Suggested Scriptures and Liturgy for Women’s History Month:

March 5, 2017
Daughters of Zelophehad, Numbers 27: 1-11
Women Speaking Truth to Power

Daughters of Zelophehad  Numbers 27:1-11

27 A notice was presented by the daughters of Zelophehad ben- Hephër, ben-
Gilead, ben-Machir, ben-Manasseh, ben-Joseph. The daughters -Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah
and Tirzah — came to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, stood before Moses, Eleazar, the
elders and the whole assembly and stated their case: “Our father died in the desert. But he
was not one of those who joined up with Korah to conspire against YHWH and were killed in the
effort. Zelophehad died for his own sins, and left no sons. But why should the name of
‘Zelophehad’ disappear from the clan for lack of a son? Give us property equal to the share of
our uncles!”

Moses brought their case to YHWH, who said to Moses, “What the daughters of
Zelophehad claim is right and just. You must allow them to inherit the share of property allotted
to their uncles, and turn Zelophehad’s inheritance over to them.

“Say to the Israelites, ‘If a person dies without a son, give the inheritance to the
daughter. If there is no daughter, give the inheritance to the other heirs. If there are no heirs,
give the inheritance to the uncles. If there are no uncles, give the inheritance to the nearest
relative in his clan, who will take possession of it. ’” This is to be a legal statute for the Israelites,
as YHWH commanded Moses. (The Inclusive Bible)

Opening Prayer:
One who hears, even when our fellow humans turn a deaf ear, listen to our petitions
this day. Bless us with the wisdom to know your peace and justice, your love and mercy.
Grant us confidence to go before our accusers and the strength to stand before those who
judge us. May our efforts, no matter how small, bring about the beautiful world you desire.
We pray this in the name of Jesus, Christ. AMEN.

Celebrating Holy Communion Together
Leader: Christ invites everyone to this table.
Many: Before we gather here, let us make our confession before the God and each other.
ALL: GOD OF DAUGHTERS AND SONS, GOD OF ORPHANS AND HEIRS, YOU PROTECT THE
OPPRESSED AND FORGOTTEN AND FEED THE HUNGRY WITH GOOD THINGS. SOMETIMES WE
FORGET YOUR GREAT LOVE FOR US. WE ARE AFRAID TO SPEAK UP WHEN WE ARE
WRONGED. WE WORRY ABOUT WHAT OTHERS MIGHT SAY ABOUT US, OR WHAT THEY
MIGHT THINK. REMIND US ONCE AGAIN THAT YOU STAND AMONG US IN CHRIST, OFFERING
LIFE TO ALL OF YOUR CHILDREN. GIVE US OPEN HEARTS AND MINDS TO RESPOND TO YOUR
LOVE BY GIVING ALL OF OURSELVES.
Leader: In your love, remind us of the good plans you have for us. Pour your courage and
strength into us so that we may recognize and rejoice in the new things you are doing.
ALL: HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, ONE, GOD OF POWER AND MIGHT, HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FULL OF YOUR GLORY. HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST! BLEST IS THE ONE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF OUR GOD. HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST!
Leader: Jesus encourages us to put our whole selves into the work of being a disciple. Sometimes that means leaving behind old ideas and ways to embrace new ones. Sometimes it means speaking up and speaking out when we are timid and terrified. Are we willing to overcome our fears for the promise of what we may become?
Many: When the day of the Passover arrived, and before the betrayal, Jesus took a place at the table with the Disciples, and said to them, “I have longed to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. Take this bread, let it be my life, broken and shared among you. Take this cup, let it be my love, poured out for you and for many. Do this in remembrance of me.” We resist the thought of Jesus suffering and dying so something new might happen. We don’t understand it, and turn away in doubt and fear. However, God never leaves us. No matter what we do, the love and life that is in Christ cannot be conquered. Love always overcomes evil. Life always defies death. We may not understand, but we can sing out our gladness for the mystery that is God’s faith in us and our faith in God.
ALL: CHRIST HAS DIED, CHRIST IS RISEN, CHRIST WILL COME AGAIN.
Leader: Pour out your Spirit onto this everyday food and make it extraordinary. Pour out your Spirit on us everyday people and make us the extraordinary body of Jesus Christ, embarking together on a new adventure.
Are we ready to give all we have for the work that is before us? Today is another opportunity to accept the forgiveness and blessing that sets us free to create and co-create the beloved community God intends for the world. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other and one in ministry to all the world, until we feast together with Christ in heaven.
ALL: AMEN

Closing Prayer: 
UMH #456
Loving One, open my eyes that I may see the needs of others; open my ears that I may hear their cries; open my heart so they need not be without succor; let me not be afraid to defend the weak because of the anger of the strong, nor afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich. Show me where love and hope and faith are needed, and use me to bring them to those places. And so open my eyes and my ears that I may this coming day be able to do some work of peace for thee. AMEN.

March 12, 2017
Ruth 1:5b-17
Women Supporting Women

Opening Prayer:
Lover of our souls, we give thanks that when all else fails us, you are still there, waiting for us patiently, embracing us warmly, loving us extravagantly. May we be more like you in our loyalty and love for one another. Grant us the gift of steadfast forgiveness, faith
and fortitude as we live our lives in the light of your great and insurmountable love. For it is in Christ Jesus that we pray these things. AMEN.

Responsive Reading:

One: Where you go, I will go.

Many: Take me with you

One: On a road that leads to hope

Many: Equity and fairness

One: Let me come along

Many: Seeking level ground for girls and boys

One: Men and women

Many: Rich and poor

One: Dark and pale

Many: Old

One: Young

Many: Let's find the promised land

One: Together

Many: Take me with you

One: Where you go, I will go.

March 19, 2017
Mark 5:22-43
Women’s Bodies

Opening Prayer:

Most merciful Creator, you make us differently, yet we are in so many ways we are the same. We are all of different ages, abilities, and shades. Our wealth and status vary. Yet we all feel and bleed. We all yearn for a better life, one that stretches beyond the very limits of our bodies. Help us, loving one, to come to the aid of the other, no matter how different their life might seem to us. To comfort those who are afflicted, to raise up the trodden, to free the captive, to feed the hungry, to shelter the poor, and to free the oppressed. May we be instruments of the love you freely bestow on us. In the name of Christ. Amen.

March 26, 2017
The Widow’s Mite, Mark 12:41-44
Women Giving All

Opening Prayer:

Jesus, you sit quietly and watch. You observe our coming and going, our offering and our clinging, our sacrifice and our comfort. Some are rich with much to give. Others are poor
giving all they have. Search our hearts this morning. Are we giving all we have? Do we trust you enough to risk our time and our talents in your service? Help us to give of our lives and our gifts that they might multiply and grow, creating a better community and a better world. In the name of Christ. AMEN.

Closing Prayer:

Loving One, we have gathered together to praise and pray, to reflect on your word, and to eat at your table. Now you call us to do your work. Not in some halfhearted way, but in the fullness of life and spirit that you inspire in each of us. Be present with us, guiding our steps as we begin this journey of justice and hope that promises to open new opportunities for women and men in The United Methodist Church and beyond. May your wisdom and blessing be with us as we work together. AMEN.