and death to so many, we will pray, vote and lift our voices against such actions. We will speak out about the crimes perpetrated on women, just because we're women.

All: Lord it is not easy being a Christian, but you never promised us an easy road. We will try to be kinder, gentler and giving people so others may see us and want to follow you.

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY BIBLE STUDY: (by Patrecia L. Williams)

We now live in a world that gives humanity the capacity to rely upon the Artificial Intelligence (AI) of computer systems. This promises to bring efficiency and effectiveness into the lives of many as the computer systems perform tasks that

usually involve human intellect. Though the basis for computer driven AI has as its foundation to help mankind, can it do so with intended God-ordained spiritual fervor and conviction of Holy Spirit filled and led Believers in Jesus Christ? Apostle Paul tells us: “For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago” (Ephesians 2:10 NLT). Therefore, Church Women United can: “Give justice to the poor and the orphan; uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute” (Psalm 82:3 NLT), as delineated in the national CWU Quadrennial Priority tenets pertinent to Human Rights.

Over 2,000 years ago Jesus taught his disciples about the final judgement of mankind using sheep who will be positioned on His right and goats who will be positioned on His left. He said of the sheep, “For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.” (Matthew 25:35-36). During Jesus’ explanation, “the righteous [sheep] answered him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’” (Matthew 25:37-39). Having done these acts of helping “the least of these my brothers and sisters”, Christians are performing the deeds on the body of Jesus Christ.

Knowing that Born-again Believers are saved to do good deeds of helping others is spiritual obedience to God through our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. Since eternal life is promised to Believers, we are encouraged to always exercise due diligence in love while we “Give justice to the poor and the orphan; uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute” (Psalm 82:3 NLT). God knows and sees our heart intentions. The promise “to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.’” (Matthew 25:34).

An amazing twenty-first century woman who prominently advocated for a myriad of social justice and human rights concerns was Rosalynn Carter, former First Lady and wife of former president Jimmie Carter. Some of her help people actions included: confronting age discrimination dealt to older Americans, staunch supporting of progression of women’s equality, she encouraged opportunities that benefited people with developmental disabilities, dedicated her talent and abilities to improving treatment and services for those dealing with mental health conditions, a proponent of the Equal Rights Amendment, labored with her husband, after he left public office, in building houses for people in need, and numerous other [*Help Others at All Times*] accomplishments during her lifespan.¹

¹ The Carter Center. *Rosalynn Carter, 1972-2023, Former First Lady of the United States and Founder of The Carter Center*. Retrieved April 14, 2024 from https://www.cartercenter.org/about/experts/rosalynn_carter.html

PROGRAM: Human Rights Award presented to Brandi Grayson, Founder and CEO of Urban Triage.



Brandi Grayson is a transformative leader who founded Urban Triage in 2019 to support those affected by state violence, including mass incarceration and housing shortages. Under her leadership, the organization has mobilized significant resources to assist vulnerable communities in Madison and has grown to over 23 employees.

In 2020, Brandi secured the second-largest contract in Dane County to provide rental support during the COVID-19 pandemic. Urban Triage is now a key community institution, offering emergency assistance, transformative personal and leadership development cohorts, advocacy, and housing support to thousands annually.

Brandi's contributions have earned her numerous accolades, including recognition as one of Wisconsin's most influential African Americans in 2015 and the Community Leader of the Year award in 2022. In 2023, the Madison Black Chamber of Commerce honored Urban Triage as the People's Choice Business and Nonprofit.

Her collaborative leadership style emphasizes community, integrity, and gratitude. Brandi works across political divides, partnering with organizations like UW Health and the Madison Police Department to support those in need.

As a co-founder of the Young Gifted & Black Coalition, which leads grassroots campaigns and Black Lives Matter protests Brandi amplified essential voices within the community. Currently, she hosts the Black Convergence radio show on 92.7 FM, where she continues this important work. Outside of her professional life, Brandi is a devoted mother and a nature enthusiast, finding joy in simple pleasures. Her commitment to addressing systemic challenges makes her a powerful advocate for vulnerable populations.

OFFERING: Human Rights Day Celebration offerings are sent to support the work of CWU National movement.

OFFERING PRAYER - UNIT TREASURER: (by Rev. Billie J. Simmons)

Lord, we thank you for Your faithfulness. Thank you that we can always trust in You. You are an abundant God and out of Your great mercy you have given us so much. We give you this offering today. With it, we worship You and give our whole selves to You. Please now take it and use it for Your kingdom and Your glory. Extend and multiply its reach and influence we pray. May it be a great blessing to many. We ask all this in the powerful name of Jesus. Amen.

SONG OF PRAISE SUGGESTION:

“Change is Gonna Come” by Sam Cook

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEBIaMOmKV4>

CLOSING SONG:

2025 Celebration Theme Song: “I Am Woman” by Helen Reddy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rptW7zOPX2E>

CLOSING PRAYER: (by Rev. Billie J. Simmons)

Guide us, through the love you revealed, to establish the justice you proclaimed, that all people might dwell in harmony and peace, united by that one love that binds us to each other, and to you. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

SENDING FORTH:

“As we leave this place today, let us remember we are an ecumenical movement of women who have

Agreed to Differ, Resolved to Love, and United to Serve.”

ACTION ACTIVITIES-TAKE AWAY: (ideas to implement after the program)

Our hope is that you will be inspired to take action in your community as it pertains to each Celebration. This could be helpful to increase membership in your unit.