



## Wednesday Prayer

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – Until we all are free

**For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another.**

**Galations 5:13**

There might be a few others out there who, like me, attended the ELCA Churchwide Youth Gathering in Dallas in 1991, “Called to Freedom” based on this scripture text. At that event, I had the privilege of hearing the amazing Maya Angelou as she held 30,000 youth spellbound while she spoke and sang about being called to freedom. I vividly remember this poet, civil rights activist and icon quoting her poems “Still I Rise” and “Caged Bird” and singing spirituals of freedom as sung by her ancestors enslaved in the south. She reminded us that the world has cages of many shapes and sizes, and the fight for freedom continues.

I can't be sure that another one of her quotes was spoken verbatim that day, but it was certainly the essence of her message; “The truth is, no one of us can be free until everybody is free.” This was also Paul's message to the church in Galatia. When we're freed by Christ, we're called to live by the Spirit, and set others free through love and all the gifts of the Spirit. One of the many cages to which Maya Angelou referred is sex trafficking, which holds an estimated 600,000 to 800,000 individuals, children and others who are most vulnerable. Contributing to this deep injustice are more cages that need to be opened – cages of poverty, homelessness, low self-esteem and many more.

At Cherish All Children, we are called to freedom, and in our freedom to live by the Spirit. We're called to open as many cages as possible, through advocating and praying for, welcoming, nurturing and educating youth and adults in our congregations, and by engaging in this work together. This weekend you can participate in our [Cherish All Children 5K](#) as a walker or a sponsor, joining in this important mission. None of us are free until everybody is free, and freedom comes through the grace-filled forgiving love of Christ.

**Gracious God, you set us free through Christ Jesus with a power greater than any cage that can try to hold us captive. Grant that we live out our freedom in grace-filled lives, loving our neighbors, and advocating for justice so that all might be set free in Christ. Amen.**

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We hope you'll join us this weekend by walking, running, hiking, or sponsoring a 5K participant! Visit [cherishallchildren.org/race](http://cherishallchildren.org/race) to sign up or donate.