

**3<sup>rd</sup> AUGUST 2014**



**Tribal and Adivasi  
Sunday  
Worship Order**

**THEME:**

**FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS: DISCERNING REDEMPTIVE  
WISDOM FROM THE MARGINS**



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## Seeking Alternatives to Our Ways of Living

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The ecumenical annual celebration of Tribal and Adivasi Sunday is scheduled for 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2014. As the theme of the celebration indicates we are living in crucial disturbing times. We are living in times of different manifestations of climate change. A threat of nation-wide drought looms large while there would be spells of flash rains and floods in certain regions. One of the reasons for this phenomenon is that we the developed people have created havoc with ecology. Is there any redemption? We are living in times of globalization, in a 24x7 world where the gap between the wealthy and the poor continues to increase, and those of us (the so-called middle class) who enjoy the fringe benefits of such an economic system are hardly aware of the sufferings of the victims of globalization. Is there any redemption? We are living in times where casteism continues to plague our society and the politics of communalism is gnawing at integrative roots of society. Is there any redemption? We are living in times of wars, terrorism, and wars on terrorism, and where peacemaking mechanisms are either politically manipulated or are weak. Is there any redemption?

As we celebrate Tribal and Adivasi Sunday, there comes a reminder, “Let us learn from our indigenous roots.” Our tribal/ adivasi culture teaches us to live in integrity with nature. Our primal traditional heritage emphasises egalitarian community living. Our indigenous ways of inter-personal relationships accentuate community solidarity. However we, with our prejudices and perspectives, have looked down upon our tribal/ adivasi brothers and sisters living in forests and interior rural places as uncivilized. We, in the name of development, have been taking away their land and livelihood, considering them as dispensables. We, the so-called civilized people, have been calling for converting our tribal/ adivasi brothers and sisters to our sophisticated ways of urbanized living.

The time has come to look to the margins as our centre and learn from them. There are many people on the margins be they women, youth, children, dalits, tribals/ adivasis, and so on. Hence the theme of this year’s celebration is “FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS: DISCERNING REDEMPTIVE WISDOM FROM THE MARGINS.”

**Rev. Dr. Roger Gaikwad,**  
General Secretary,  
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## Introduction

The United Nations declared the 9<sup>th</sup> of August as *International Day of the World's Indigenous People* all over the World during its General Assembly in 1994. By following this UN day, on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2010, during the Annual General Body Meeting of the National Council of Churches in India in Bangalore, the NCCI, for the first time, announced the observance of *NCCI Tribal and Adivasi Sunday*. The NCCI therefore from then urges and requests member constituents to annually observe every First Sunday of August as the *NCCI Tribal and Adivasi Sunday*, commencing from year 2011 and that the date be marked in the Church Calendar and Dairy.

In order to have a better understanding of the life situation of the Tribal and Adivasi communities in India, and to have a common form of worship for this special Sunday, the NCCI, *Commission on Tribals and Adivasis* therefore brings out this Liturgy. The NCCI acknowledges that many Churches do not follow a liturgical form of worship, still the NCCI requests those Churches and organisations to use this Liturgy by adopting it suitably in their own tradition. At the same time the NCCI is also aware of the absence of Tribal and Adivasi communities in certain Churches, yet the NCCI requests all those Churches to observe this special *NCCI Tribal and Adivasi Sunday* to show our solidarity to our fellow citizens and to the people of God who are oppressed and marginalized in various ways. The NCCI hopes that the observance of this Special *NCCI Tribal and Adivasi Sunday* will be an enriching exercise in our faith affirmation and for widening the horizon of our Ecumenical Journey. May God bless us all to become better citizens in the Kingdom of God here on Earth by bringing the struggles of the Tribal and Adivasi communities within the worshipping communities.

The expression 'Tribal' and 'Adivasi' means 'original inhabitants of their land' and 'children of the soil' across India. Not all the Tribals and Adivasis are included under the Scheduled Tribes of the Government of India. According to Census 2011 the percentage of Scheduled Tribes of the total Indian population (1.21 billion) is 8.6 % (104,281,034 million). Majority of them live in rural areas (11.3% - 93, 819,162 million), while only 2.8% (10,461,872 million) reside in Urban areas. About 16% of the mineral resources in India is found within the Tribal/Adivasi land, which is the major cause for the present crises done to them in the name of globalization through so called development. On the Tribal and Adivasi Sunday Indian churches are positively challenged to address the issues of discrimination faced by Tribals and Adivasis across India.

## Order of Worship

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(In order to create an atmosphere of worship, which is befitting to the Tribal and Adivasi Sunday, different creative arrangements could be done. For example drums, and small branches of trees could be arranged in the worship place to denote the Tribal rhythms and the lives of Adivasis intermingled with forests and nature.)

### Call to worship

L: For such a time as this, let us together worship God the source of life and wisdom, who gave us this day to worship together with all that is seen and unseen.

**C: Come, let us worship God our maker**

L: For such a time as this, let us in harmony worship the redeemer who taught us through his life and wisdom on this earth.

**C: Come, let us worship the Redeemer the Christ**

L: For such a time as this, let us as one people worship the sustainer of all lives

**C: Come, let us worship the Sustaining Spirit**

### Opening prayer

Creator, source of all being, we come into your presence seeking a discernment of your redemptive work that has been in the life of the people who are close to the nature, and for your presence that is within the web of all living beings. Help us to see your indwelling presence in the community of all creatures and those who live by nature. Help us to learn love and compassion that you bestowed in and through the life of the people who harmoniously live with nature. Strengthen us with that love and compassion to overcome evils in our society, forces of injustice that marginalize, alienate, segregate, and dominate people of the minority group, so that we may develop the harmonious life within the community of the whole world. Make us sensitive to the crisis at the interface of the cry of the marginalized and the cry of the nature. We pray that you bring us to a redemptive community where peace and harmony of all life is enhanced. Bring us into a bigger community which accommodates various cultures and traditions reducing forces of assimilation but entertaining differences of all. We pray in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

### Hymn

1. Help us accept each other as Christ accepted us;  
Teach us as sister, brother, each person to embrace.  
Be present, Lord, among us and bring us to believe  
We are ourselves accepted and meant to love and live.

2. Teach us, O Lord, your lessons, as in our daily life  
We struggle to be human and search for hope and faith.  
Teach us to care for people, for all not just for some,  
To love them as we find them or as they may be come.

3. Let your acceptance change us, so that we may be moved  
In living situations to do the truth in love;  
To practice your acceptance until we know by heart  
The table of forgiveness and laughter's healing art.

4. Lord, for today's encounters with all who are in need,  
Who hunger for acceptance, for righteousness and bread,  
We need new eyes for seeing, new hands for holding on:  
Renew us with your Spirit; Lord, free us, make us one!

#### **Confession (To be said in unison)**

Gracious God, we come to you to seek pardon for all that we have done, especially for being silent at times of injustice meted to the tribal and the adivasi people. We have been insensitive to the cry of nature that is so close to the tribal and adivasi people, and have destroyed their forests and our natural resources in the name of development and increased the level of global warming in our planet. Lord we have been insensitive to their cry and have not paid heed to their life testimonies and have often negated them with dominant ideologies. We have also been harsh on children by not acting when they really needed us; we have just passed by child labourers who were working at various construction sites and other amenities. Lord, forgive us sinners, for we have sinned and have not walked the way you have taught us to, through your son Jesus. Teach us to pay heed to the cries of all those oppressed and give us the strength to act according to your will in being instruments in your liberative act. **Amen.**

#### **Absolution**

The Saviour of the world, the refuge of the repentant, forgives and strengthens all who truly seek his grace. He accepts you as his sons and daughters, and sets you free from the bondage of your past. Be always ready to forgive as freely as God has forgiven you. And, above everything else, love, and never forget to be thankful for what Christ has done for you. **Amen.**

### **Special Item:**

(A dance performance, or a skit, which is associated with the lives of Tribals and Adivasis showing the discriminations and hardships they face in the caste and race- ridden Indian society. Children performing in the traditional costumes of Tribals/Adivasis will be also a meaningful act)

<b>Bible Readings</b>	Exodus 1:15-22
	Esther 4:9-17
	Luke 7:31-35

### **Sermon:**

**“For such a time as this: Discerning redemptive wisdom from the margins”**

(Certain points to be used in the sermon)

1. The intimate relationship of the Tribals and Adivasis with nature and the ways in which they see God in these intrinsic relations. How the neo- liberal policies of governments and the greed of the multinational companies disturb and destroy this essential relationship of human beings to nature.
2. Reiterate the resisting and protesting power of the marginalised communities. Exhort about the responsibilities of the marginalised communities to relentlessly oppose the oppressive structures.
3. Realise the importance of the time we are living. In Indian context we can think of the possible dangers the marginalised communities such as Tribals and Adivasis are facing in the post- election time. The need of reacting in the positive and affirmative ways to the signs of the time should be emphasised.

### **Affirmation of Faith:<sup>1</sup>**

We affirm our faith in one God -

**Source of all life and wisdom, greater than all names and forms, source of our being, closer than any. Upon this one God we depend for all we are and for all that ever will be.**

And we affirm our faith in Christ -

**Who has shown us the way to true life and wisdom. By breaking the chain of human bondage, through his self-giving life and death and by his rising again, he has given us hope for a new humanity, hope for the healing of earth's life.**

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<sup>1</sup> Taken and adapted from the Order of the Lord's supper: CSI Liturgy

And we affirm our faith in the living Spirit of God -

Through whom we awaken to God's purpose for the world, and share in the freedom, joy and peace of the children of God. For by his Spirit God's love has flooded our lives, shaping us into a community of forgiven and freely accepted brothers and sisters set apart for God's service, risen with Christ we share in his work for God's world of everlasting life, wisdom, justice and peace. AMEN

### Special Song:

### Breaking of the Bread<sup>2</sup>

Our Creator God is with us to bless us;

**Saranam, saranam, saranam**

The risen Lord is with us to bless us;

**Saranam, saranam, saranam**

The transforming Spirit is with us to bless us;

**Saranam, saranam, saranam**

O God, Redeemer of fallen creation, at the last meal that your Son, Jesus Christ, shared with his disciples before his death, he took bread in his hands of compassion, gave you praise and thanks, and broke bread. Then he said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

**We celebrate through this bread, the self-offering of our Saviour Christ.**

Then after the meal he took the cup, offered praise and thanks to you, gave the cup to his disciples and said: Drink this, all of you: This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.

**We celebrate through this cup the new covenant of our Saviour Christ.**

As this bread is broken and this wine poured out, O Seeker and Saviour of the lost, we remember again the poor and oppressed of the earth. We recall that your body was broken that the hungry might be nourished, the oppressed set free, replenished with the bread of new hope and new life.

**Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come in glory.**

As this bread was once scattered seed, O Bread of life sown in the earth to die and rise to new life: so to gather all people together as one humanity of your coming reign. Restore the broken life of your creation; heal the disfigured body of your world; draw all creatures

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<sup>2</sup> Taken from the Order of the Lord's supper: CSI Liturgy

unto yourself through the cross and in the power of your risen life. And grant to all the faithful departed a share in your bliss, that with them we too at the end may be welcomed into your eternal kingdom through your inexhaustible grace, and through the guidance of your indwelling Spirit.

**Sanctify us, sanctify this bread, and sanctify this wine, so that together we may be the body of Christ. AMEN**

### **Sharing**

When we break the bread, do we not share in the body of Christ?

**We seek to share your life, gracious God.**

When we lift the cup, do we not share in the life-blood of Christ?

**We seek to share your life, gracious God.**

The things of God for the People of God, come and share.

### **Thanksgiving**

Having now by faith received the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, let us give thanks:

**Merciful God of all creation, holy Parent of all people through our Lord Jesus Christ who united all things in His fullness, we join your whole creation in exultant praise of your bountiful goodness. You have now touched us with new life and filled us with new hope that your reign will come, that the hungry will be fed, that the oppressed will be set free from evil, that your reconciling work will be done, that love and faithfulness meet together, that justice and peace will kiss each other and the whole creation will be filled with your glory.**

**AMEN**

**Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God, forever and ever. AMEN**

### **Closing Prayer:**

Loving lord, we thank you for guiding us and being present with us throughout this worship. We ask for your continuing guiding presence in and through our lives, as we strive to live according to your will, and remain active in your liberative act. May your encompassing love dwell in us, as we embrace all creation with love and the stewardship that you have entrusted upon us; guide us Lord to be your instruments of justice, peace

and compassion so that we all may work according to your redemptive wisdom. We pray this prayer in the name of our lord who came down to uplift the downtrodden, the marginalised and the vulnerable, Jesus Christ our lord. **Amen.**

### **Benediction**

May the Triune God, give us

wisdom and strength to be agents of justice and peace in the lives of those who are being oppressed and marginalised in the society, especially the members of the tribal and the adivasi community. **Amen.**

*(Prepared by Rev. Lalawmpuia Hahnar and Mr. Vinod Shemron Saduri, the United Theological College, Bangalore)*