Dear Sisters,

I greet you in the name of our risen savior, Jesus Christ.

I have been pondering many topics and decided to write about the biblical story from Mark 10:35-45. Please take some time to read this scripture passage.

In October last year I attended a ministers’ retreat. One morning was set aside for this text, and we stepped into the story using a method called **Bibliodrama** —role playing or improvisation using Bible stories. Originating from Europe, Bibliodrama utilizes various theater forms like dance and play to get in touch with the Word. A director leads the selected text and invites participants to step into the role of a character or object in a personal way. With ample moments of silence, reflection and processing, we discover the richness of the Scriptures by allowing the text and our own lives to meet.

In our retreat, we chose to be one person in one spot. Some were the disciples walking with Jesus on the way. Others were John and James, who drew Jesus’ entire attention towards themselves. And others were those about whom Jesus had talked: the rulers and high officials, and ordinary people— the oppressed and suffering.

Because of the behavior and the request of the sons of Zebedee, the other disciples had to define their positions towards Jesus, their fellow disciples and towards the so-called Gentiles. Some felt closer to Jesus and others felt further away.

But the discussion about the seat at Jesus’ right and left side took away all attention from the ones who really needed it: those who are far away from Jesus, as well as the poor and the oppressed on the side of the Gentiles. Besides that, almost all had lost sight of the goal of Jesus’ journey: the glory.

I am sure we all are longing to enter God’s glory with Jesus. I believe it will happen by putting our devotion towards the others. To drink the cup and to experience the baptism Jesus speaks of means to be a servant to all of those who don’t have a voice to ask for the right or left seat—those who don’t even have a chance to come close to Jesus and to learn from him.

And when I imagine God’s glory, I see Jesus in the middle of a big circle — which means we are all equally close to him. There will be no right and left seat — we will be as close to Jesus as we need, and Jesus will be as close to us as we need.

I am sure I never would have come to this insight if I hadn’t had the chance to play this story, to step into the shoes of one of the characters. I felt like one of the oppressed, one of those over whom the rulers execute their lordship and exercise their authority. I had the chance to watch the discussion between Jesus and the sons of Zebedee.  And I was wondering:

* Why does no one look to us?
* Why were we left outside?
* Why don’t they include us and do what brings them – and actually all of us - closer to the realm of glory?

It is not a competition to be first in the realm of glory. It is about sharing the presence of Christ here and everywhere.

The UWD is trying to do just that—look towards those who need assistance on the way to a better life, a life in justice and peace. With that in mind we conduct our regular meetings; with that in mind we prepare the next Unity Women’s Consultation; with that in mind we enjoy fellowship with you all —sisters around the world.

For the celebration of Easter and the resurrection of Jesus Christ I greet you with one of my most beloved Easter hymns(1).

*He has arisen, Alleluia! Rejoice and praise Him; Alleluia!
For our Redeemer burst from the tomb, even from death, dispelling its gloom.*

*Let us sing praise to him with endless joy; death’s fearful sting he has come to destroy.
Our sins forgiving, alleluia! Jesus is living, alleluia!*

*The angel said to them, “Do not fear! You look for Jesus who is not here.
See for yourselves the tomb is all bare; only the grave cloths are lying there.”*

*Christ has arisen; He sets us free; alleluia, to him praises be.
Jesus is living! Let us all sing; he reigns triumphant, heavenly King.*

Sincerely, your Sister in Christ, Erdmute D. Frank
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(1) Text: Bernard Kyamanywa,; tr. Howard S. Olson (1969) Tune: Tanzanian melody
Quoted after Moravian Book of Worship. Moravian Church in America, Bethlehem, PA & Winston-Salem, NC. 1995