



Circles and Acorns: An Installation Service

February 18, 2011

Preparation: Prepare little wreaths from grape vine or ivy with different kinds and sizes of acorns glued on. Use a glue gun for easy attachment. Some of these items can be found in craft stores. Be sure to get the name of each officer and the office to which they have been elected.

(Call those to be installed to the front by name and office, asking them to face you.)

Leader: In preparing for our installation service today, I'd like us to think about circles. Perhaps the first idea that comes to mind is that old saying, "What goes around, comes around."

A more unique thought comes from a poem by Robert Frost which gives thoughtful insight for leaders. He cautions against 'dancing around the edge of the circle' without ever focusing on the center. As you become involved in attending meetings, planning projects and presenting programs, I hope that you will stay centered, remembering that the first phrase of our Purpose is TO KNOW GOD, and that you are called to leadership in Christ's service to others.

A speaker from Australia who was asked to accept assignment as pastor of a dying, inner-city church, asked herself, "If Jesus had this job, what would He do?" She also used the phrase, "Let me be as Christ to you as you are Christ to me." When you get home, read the judgement story at the end of Matthew 25 with those words in mind.

So Christ must be at the still, quiet center of your activities, as you dance around the edge of the circle.

(Give each officer a wreath)

You will notice that these wreaths are decorated with acorns. An unknown poet said, "each woman is like an acorn, having the heritage of strength from its source, and the seeds of strength for new growth."

Your wreaths have acorns in several stages of maturity, just as each of you are in different stages of your leadership journey. Some of the acorns are young, just as some of your talents are as yet undeveloped, but are ready to mature and open up with a bit more time. Some of the acorns are fully mature ready to grow a new oak tree. Several of you are returning officers, familiar with your place on the team and aware of the needs in the conference and of your ability to help meet those needs. You will see some hollow pods--they look like little cups--a reminder that all of us, as leaders, are role models for others, setting an example of being open and overflowing with Christ's love.

Please turn to face those gathered here.

I want to ask those gathered here to help in our installation. Will those who are seated on the outer ends of each row, and those in the back pew please stand in the outer aisle and back

row and join hands, forming a circle with the officers who are facing you. The circle symbolically surrounds the membership of the conference which you will serve.

I will ask three questions to which the officers will respond " With Christ's help, I will " The fourth question is directed to all gathered here, and the response is, " With Christ's help, we will. "

Officers, do you accept the responsibilities of the office to which you have been elected? (Pause for answer) Do you covenant to attend and participate in all activities of the conference team, as much as humanly possible? (Pause for answer) Will you, by diligent practice of the disciplines of Bible study and prayer, center your life on service to Christ? (Pause for answer) (To those gathered) Will you support these sisters in Christ with loving concern, cooperation and prayer? (Pause for answer)

As we remain enclosed by this circle of love, I declare you duly installed as officers of the (name of conference) United Women in Faith.

Let us pray: God, we stand before you, centered in Christ and bearing seeds of strength for new growth. Take our hands, work through them. Take our lips, speak through them. Take our minds, think through them. Take our hearts, set them on fire. Amen.

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