

LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

[revised from a 175th Haystack anniversary litany]

- One: God of all creation, maker of heaven and earth, we gather this day in remembrance of those who caught your vision for a global family of faith.
- Left: We remember this day a thunderstorm in 1806 when a new vision came like a flash of lightning and your revelation struck like a thunderbolt.
- Right: We remember this day a farmer's haystack in Massachusetts that afforded shelter for young men during a violent thunderstorm.
- One: God of our forebears, we remember this day five students at Williams College—Samuel Mills, James Richards, Francis Robbins, Harvey Loomis, and Byram Green—who, in the shelter of that haystack, dedicated their lives to the cause of Christ throughout the world.
- Left: We remember their youthful exuberance and commitment to Christ that inspired the formation of Boards for Foreign Missions.
- Right: We remember other prophetic voices who established the Boards of Foreign Missions.
- One: We remember and celebrate our contemporary mission through our partnerships around the globe—sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ through the feeding and healing of bodies, the education of minds, the salvation of souls, release from injustice, and freedom from oppression.
- Left: We remember the many faithful women and men who have gone into all of the world in Christ's name.
- Right: We remember our global mission partners sharing their talent, compassion and commitment.
- One: We remember this day the affirmation of assurance that Samuel Mills so joyfully proclaimed to his Haystack Meeting companions: "We can, if we will!"
- All: Hear us, creator God as we affirm their legacy—we can, if we will! Amen.

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LITANY FOR EMERGING MISSION

- One: Just as five Williams College students sought shelter from a thunderstorm under a haystack 200 years ago, so today we seek sanctuary amid the storms of life.
- All: Their refuge, however, became a haven for revelation—a catalyst for divine inspiration and a commitment to reach out to the world in the name of Jesus Christ.
- One: Inspire us anew, O God, to recognize that there is still so much to accomplish in the world today.
- All: We are the heirs of a great legacy, and our mission today is ever so vital in a hungry and hurting world.
- One: As we join in celebration of 200 years of mission, we pause to reflect on our entire heritage, acknowledging that even though our forebears had the best of intentions, the Church's presence in the world may have led to pain, destruction and exploitation.
- All: Merciful God, we confess that our collective mission history has sometimes been part of the cause of the breakdown of cultural identity, the depletion of natural resources, the oppression of communities, and the injustice of colonial governments. We come before you in deep humility, acknowledging past transgressions and seeking forgiveness for the Church that you love so deeply.
- One: As we pause to reflect on our heritage, we also acknowledge that even though our forebears may have gone astray in their gospel zeal, the Church's presence in the world has also led to amazingly wonderful, life affirming accomplishments.
- All: We give you thanks, O God, for the dedicated missionaries who helped construct schools, provided health care, initiated economic revitalization, worked for racial tolerance, and affirmed the worth of indigenous people.
- One: Our mission heritage has been a mixed blessing.
- All: O God, with joyful exuberance and profound humility, we look forward to your call to embrace the world with the love, justice and mercy of Jesus Christ. As the twenty-first century unfolds we ask your blessing on our numerous mission partnerships around the world, your guidance as we work with indigenous people, your spirit as we seek to learn and grow together in Jesus Christ.
- One: May our Haystack commemoration fan a spark that will rekindle global mission in new and transformative ways.

Amen.

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