

The Gift of Jesus, our Friend

A prayer service to be used at the conclusion of chapters 5 & 6 of *Jesus Christ: God's Revelation to the World*

Gathering

LEADER: Heavenly Father, you have given us the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ illustrating your friendship, love and everlasting covenant. Strengthen our own friendships as we strive to love one another with all of our hearts and you, Father, above all else.

ALL: Amen

The Word of the Lord (based on John 15:9-17)

READER: As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another.

The Word of the Lord

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Response

LEADER: Lord, you have sent your prophets to speak your holy word to the people of Israel and to us awaiting your holy message. You have said:

(From Deuteronomy 18)

GROUP 1: I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their

kindred, and will put my words into the mouth of the prophet; the prophet shall tell them all that I command.

GROUP 2: Anyone who will not listen to my words which the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will hold accountable for it.

GROUP 3: But if a prophet presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded, or speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.

GROUP 4: Should you say to yourselves, "How can we recognize that a word is one the LORD has not spoken?"

GROUP 5: If a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD but the word does not come true, it is a word the LORD did not speak. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; do not fear him.

ALL: Thank you Lord, for sending men forth to proclaim your holy word so that we might follow and do your will as friends with Jesus Christ.

Prayer of Friendship

LEADER: Heavenly Father, You have sent us the one true and only friend we need in Jesus Christ, your Son.

LEADER: Open our hearts

ALL: That we may embrace your loving goodness

LEADER: Open our minds

ALL: That we may embrace your holy word and apply it to our lives

LEADER: Open our spirits

ALL: To know you and be guided by your loving presence

LEADER: We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord

ALL: Amen

Closing:

LEADER: Thank you, Father for the divine gift of your son Jesus Christ. His friendship and love has been a testament to us of your loving care and your eternal promise to us, your children. Help us to share your love with others through our friendship and loving concern. We ask this in your name.

ALL: Amen