

Service of Anointing for Cancer (in hospital)

First Mennonite Church, Denver, Colorado
Vern Rempel, Pastor

Introduction

Healing stories comprise one-fifth of the gospel texts. The ministry of healing was integral to the work of Jesus and the N.T. churches.

Today we want to base our actions on that Biblical witness. I do not consider this a guarantee of physical health nor a replacement of other medical arts. But it is a sign by the one receiving the oil and by those gathered that physical illness is not something that breaks our community with God and each other, but rather becomes the occasion for renewal of our communal and spiritual ties. We believe that this community of love and support makes for health so far as it is possible within the limits and boundaries of the finite world in which we live. We believe it gives us a taste of the final wholeness that we all hope for and believe we have in a holy and loving God.

The sign of oil is ancient. It stands as a symbol of the presence of God's Spirit which we pour out for each other as the community of Christ. I am using olive oil as a concrete, historical connection to the healing ministry of Jesus in eastern Mediterranean lands. This oil will be placed on _____'s forehead.

The freshly cut flowers are a symbol of the ever-renewed life we have in God's love.

This service is a prayer for healing.

Scripture readings James 5:14-16 and Psalm 145:14-21 (*followed by pause*)

Song (*based on Psalm 91*)

Blessing with water (*water from a symbolic location is placed on forehead*)

Laying on of hands with prayer by friend or family member

Anointing with oil

I anoint you in the name of God who is like a father or mother to us, Jesus, healer and prophet full of God's own Spirit, and the Holy Spirit who is the very breath of God among us. Amen.

May your darkness be turned to light, your sickness to health. Amen.

Benediction

And now may our gracious and loving God, the God of the resurrection and the life, go with each one gathered here. Amen.

Greeting one another