

Embracing the Call  
Opening Prayer for Women in Ministry Conference  
May 2, 2005  
Written and Led by Irie L. Session

God of heaven, we praise you and bless your name above every name that is given among human kind. We are here tonight by your name, to publicly—without hesitation, critique or fear of reprisal, to embrace our respective calls to ministry.

Thank you for those women who had a mind to bring us together. Those women who sacrificed their time, talents, and even treasure, to make this conference a reality.

My prayer tonight, is that while we are here to embrace our calls, we remember what Jesus demonstrated through his life—that ministry is about life and death, and the redemptive transformation of human lives and institutions. I thank you that Jesus who was endowed with the Spirit to preach good news to the poor, proclaim freedom to the prisoners, recovery of sight to the blind, and release those who are oppressed, is our model for ministry. Help us Lord, to have the mind of Christ.

Help us also remember those sisters who are not here. Women languishing on the fringes of life who have not had the freedom nor the encouragement, to embrace or even acknowledge their calls to ministry. African-American women, Hispanic women, Asian women, women of color who are often considered the least of these, women who are always last to the table. Help us Lord, to remember the plight of all women.

Thank you for this time Lord, please make our time together fruitful, nourishing, and most of all, make it life altering.

In the name of the God of Sarah, Rahab, Esther, and those certain women who followed, funded, and fellowshiped with Jesus, we give you praise and thanksgiving, Amen.