

A Litany on Children and the Church

Leader: Because we affirm that all children are a gift of God, created by God and created good;

**People: All children are a gift to the whole of the human community;
All children have a real faith and gifts for ministry;
All children have the right to be children;
All children are not just tomorrow, they are today.**

Leader: Because we believe that all children depend upon adults for safety and security in a world that does not always value children, all children are affected first and most deeply by those things that work against health and wholeness:

Reader 1: Where there is disease, children sicken and die;

Reader 2: Where there is homelessness, children sleep on the streets and in other dangerous places;

Reader 3: Where there is war, children are frightened and without a safe place;

Reader 4: Where the air and water are polluted, children feel the effect in their bodies and in their futures;

Reader 5: Where there is shame, children's spirits are wounded.

People: Therefore, we hope for a world where all children can find a safe place; where all ages, races, genders, creeds and abilities are recognized, valued and celebrated; where all adults hear the voices of children and speak with as well as for them; where all children have "first call" on the world's resources and first place in the minds and hearts of the world's adults.

Leader: Because Jesus welcomed children and encouraged us to welcome them in his name, Jesus lifted up a child as an example of what the realm of God is like;

People: Therefore, we hope for a church where we take seriously our baptismal vow to nurture all children committed to our care; where we bring good news to all those places where children are in need; where adults and children alike share in ministry.

Men: We covenant

Women: We covenant to act

All: **We covenant to act so that this vision may be made real for all children, now and in times to come. Amen.**

*Adapted from A Vision For Children and the Church
205th General Assembly (1993) of the Presbyterian Church USA*