16 [21] Days of Activism to **End Violence against Women**

LITURGICAL RESOURCES



Women and Gender Justice Network of the Lutheran Churches in Latin America and the Caribbean - LWF

LITURGICAL RESOURCES FOR THE

16 [21] Days of Activism to End Violence against Women

2026

The Women and Gender Justice Network of the Lutheran Churches in Latin America and the Caribbean makes liturgical resources available to faith communities for the 16 [21] Days of Activism to End Violence against Women and Girls campaign.

The worship liturgy **"Persistence That Transforms: Justice against Gender-Based Violence,"** draws inspiration from Luke 18:1–8. It was prepared by Judith Bracho and Xiomara Mago of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Venezuela, and Pastor Ángela Trejo Haager of the Lutheran Church in Mexico.

The Parable of the Persistent Widow invites churches to listen to women who claim their rights, recognize the barriers to accessing justice, and turn solidarity into concrete commitment.

This liturgy may be used on November 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, or at other times during the campaign, which continues through December 10. *[In Brazil, this mobilization begins on November 20, Black Consciousness Day, also highlighting the relationship between racism and gender-based violence.]*

Share this resource with other communities and groups. Whenever possible, send the LAC Network coordination team a brief account of your experience, along with photos approved for publication. It will be wonderful to share this activity on our social media channels.

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Coordination of the Women and Gender Justice Network of Latin America and the Caribbean

MATERIALS

- Bible, cross, candles.
- Large sheets of paper, poster board, or paper panels to create a large, visible mural depicting a door with windows or flaps that can be opened.
- Orange markers for writing requests for justice on the mural.
- A prominent, accessible area at the front of the worship space where participants can approach the mural; if necessary, a table or other surface for writing.







PREPARING THE SPACE

Before the celebration, prepare a paper mural depicting a large door with closed windows. The windows must be able to open at the moment indicated in the liturgy without damaging the panel. Place the mural in a prominent location, preferably at the front of the worship space, at a height that allows people with different mobility needs to participate. Keep markers in an accessible location.

The closed door represents the difficulties and the "noes" women encounter when seeking protection and justice. Knocking on the door, writing a request, and opening the windows echo the persistence of the widow in Luke 18. The open windows symbolize listening, welcome, and the community's commitment to justice. The mural may remain on display after the celebration as a reminder of this commitment.

LITURGICAL GUIDELINES

During preparation, decide who will lead the liturgy, who will read the Bible passage, who will guide the interactive activity, and who will open the windows. Check beforehand that the paper door makes an audible sound when gently knocked on and that the flaps open properly. Briefly explain the meaning of the activity before inviting people to participate.

After the sermon and the hymn provided for in the liturgy, invite people, without requiring anyone to participate, to approach the mural, knock gently on the door with their knuckles, and write a word or request for justice using an orange marker. Anyone who prefers may simply participate in silence. Those who cannot move to the front may dictate their request to a support person or have the materials brought to where they are seated.

When everyone has finished writing their requests, the community may proclaim together: **"Justice! Justice!"** Then the women designated in advance may approach and open the windows. A song of hope or freedom, a moment of silence, or another simple gesture of communion may conclude the action. The aim is not to reenact suffering, but to express publicly a willingness to listen, support, and act.

LITURGY

“Persistence That Transforms: Justice against Gender-Based Violence”

November 25 – Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women
Women and Gender Justice Network, LAC

LITURGICAL TEAM: Judith Bracho, Xiomara Mago (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Venezuela). Pastor Ángela Trejo Haager (Lutheran Church in Mexico).

GATHERING LITURGY

PRELUDE

A melody that invites the congregation into a state of calm and readiness is suggested.

WELCOME

Welcome, everyone. Today’s liturgy invites us to recognize the forms of violence that continue to occur in our society. We will reflect on laws that are not always applied fairly to women who have experienced different forms of violence.

We hope that the Gospel will encourage us to work towards ensuring that the authorities responsible for enforcing the law are accessible to women when they raise their voices to seek justice.

TRINITARIAN INVOCATION

May the grace of Jesus, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all today. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN

(Each congregation may choose.)

CONFESSION OF SINS

God of grace and mercy, we confess that we have not always done good in our community. We acknowledge that we remain silent when we witness violence happening around us. We recognize that violence against women continues and that the church perpetuates this system that harms our sisters.

We ask you today, O God, to renew us so that we may proclaim the Gospel of peace, equity, and grace for all the women gathered here.

Help us carry this word of freedom to other women beyond our church, out of responsible love as communities of faith.

DECLARATION OF GRACE

Trusting that God hears us, we are invited to receive God's grace and to respond with love in the pursuit of gender equity in our society.

God has forgiven us and empowers us to create spaces of freedom for all people.

KYRIE

Creator God, we behold the world you have made, and it pains us to see violence, wars, and the destruction of your creation. Comfort those who suffer, strengthen those who promote peace, and awaken in your people the courage to be instruments of your reconciliation. Amen.

GLORIA

God continues to call people to serve the Gospel that summons us to justice.

Christ continues to feed those who hunger for bread, knowledge, hope, and justice.

The Holy Spirit continues to awaken gifts for service with wisdom, justice, and love.

Glory to God forever.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Let us acclaim the Gospel by singing "Alleluia." (Each congregation may choose the song.)

SCRIPTURE READING

Gospel according to Luke 18:1–8

SERMON

"Today I invite you to think about the laws our country has in place to protect women's rights.

Now think about all the court cases that women have been able to win easily and with favorable outcomes.

Could it be that not all of us have access to the law? Do you think enough is being done to ensure that all of us know our rights?

The Gospel of Luke presents us with a Jesus who knew very well the civil laws of his time. He knew how people were governed and who made decisions and exercised authority in their communities. That is why, with his prophetic voice, he speaks through this parable, denouncing authorities who ignored the voices of those most in need, as was the case of the widow.

We do not know exactly what the woman needed. We can suppose, given that she was a widow, that she might have been asking for a safe place to live, access to decent food, or support from a relative to sustain herself financially. At that time, people could request hearings to present their cases in person, although they could also receive support; yet she decides to go alone.

Think for a moment: How many days or months did this woman appear before the judge seeking justice? How many times did she explain her case without truly being heard? She was the victim of an adversary who was harming and hurting her and who, apparently, enjoyed protection. Yet the widow did not have the "right" to plead for her rights, even though her demands were just.

In our contexts, is the voice of a victim heard? Do we believe her when she tells her story of violence?

It is quite possible that our answer is no, and also possible that we know women who are going through similar situations.

Sadly, the world has not changed, and injustices that violate the dignity of the most vulnerable people in our society continue to be perpetuated.

In the parable, Jesus exposes the authorities of his time, who showed neither compassion nor mercy. He saw that they did not fear God, in the sense of being moved to act justly. But he affirms the widow as a woman who will persist day after day until she is heard.

We can imagine this woman on the courthouse steps, in the streets, not alone but alongside other women who were likewise seeking to be heard by the authorities. I am sure the widow studied and understood the laws; she knew what she could ask for and whom to approach. I imagine that before long she was also able to support other women.

Finally, faced with the widow's persistence, the judge decides to act in her favor.

The question Jesus asks us at the end of the parable is especially interesting, because it challenges us as churches to take action and listen to the voices of those claiming their rights: "When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

At first, we might answer no. But I believe we can respond to Jesus as follows: "Yes, Jesus, you will find faith in those of us who are troubled by injustice. You will find faith expressed as trust in people who will work for what is right."

Let us continue working together as communities, as churches, and as a society so that laws are upheld and the voices of those who have been hurt are heard. Let us persist until justice becomes a reality for all women and for every person in this world. Amen."

CONFESSION OF FAITH

(The Apostles' Creed may be used.)

HYMN

(Each congregation may choose the song.)

LITURGICAL ACTIVITY

PREPARATION: A paper mural depicting a large door with closed windows that can be opened at a certain moment.

1. Participants come forward, gently knock on the paper (making the cry for justice resonate throughout the church), and write their requests with an orange marker.
2. When everyone has finished writing their requests, they may say aloud: **Justice! Justice!**
3. Then the designated women in the group come forward and open the windows.
4. At this moment, people may embrace one another, sing a song of freedom, and celebrate justice.

LITURGY OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION

In Jesus' parable, we affirm that justice is possible and that he listens to those who cry out for a better life.

We approach the table to renew our faith; in doing so, we prepare ourselves to persist in making justice possible.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night in which he was betrayed, took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Drink from it, all of you; this cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for all of you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Come, for everything is ready. The table is not a reward for those who have attained perfection, but nourishment for those who need grace. Here Christ welcomes those

who hunger for hope, thirst for justice, long to begin again, and wish to walk in communion and equity. Come, for Jesus is good.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE BREAD AND WINE

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

As daughters and sons of God, we pray with the words Jesus taught us: *"Our Father in heaven..."*

SENDING LITURGY

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

"May the just God fill us with the breath of life so that we may continue creating spaces of mercy,

May Jesus, who walks beside us, encourage us to offer hope and favorable responses to all people,

May the Divine Ruach inspire us to affirm in faith that we believe a better world is indeed possible."

SENDING

"Let us go with joy; justice walks beside us. **Amen.**"

POSTLUDE