CLERGY EMERGENCY LEAGUE

RESIST | RECLAIM | RENEW

LITURGICAL RESOURCES FOR ELECTION SEASON

REV. STEPHEN M. FEARING, EDITOR

About this document: These liturgical resources were written by members of the Clergy Emergency League. For more information, please visit www.ClergyEmergencyLeague.com or email us at ClergyEmergencyLeague@gmail.com. Full permission is given to use and/or adapt all the resources in this document for use in congregational worship with appropriate credit given to the author.

About the editor: Rev. Stephen M. Fearing is a Presbyterian (PCUSA) pastor who ministers to and with the people who are Beaumont Presbyterian Church in Lexington, Kentucky. A graduate of Columbia Theological Seminary (Atlanta), Stephen has served congregations in Georgia, New York, and Kentucky. He is husband to Tricia (a therapist) and father to Hazel Grace (born June 1, 2020). He has authored more than 60 hymns and hundreds of prayers and liturgies, all of which are free to use and can be found at www.stephenmfearing.com.

CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGIES

A

REV. MARIE DUQUETTE
KING OF KINGS LUTHERAN CHURCH
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

We light this candle remembering
the Light that shines in the darkness has not, is not, and will not be overcome.
As the glow from this candle illuminates our space,
we reflect on the words of Archbishop Desmond Tutu:
goodness is stronger than evil;
love is stronger than hate;
light is stronger than darkness;
life is stronger than death.

REV. BEN FITZGERALD-FYE
SCIPIOVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SCIPIO CENTER, NEW YORK

Holy One,
in a time of shadows,
we gather to seek the light.
In a time of sorrows,
we gather to claim the light.
We light this candle with holy hope.

We light this candle to acknowledge the grief of those who lost loved ones
to violence and to illness, to injustice and to inaction, to brutality and to lies.
We light this candle for the dead and the grieving.

We light this candle to shine light on the oppressed and the marginalized,
for the forgotten and the dismissed, for the poor and the powerless.
We light this candle for the least of these.

We light this candle for black and brown siblings living under the weight
of systemic, institutional racism in the self-described "land of the free."
We light this candle because black lives matter.

We light this candle for children made orphans by state-sanctioned cruelty,
for young ones kept in cages, for people fleeing violence only to find violence.
We light this candle for humanity unrecognized.

We light this candle to see injustices, to see them and commit ourselves to their dismantling.
We light this candle for justice and equity.

We light this candle for rainbow siblings, for L and G and B and T and Q and I and A and beyond
who live in fear of lost rights, harmed bodies, and unholy rejection.
We light this candle because love is love and labels destroy.

We light this candle to embolden our faith that we may speak truth to power
and cry out against the idolatries of wealth, power, and weaponized religion.
We light this candle for the soul of our nation.

We light this candle because we believe in the light that cannot be overcome,
in the light that shines justice,
in the light of peace,
in the light of truth,
in the light of a whole-hearted faith.
We light this candle because we are called to be of the light.

Holy One,
see this light and brighten it,
see this light and know our struggles,
see this light and know our faith.
Let this be for us a liberating light,
a loving light,
a light to guide our feet
toward mercy,
toward justice,
and toward a steadfast love.
Amen.

OPENING PRAYERS

A

REV. BETH M. WOODARD
ST. MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
HIGH POINT, NORTH CAROLINA

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Most holy God, almighty King:
You love justice and bring equity to the Earth. *Ps. 99:4*
On this [day/evening/night], as we await electoral information and results,
may our hearts, our minds, our spirits, and our bodies abide in your unfailing presence.
Still our anxieties, O God, and point us toward the way of love
for all with whom we live and walk, work and play, tend and love.
Pour out your healing and wholeness upon us all,
in the name of your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen.

B

REV. MARIE DUQUETTE
KING OF KINGS LUTHERAN CHURCH
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

Wrap us in your love, good Lord,
on this night when the chill of separation,
the ache of isolation,
and the tension of tears left un-cried,
threaten us with a sense of despair.
Remind us of the actions of all your saints
who do the dangerous, holy work to overcome hatred and corruption,
and who insist upon leading with truth, compassion, and the wisdom
of those whose life's work centers on serving all of your beloved.
Protect your servants this night and surround them with your light. **Amen.**

C

MARY SANDERS
UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY

Merciful God,
we thank you for gathering us, virtually and in person.
Be with those who could not join us today.
Hold all in your care.
Help us to prepare our hearts and minds for worship.
Clear out the worries, troubles, and idols of this world so there is only room for you.
Open our ears and minds so we may hear your word and know the truth you offer.
Open our hands and arms so we may offer ourselves and our gifts in service to you and others.
Open our eyes so that we may recognize you in those we see.
Open our mouths so we may sing your praise and speak of your love.
Open our hearts so you may dwell in us always.
We ask all these things in your Son's name.
Amen.

D

MARY SANDERS
UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY

God, Lord of all,
You command us to love our enemies,
to love our neighbor as ourselves and to seek peace with our siblings.
Lead us from prejudice and fear to truth.
Save us from our own cruelty, hatred and spite
and help us to seek reconciliation with one another and with you.
Guide our elected officials to seek and promote justice for all,
to serve in humility and truth, and to pursue wisdom and understanding.
Give us purpose and strength to end poverty, prejudice and oppression,
to create healthy and whole communities and to live in harmony with one another.
Grant us the willingness to love you with our whole heart, mind, and strength.
Bless us with a sense of your presence, so that we may have peace.
Amen.

E

REV. DR. BEVERLY DALE
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Oh Wise One,
You stand at the beginning and at the end of time,
the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.
From the first Creation of life on this planet
the Abundance of Your love and blessing has poured forth
and is visible still through the beauty and the gifts around us,
from the vastness of the stars and all the myriad pieces moving in the heavens above
to the warm touch of loved ones and the eager hug of a child.
We know we are but puny flecks of dust in comparison,

for we know the barest fraction of the grand scheme of it all.
We glimpse only the smallest portion in the vast expanse of time.
And so, Wise One, we celebrate that even though we see and know only in part,
Your wisdom sees and knows in full.
We celebrate that while our vision is inadequate,
You bless our best intentions to join in the wideness of Love's possibility.
We celebrate each other as we join with all of the wider global family
to envision peace with justice, unity of spirit, and the healing that brings wholeness.
Be present in us, with us, and move through us.
We trust that when Your people lean into Your abiding presence, all is well and all will be well.
We praise Your name.
And all the people say,
Amen.

F

REV. STEPHEN M. FEARING
BEAUMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

God of Justice,
we gather this [evening/day/morning] in uncertain times -
times of discord, dissonance, disruption, and disorientation.
And in the midst of such trials,
you call us to be neighborly to one another - *Phil. 2:4*
to our black, brown, indigenous neighbors,
to our LGBTQIA+ neighbors,
to our undocumented neighbors,
to our unemployed neighbors,
to our addicted neighbors,
to our neighbors without health insurance,
and all other neighbors around us who are oppressed.
We gather in prayer this [evening/day/morning] to petition you in your mercy,
to guide our footsteps to ferociously and faithfully pursue your call to justice.
As we await the results of the elections,
may peace prevail by all people in this nation
and may our democracy be protected
so that we may be free to protect the least of these among us.
Giver of Every Mercy,
give us a double portion of your Spirit this [evening/day/morning]
that we might be guided by Her wisdom and held in Her hope.
This we pray in the name of your Beloved Child, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

G

REV. KARIE ANN CHARLTON
THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

Holy God, we pray for peace in our land.
May our sanctuary (or virtual worship space) be a shelter for those who need love and acceptance.
The refugee and the stranger among us will be called beloved neighbor and honored guest,
for we are all one family.
Unite us in love, love of God and love of one another,
so that no one is in need or overindulged but that all live together in sufficiency and safety.
In Jesus name we pray. **Amen.**

CALLS TO WORSHIP

A

REV. DR. ROCHELLE A. STACKHOUSE
FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

Come, Holy Spirit, come.
Come with wind to blow away fear, hate, and anger.
Come with flames to warm those who are cold and sad.
Come with enough noise to drown out shouts and lies.
Come with whispers to force us to be quiet and listen:
to you, to each other, to the earth.
Come, Holy Spirit, come.

B

REV. DR. BEVERLY DALE
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

We gather to remind ourselves that Love calls us to our crucial work at hand:
to save the children and save the planet,
save one another,
friends and strangers and even our enemies.
And so we say, **give us courage. Give us wisdom. But especially give us joy.**

We gather to remind ourselves that Love calls us to see a wider vision that embraces everyone -
a vision of health and well-being,
of goodness and kindness,
of peace with justice.
And so we say, **give us courage. Give us wisdom. But especially give us joy.**

We gather to remind ourselves that together we are stronger,
that all God's children are created to connect, to care,

and to compassionately assist and defend one another.
And so we say, **give us courage. Give us wisdom. But especially give us joy.**

We gather to remind ourselves that this is who we are:
justice seekers, peacemakers, spirit comforters, truth defenders, earth lovers.
And we remember this is how we are called to be reflections of the Divine.
And so we say, **give us courage. Give us wisdom. But especially give us joy.**

We gather to remind ourselves that the work of binding ourselves together in unity and love is difficult.
The challenges of creating a more just world are tiring and sometimes grueling.
And so we say, **give us courage. Give us wisdom. But especially give us joy.**

We gather to remind ourselves that all is well and all will be well for God will not be mocked.
The power of Love is greater than our deepest fear,
stronger than our deepest sorrow, and wider than our wildest expectations.
The one whose eye is on the sparrow is also watching out for each one of us.
And so we say, **give us courage. Give us wisdom. But especially give us joy.**

We are called to this moment - in this hour and in this time and place.
We say "yes" to this life to which we are called and will not fear the Spirit's "yes" that is inside of us.
We do not know the future but we know who holds it.
And this assurance gives us joy.
Let us rejoice in this knowing.
Love is here, in our midst.
We are not alone. **Amen.**

C

REV. STEPHEN M. FEARING
BEAUMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

Come, however you are, and lay your burdens on the Lord -
burdens of fear and anger, of anxiety and uncertainty.
Come, however you are, and turn your heart to scripture's mandate:
to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly. *Micah 6:8*
Come, however you are, and remember the promises of God's word:
that we shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. *Ps. 27:13*
Come, however you are, no matter who you are, and no matter where you are,
and let us gather to lean on the everlasting arms of Christ Jesus.

D

REV. LUCY YOUNGBLOOD

Jesus said,
"Come, all who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." *Matt. 11:28*
Come, all who carry grief and loss.
Come, all who carry loneliness and fear.
Come, all who carry grief and anger.
Come, all who have had it up to here.
Open our arms! Open our hands and do not hide what weighs us down.
In this time, lay our burdens down before Christ and the Community of Faith.
Come all together and find rest for our souls.
Let us worship God.

E

REV. MAXWELL MUSKA
ASSOCIATE PASTOR, FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SHELBYVILLE, INDIANA

At a moment in our country's history when we seem more divided than ever:
We gather to worship the God who unites us all.
As the nation votes for leaders and issues at the national, state, and local levels
and awaits the election results,
knowing that millions of lives will be affected by the outcome,
we remember what we are called to do and be as followers of Jesus:
To do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God *Micah 6:8*
and one another, to seek welfare, peace, justice, and equity for the poor,
the oppressed, and the marginalized, to be a neighbor to all.
May we gather our voices together in word and song.
May we unite our hearts to praise the One who makes all things new: *Revelation 21:5*
And may our voting be the beginning and not the end of our engagement
with the systems of power in our world,
joining with God in the work of creation and re-creation.

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

A

REV. KRYSTAL LEEDY
PASTORAL FELLOW
TEXAS INTERFAITH CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY

Almighty God,
we confess that we have been looking at issues over people.
We have lost the humanity of others and lost our own humanity in the process.
We have looked inward with self-preservation rather than outward with empathy.
As you have taught, we are nothing without each other.
As we stumble to see others as brothers and sisters,

fill us with the catalyst of loneliness,
that we might remember that we are a community bound in love for you and for each other.

(Kyrie Eleison- in song or repeat thrice kyrie eleison, meaning Lord, have mercy)

Assurance:
People of God, remember that you are one body of people, bound together in love.
When one suffers, we all suffer.
May we look beyond the masks to the spark of life in people's eyes.
As you are resilient, realize that your fellow humans are also resilient. Tell them so.
People of God, you are forgiven, go and sin no more.

B

REV. MAXWELL MUSKA
ASSOCIATE PASTOR, FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SHELBYVILLE, INDIANA

Call to Confession
It's easy to lose hope,
especially when the problems and divisions we face seem insurmountable in our personal lives,
the church, our country, and our world.
But the psalmist reminds us that our hope is in the Lord.
Let us together confess the ways that we harm each other and ourselves
when we lose sight of the source of our faith and hope.

Prayer of Confession
O God our light and salvation, *Ps. 27*
our strong fortress and hiding place,
we confess our lack of hope and trust in you.
We can feel so small in the midst of our struggles,
that our work is insignificant when the problems we face loom so large over us.
As a result, we can become complacent and slow to act for the benefit of those on the margins.
Help us to look to you as our source of hope.
Help us to act out our faith and represent your hope and truth
in our communities and throughout your world.
Help us to be active participants and partners with you
in bringing your kingdom *(or kin-dom)* **on earth as it is in heaven.**
We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who shows us the way, Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness/Pardon
May we have sure faith
that we will experience the Lord's goodness in the land of the living! *Ps. 27*
Hope in the Lord!
Be strong! Let your heart take courage!
Hope in the Lord!
Know that we are forgiven and be at peace! **Amen.**

C

REV. MELODIE LONG
WATERFORD, CONNECTICUT

Call to Confession
Come, come to the place where God hears, where God heals, where God makes all things new.
Though we stumble, though we fail, God is faithful and believes in what can be. Let us pray.

Prayer of Confession
Holy One, you created us in your image,
people meant to be reflections of your love, your grace, and your justice.
More often, though, we put our own selfish desires above you,
our ambitions above your beloved community,
our greed above the needs of others,
our justice above your compassion,
our fear above your grace.
The realization of all that we have done and left undone is heavy indeed
for we have damaged the world you have entrusted to us.
As we participate in this election process and in the life of this nation,
remind us who we are to be as your people.
Free us from ourselves, and show us how to live.
Hear now the silent prayers of our hearts…….. Amen.

Assurance
Believe the good news!
God loves us and accepts us who we are and where we are –
and God believes in who we can become.
Know that grace takes us and wraps us in the gift of new beginnings.
Thanks be to God!

D

REV. STEPHEN M. FEARING
BEAUMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

Call to Confession
With hearts broken open to receive the grace of God,
let us confess the ways our sin has hurt our relationships with each other and with God.

Prayer of Confession
Gracious and Merciful God,
you call us to bear fruits of the Spirit: *Gal. 5:22-26*
love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
We've spent much time these past few years wondering if these things still matter.
We confess that we've been quick to ask these fruits of others
but have not cultivated them for ourselves.

Forgive our shortcomings and help us reflect the fruits that will heal this broken nation.
Help us to live by the Spirit and be guided by Her wisdom.
This we pray in the holy name of your Beloved, Christ Jesus. Amen.

Assurance
Hope in the Lord! Be strong! Let your heart take courage! Hope in the Lord! *Ps. 27:14*
God's mercies are from everlasting to everlasting. *Ps. 103:1*
I declare in the strong name of Jesus, our sins are forgiven. **Alleluia! Amen.**

E

REV. MELODIE LONG
WATERFORD, CONNECTICUT

Call to Confession
Did you hear? God's voice is calling us –
calling us to come home,
calling us to dare to live,
calling us together in community.
Let us pray.

Prayer of Confession
Holy One, it is frightening right now.
The voices of the world are loud and angry,
filling us with a deep fear and despair that this is all that can be.
We are told we must win at all costs,
even when the price involves the sacrifice of the most vulnerable among us.
We are told that we are superior to others,
even though our faith tells us that we are all your creation.
When we speak up in defense of our faith, we are even told that our faith is wrong.
We find it tempting to give in to the chaotic demands, for we are so very weary of it all.
Breathe into us your grace that gives us hope and courage for the living of these days.
Hear our prayers……. Amen.

Assurance
Take a deep breath.
Let God's sacred spirit fill your heart, your soul, your mind.
Breathe in the grace of new life.
Be at peace.

PRAYERS FOR ILLUMINATION

A

REV. KRYSTAL LEEDY
PASTORAL FELLOW
TEXAS INTERFAITH CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY

Holy Spirit, lamp for all people,
guide our way as we open ourselves to be changed by your Word.
As we dwell in the majesty of the purple mountains,
or our hand grazes through the amber grain,
and each time we take fruit from the plain,
may we never forget that the land which we inhabit,
is only available by your grace.
Extend that grace to us today,
even if the skies seems less spacious
and the sea less shiny,
hold up your lamp for all people,
that we may see you in the faces of one another,
and the voices that come from Scripture,
that our pilgrim-feet may find their way back to you. **Amen.**

B

REV. NICOLE PICKENS

Gracious God, whose steadfast love endures forever, *Ps. 107:1-7, 33-37*
inspire us to recognize your passion, justice, and mercy for all,
so that we might follow your example
and be part of your transformative work
as citizens and as kinfolk to all humanity.
We pray in the name of Jesus the Redeemer
and by the power of your vibrantly moving Spirit. **Amen.**

C

REV. STEPHEN M. FEARING
BEAUMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

God of Eternal Wisdom,
in this time when there are such assaults on the truth,
clear our minds of all the clutter and clatter of falsehoods
and still our hearts that we might receive the wisdom of your Word.
Through the reading of scripture,
bless us with a double portion of your Holy Spirit
that She may guide us to the Truth that will set us free. **Amen.** *John 8:32*

AFFIRMATIONS OF FAITH

A SLATS TOOLE

In a time when it is hard to know who to trust and what to believe, we believe:

that God created this world:
landscapes,
plants,
animals,
humanity,
and called it good.

that God came to be with us:
to live with us,
laugh with us,
break bread with us,
cry with us,
and become one of us.

that God is still working within and among us:
to comfort us,
inspire us,
challenge us,
and strengthen us,
as we face the days ahead.

In a time when it is easy to be overwhelmed by evil and fall into despair, we believe:

that God cares about creation:
God weeps for the rising oceans
calls for justice for the abused earth
mourns every lost species,
and stands with those who are oppressed
by sinful human systems.

that God did not shy away from the evil we can do:
God decided to suffer at our hands
to be betrayed and denied,
scorned and mocked,
and even be killed,
to show that our very worst
cannot separate us from God's love.

that God is still present in our world:
God did not leave us orphaned,
but continues to work alongside us,
using our triumphs and joys,
as well as our failures and faults,
to shape this world back towards goodness.

In a time when we are tempted towards fear and inaction, we promise:

that we will share the cares of our Creator:
We will seek to be true stewards of this world and each other.
We will recognize the image of God in all people,
and stand with those who are being dismissed, ignored, and harmed,
whatever the future may hold.

that we will follow the example of our Savior:
We will share our time, our energy, and our resources with each other.
We will root out evil in our own souls,
and work to dismantle systems that keep people from living into their sacred possibilities,
whatever the future may hold.

that we will be led by the presence of the Spirit:
We will not give in to forces that isolate us from God and each other.
We will recognize the work of God in ourselves and in our community,
continuing to move forward in our faith that this is not how the world has to be,
whatever the future may hold.

B

REV. MELODIE LONG
WATERFORD, CONNECTICUT

In the beginning with a sacred breath of grace God created the world.
Designed to be a place of infinite beauty, the world shimmered with possibilities.
Surrounded by the gift of that creation,
humanity with all its intricate diversity became God's beloved community.
And all was good.
But greed, power, the lust for more, rampant individualism tore the very fabric of that community.
We watched in horror as governments and corporations were crafted
to protect the rich and powerful while discarding the poor and hurting.
Determined to survive, even the Church fell prey to relentless competition and false standards of faith,
perverting Jesus' good news to a selfish agenda.
But we believe that hope comes even when all seems so bleak, that light will overcome the darkness.
We believe in a gospel of particular care for the vulnerable,
of a radical love that welcomes and embraces all,
of a grace that always creates new life.

So we commit ourselves to life in community,
to hold the treasure of one another with reverence,
to carry the ones who are tired and broken,
to grasp God's hope of new life and pull it deep into our hearts,
and then to walk together as we seek God's living justice.
Filled with love, filled with grace, filled with hope,
we promise to God and to one another to live fully into God's good and beautiful creation.
This we believe. **Amen.**

C

REV. STEPHEN M. FEARING
BEAUMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

We believe in God the Creator,
who breathed life into creation
and filled this blue sphere with creatures great and small; *Genesis 1*
who called humanity to be stewards of the earth
and to care for it and its inhabitants with righteousness; *Gen. 1:28*
who opposed Pharaoh's economy of greed and violence
and liberated God's people from an oppressive political regime; *Exod. 2:23-25*
who led God's people through the wilderness
and provided them with manna to sustain them on their journey; *Exod. 16*
who gave us the prophets to steer us back to justice when we strayed
and said: "woe unto you who legislate evil;" *Isa. 10:1*
who continues to create even to this day
and brings forth new possibilities when we think all is over. *Isa. 43:19*

We believe in God the Redeemer,
who was born into this world as a brown, Middle Eastern Jewish boy,
and on the run from a cruel politician; *Matt. 2:13-18*
who is no stranger to wilderness
and walks with us as a friend when temptations abound; *Luke 4:1-13*
who fed the masses simply because they were hungry *Mark 6:30-44*
and provided free healthcare to the injured and infirm; *Mark 6:53-56*
who is the way, the truth, and the life,
when other voices claim to be the same; *John 14:6*
who calls us to be neighborly to one another
and to be relentless advocates for the oppressed and vulnerable; *Luke 6:20-26*
who was unjustly and violently executed by the empire
and resurrected by God, defeating death once and for all. *John 20*

We believe in God the Sustainer,
who advocates for us in our times of need
and binds us to one another to cultivate the Beloved Community; *John 14:25*
who helps us in our times of weakness
and intercedes on our behalf with sighs too deep for words: *Rom. 8:26*

who comes in tongues of flame to bind together God's disciples
and equips us for the work we are called to do; *Acts 2*
who brings us to the Table to eat the bread and drink the cup
and renews us to defiantly proclaim Jesus' resurrection in word and deed;
who hovers over the waters of our baptism
and seals us into the eternal kingdom that supersedes any human administration;
who knits us together with those who are different than us
to heal this world be being neighborly to one another. *Acts 10*

D

REV. KARIE ANN CHARLTON
THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

With Mary, we will glorify God with all that is within us.
From the depths of our souls and the movements of our bodies we will rejoice in God our savior.
For God has looked with favor on those whom the world says are worthless. *Luke 1:46-55*
We believe that God highly favors the marginalized and shows bias towards the poor.
We are called to do the same, in God's holy name.
God shows mercy from generation to generation of believers.
God's strong arms cradle the weak and scatter away arrogant thoughts and proud inclinations.
God has pulled down the powerful and uplifted the lowly.
God fills the hungry with goodness and sends away those who are full of themselves.
God will come to the aid of the faithful, remembering the ways of mercy,
just as was promised to our ancestors, to Abraham and Sarah, and to their descendants forever. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

A

REV. KRYSTAL LEEDY
PASTORAL FELLOW
TEXAS INTERFAITH CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY

God,
we heard it was said that America is the greatest, the best, the most,
but you say to us, the Kin-dom of God is a seed, a pearl, a pinch of yeast.
We heard it was said that America is the superpower,
but you say to us, you are strong when you are weak.
We heard it was said that America is known by our might, our flag, our pride,
but you say to us that they will know who we are by our love.

The world is not ending this election season, O God, but it certainly feels like it might.
I wonder how many times you have met your people at these types of crossroads,
teaching us how we might learn how to hope again.

Wise Parent, you remind us that we always have a seat at the Table, and are each a part of a body,
a loaf of bread where each crumb is interconnected with another,
of one substance but distinguishable in flavor.
Raise your banner of love over us, God,
that we might not serve the Empire but rather the Kin-dom of God where race is celebrated,
economic status is leveled, and gender fluidity is accepted as the new normal.

And yes, as we go to the ballot boxes, you teach us in what powers our values lie.
And, we will watch the votes come in, and you will teach us patience.
As the red and blue chips are counted,
we know that people will walk away from this election devastated and elated.
And you will teach us forbearance.
It seems as if the very ideals upon which our country was founded are on the ballot, God,
and losing or keeping those ideals are worthy of your attention, God.

Because it's all been an experiment on how we might govern ourselves.
And for the past 200 years,
you have blasted through barriers that we have placed on who is a person and who is not.
Praise you, Holy Spirit,
for reminding us who we are and more importantly, reminding us who others are.
For we find our identity, yes, in our country, but more importantly, in you.

And by your grace, your faithful people have existed long before America,
and we will remain the faithful remnant.
Whether we are in power or in exile, God,
we ask that in certain spaces you temper us for the sake of our neighbor
and in other spaces you let us dance with abandon.
Because, God, though the dumpster-fire of this year,
we ask that you refine us.
Remind us who we are in you.
That we are a people that embrace the ideals of love,
of taking care of the poor, of setting captives free,
of binding up the brokenhearted.

God in our isolation, refine us to be your faithful people,
who love first and amplify your voice in the world,
even if it goes against the values of the country that we love.
May we stand with the oppressed,
with the people who are being trampled and put in cages,
whether metaphorical or literal, and amplify their voices.

Because that's where you are.

And if being where you are means that some people are angry,
then we know we are right where we need to be.

We've read the Scriptures. We know where you are.
Turn our eyes toward the places where blood runs in the streets,
where people are literally starving,
where mental illness is written off in silence and stigma,
where the virus is hitting harder,
where passion and grief are thick in the air.
Turn our eyes to communities labeled dangerous and impoverished,
because that's where the good news is about to break through.
And that's whose voices must be amplified this season, every season.
Use our privilege for good.

No matter what happens this week, God, teach us to be gracious.
And not just like that "Oh I'm sorry," kind of gracious,
but the kind of grace that can multiply a poor boy's lunch,
the kind of grace that makes strangers into friends,
the kind of grace that requires us to forgive as we have been forgiven,
and teaches over and over and over for us to be able to identify our enemy
in order to have an object of our love.

God may we build your Kin-dom this coming year,
Because you have leveled the earth and given us a strong foundation.
God bring us together at Table once again, we beg of you,
that we may hold one another in our humanity,
through the very rites that make us human.

In the name of the one whose empathy is realized in the incarnation,
whose Kin-dom has no end, who taught us to pray saying,
Our Father/Mother/Parent, who art in heaven…

B SLATS TOOLE

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, hear us and be near us.

We come to you on a day that should feel like a beginning, or an end, but is really one deeply important day in a long, hard season. Our anxiety has been high for weeks, months, even years. We look to this day for answers, for a sense of what the next four years will look like, but we know that the results of this election will continue to be counted for days and weeks. We look for relief and know it probably will not come.

But you are our relief. You are our shelter from the stormy blast and our eternal throne. Refocus us. Remind us of your presence. Help us, even now, to be still and know that you are our God.

We pray for the next four years of the life of our country. Whatever the results of this election may be, real people are affected by the decisions of those who hold office. We pray for those who are most affected: for children held in cages at the border, for immigrants for whom the threat of ICE raids is far too real, for Black people facing police violence, for Indigenous Peoples whose traditions and land have been disrespected and

stolen for centuries, for all who feel the sting of racism, for LGBTQIA2S+ people whose rights either at risk of being taken away or have never been protected at all, for disabled people who are devalued by our capitalistic society, for the millions in our country who cannot afford healthcare in the middle of a global pandemic, for future generations who will have to pay for the havoc we have wreaked upon this world, for all whose intersecting identities put them more and more a risk. We know that we cannot even name all of those who are suffering. Our understanding of the horrors faced by those like and unlike us is incomplete. Intercede for us and complete our prayer, holding all of those who need to be held close in this time.

In the immediate coming days, give us safety and strength. The tension in our society is palpable and we know how easy it would be for violence to erupt. Help us to care for our communities, to support one another, to de-escalate and diffuse, so that none of your beloved children might be senselessly lost in this time of confusion, anger, and fear.

More than anything, keep us moving forward. Tear down the idols we are so fond of trusting--no politician will save us. Salvation comes from you alone, so work through us to bring about your kin-dom. Compel us to action, to keep going on, to continue to work toward the wholeness and thriving of all people. Help us shed the privileges that keep us comfortable while others are in danger, as you invite us to join you in serving those the world despises. Make us so vibrantly and viscerally aware of you, your goodness, your grace, your love, and your passion for our lives, that we have no choice but to follow you, our guide while troubles last, and our eternal home. Amen.

C

REV. MELODIE LONG
WATERFORD, CONNECTICUT

How long, O Lord? Will you forget us forever? As this election season comes to a clashing close, its angry noise has pounded our souls. We are wounded from the violence – physically, emotionally, spiritually. And it has been an arduous struggle, one that appears to have no end even as the voting concludes. For we know that, no matter the outcome of this election, there is much ahead as we seek healing for a shattered world, hope in the midst of despair, justice that has been horribly derailed, and peace for our rattled hearts. The enormity of it all threatens to swallow us whole, Holy One.

Yet you reach out to us with a gentle reminder of who you are. You pull us out of paralyzing fear, out of an endless wheel of anger, out of ourselves breathing hope and life into our war-torn souls. Even in this time of uncertainty as history dangles at a precipice, you speak that you are still God and we are still your beloved. So we pause, we breathe, and we pray. For our world that is like a whirling dervish of anger and hatred, we seek a deep peace. We seek a peace that goes beyond the lack of violence but one that is borne out of mutual love and respect for all. For this country, this exhausted and fragile country, this wondrous and beautiful country, show us how we each can become healers, repairers, peacemakers. For it is only together that we can be the change that is so desperately needed. Even as we pray for the larger structures of society, we remember the people, the ones you so lovingly and hopefully created. As we take our voices and feet to the polls, make us mindful of the ones who are being discarded, the ones who hunger physically and spiritually, the ones for whom poverty has become a cage, the ones who have been forgotten and dismissed as less-than, the ones who have been ravaged by a relentless pandemic. And as we vote, remind us who we are to be. Let us vote for leaders of wisdom and grace, who remember the least of these, who inspire us to be the best of ourselves as you created us to be.

Give us courage, God of all creation, God of each and every one of us, to be people of both passionate courage and gentle strength as was your Son Jesus Christ. May his life, his message, his mission be our model for all of living. When this election is over, may we never forget that the call continues. Help us dare to love and to live with joyful and hopeful abandon as your beloved creation. Because our words are never adequate, hear the prayers of our hearts….. (a time of silence)

Hold us lovingly as we go forth, O God. Hear us now as we pray as your Son continues to teach us saying…..

D

REV. STEPHEN M. FEARING
BEAUMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

Giver of Every Mercy,
we gather this [evening, day, morning] to intercede on behalf of our neighbors,
that we might live as the Beloved Community your Son gifted us the capacity to create.

You said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." *Matt. 5:3*
We pray for those who feel discouraged, disillusioned, and disgusted.
Gift them courage and energy
that they may continue to fight the good fight of faith.

You said, "Blessed are those who mourn." *Matt. 5:4*
We pray for those who have lost loved ones to COVID-19 and other causes.
Gift them with comfort and peace
that they may find hope for the future.

You said, "Blessed are the meek." *Matt. 5:5*
We pray for those whose gentle voices of love are drowned out by hate.
Gift us the ability to hear their message of compassion
that we may be transformed by subversive love.

You said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst." *Matt. 5:6*
We pray for those who are hungry while we spent $732 billion on the military last year.
Gift them with food and clean water in abundance
that they may live healthy and fruitful lives.

You said, "Blessed are the merciful." *Matt. 5:7*
We pray for those who show mercy when it's not fashionable or profitable.
Gift them the strength to continue their work
that we might learn from them and share their vision.

You said, "Blessed are the pure in heart. *Matt. 5:8*
We pray for those who show integrity in the midst of blatant assaults on truth and dignity.
Gift them the resilience it takes to remain steadfast in these times
that they may continue to resist powers of tyranny and oppression.

You said, “Blessed are the peacemakers.” *Matt. 5:9*

We pray for those who have peacefully protested these past six months.
Gift them with holy impatience and determination
that our message of justice and righteousness may ring out.

You said, “Blessed are those who are persecuted.” *Matt. 5:10*

We pray for our BIPOC (black, indigenous, and people of color) siblings.
Gift them with justice, freedom, and equality,
that may have their due life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

You said, “Blessed are you when people utter all kinds of evil against you.” *Matt. 5:11*

We pray for those who have endured racist, sexist, and xenophobic rhetoric and actions.
Gift them with a sure sense of your love for them
that they may rest in the truth they they are beloved.

We lift these prayers to you,
knowing that there is a special place in your heart
for those who endure injustice and oppression.
Lead us to a place of rejoicing through these difficult times, *Matt. 5:12*
and gather us together as your Beloved Community.
This we pray as you taught us to pray saying, Our Father/Mother/Parent, who are in heaven…

E

REV. KARIE ANN CHARLTON
THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

As we pray together, I will pause for a moment of silence between phrases. In this space, I invite you to breathe deeply and hold those dear to you in prayer. And as we pray together, let us put aside the thoughts about what is good for us as individuals and pray for what is good for our neighbors. As I read the version of the beatitudes found in The Message, imagine Jesus speaking these words to you and you speaking these words to your neighbors. Let us allow these blessings to wash over us and those for whom we pray.

Holy God, we lift up our hearts to you that you may enter in and refine our desires and thoughts so that they are directed towards you and to that which you have called us to do, love our neighbors. We pray for peace, justice, and mercy, and most of all, we pray that love guides all that we say and do. Help us to be a blessing in your world.

“You’re blessed when you’re at the end of your rope. *Matt. 5:3*
With less of you there is more of God and his rule.
[*allow for meaningful silence*]

“You’re blessed when you feel you’ve lost what is most dear to you. *Matt. 5:4*
Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.
[*allow for meaningful silence*]

"You're blessed when you're content with just who you are—no more, no less. *Matt. 5:5*
That's the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can't be bought.
[*allow for meaningful silence*]

"You're blessed when you've worked up a good appetite for God. *Matt. 5:6*
God's food and drink in the best meal you'll ever eat.
[*allow for meaningful silence*]

"You're blessed when you care. At the moment of being 'care-full,' *Matt. 5:7*
you find yourselves cared for.
[*allow for meaningful silence*]

"You're blessed when you get your inside world—your mind and heart—put right. *Matt. 5:8*
Then you can see God in the outside world.
[*allow for meaningful silence*]

"You're blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. *Matt. 5:9*
That's when you discover who you really are, and your place in God's family.
[*allow for meaningful silence*]

"You're blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution. *Matt. 5:10*
The persecution drives you even deeper into God's kingdom.
[*allow for meaningful silence*]

"Not only that—
count yourselves blessed every time people put you down *Matt. 5:11-12*
or throw you out or speak lies about you to discredit me.
What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and they are uncomfortable.
You can be glad when that happens—give a cheer, even!—for though they don't like it, I do!
And all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company.
My prophets and witnesses have always gotten into this kind of trouble.
[*allow for meaningful silence*]

Holy God, we lift up all of the prayers we prayed in the silence along with the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray, Our Father/Mother/Parent who art in heaven…

CHARGES & BENEDICTIONS

A

REV. DR. ROCHELLE A. STACKHOUSE
FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

May the power of Christ lift us above despair.
May the energy of Christ move through our weariness.
May the peace of Christ settle our anxiety.
May the challenge of Christ raise our expectations.
May the grace of Christ assure us of forgiveness when we fall short.
May the love of Christ, greater than we could ask or imagine, set us dancing into the future. **Amen.**

B

REV. BETH M. WOODARD
ST. MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
HIGH POINT, NORTH CAROLINA

Beloved of God, as we go from this time together,
hear the words of Saint Paul in his letter to the followers of Christ in Ephesus: *Eph. 2:13-14*
"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.
For he is our peace;
in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall,
that is, the hostility between us."
I charge you, as followers of Christ Jesus,
to love one another and to live in his name, today and always. Amen.

Hear now the good word, the benediction:
May the Lord bless you and keep you from all harm, *Ps. 99:1; Eph. 2:19*
in the name of God the Creator, who sits enthroned upon the cherubim;
Jesus the Son, (*sign of the cross can be made*)
who makes us no longer strangers and aliens but citizens with the saints;
and the Holy Spirit, which enters into every human heart. **Amen.**

C

REV. KARIE ANN CHARLTON
THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

Saints of God,
go out into the world offering forgiveness and love with generous hearts.
Remember that we are all one in Christ and seek unity with your brothers and sisters.
Seek out the meek and marginalized and lift them up with joy
and work to restore them to their rightful place as children of the living God.
And in all you do, go with the blessing of God. **Amen.**

D

REV. LUCY YOUNGBLOOD

Brothers and Sisters,
We've worshiped in this place and in this way.
It's now time to worship God in the world.
Pick up love for those we've lost.
Pick up justice, kindness, and humility.
Pick up love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, *Gal. 5:22-26*
goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and (dare I say it) self control.
Let us take Christ's yoke upon us.
It fits easy.
It is gentle and light for the long haul.
Let us walk together, with heads up and side by side,
Looking, not only to Our Devine Creator, but looking ahead and to one another.

May the Grace of Jesus Christ, the Love of God,
and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. **Amen**

E

REV. NICOLE PICKENS

And now, may you put the teachings of your faith into practice –
not for glory, but for love of your neighbors who are vulnerable and oppressed – *Matt. 23:1-12*
finding strength for this work in knowing that
your Divine Parent who created you,
the Spirit who would inspire you,
and the Messiah who teaches you
will empower you for all your life. **Amen.**

F

THE TALMUD

Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief.
Do justice, now.
Love mercy, now.
Walk humbly, now.
You are not obligated to complete the work but neither are you free to abandon it.

G

JOHN LEWIS

Do not get lost in a sea of despair.
Be hopeful, be optimistic.
Our struggle is not the struggle of a day, a week, a month, or a year, it is the struggle of a lifetime.
Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble.

HYMNS

“In Times of Great Decision”

Text: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette
Tune: AURELIA 7.6.7.6 D (“The Church’s One Foundation”)

In times of great decision, be with us, God, we pray!
Give each of us a vision of Jesus' loving way.
When louder words seem endless and other voices sure,
Remind us of your promise: your love and truth endure.

O God, whose gifts are countless, you send us bearing peace.
You fill our dreams with justice for all communities.
You give us global neighbors, that all may justly live.
May those we choose as leaders reflect the life you give.

O God, you bridged the distance; you opened wide your door.
You call us by our presence to reach to serve the poor.
You teach us: Welcome strangers! Seek justice on the earth!
May those we choose as leaders see every person's worth.

You call on every nation to put aside all greed,
To care for your creation and for your ones in need,
To care for those in prison, for children, for the ill.
In times of great decision, may we choose leaders well.

“How Can It Be?”

Text: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette
Tune: O QUANTA QUALIA 11.11.11.11 (“God of Compassion, in Mercy Befriend Us”)

How can it be, that the wicked ones prosper? How can it be, that the greedy ones thrive?
How can it be, that oppression and anger Hold such control, while the poor just survive?

Old ways of selfishness, old ways of sinning, Old ways of apathy seem to go on.
Old angry patterns still seem to be winning, Old fears and prejudice shadow the dawn.

Prophets proclaim it in times of despairing, Pushing toward justice while others destroy.
Precious the gift! And it's ours for the sharing! Precious is Christ, who brings hope, giving joy.

Evil may prosper, but God's love is stronger. Everyone, some day, will know this is true:
Envy and strife will not win any longer. Eternal God, all our hope is in you!

Though hope is hidden now, God changes nations. God brings the powerful down to their knees.
God sets a table of great celebration. God sent us Jesus who welcomes and frees.

Check out the rest of Carolyn Winfrey Gillette’s hymn at https://www.carolynshymns.com

“O God, We Thank You For This Land”

Text: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette
Tune: MELITA 8.8.8.8.8.8 (“Eternal Father, Strong to Save”)

O God, we thank you for this land and for the good on which we stand:
for people down through history who sought to make us kind and free,
for immigrants from every place who built this land with strength and grace.

We thank you, God, for people here who work to counter hate and fear;
who work for justice for the poor; who seek to bring an end to war;
who love the water, land and air and work for your creation's care.

We thank you, too, for those who pause to see and challenge unjust laws;
for those whose vision leads the way to bring a gentler, nobler day;
for those who answer your great call to value, love and welcome all.

As we give thanks for this our land, may we, with others, take a stand:
May we a justice-vigil keep, and never let our conscience sleep;
For silence is complicity, and all are bound till all are free.

“Eternal Parent, Mother God”

Text: Stephen M. Fearing
Tune: MELITA 8.8.8.8.8.8 (“Eternal Father, Strong to Save”)

Eternal Parent, Mother-God, who birthed the people we’ve outlawed,
forgive our foolish, fearful ways, and to the migrant turn our gaze.
O hear us when we cry to thee for desperate families forced to flee.

O Savior, cruelly crucified, you see your rule of love denied.
Born on the run, a migrant child, escaping from a tyrant wild.
O hear us when we cry to thee for desperate families forced to flee.

O Holy Spirit, truth divine, help us to follow your design;
where parents find a safer space, and racist rulers cease their chase.
O hear us when we cry to thee for desperate families forced to flee.

O Trinity, the Holy Dance, help us your mercy to advance.
When fear-full voices roar and rage, we’ll usher in a kinder age.
O hear us when we cry to thee for desperate families forced to flee.

“God Help the Politicians”

Text: Stephen M. Fearing
Tune: AURELIA 7.6.7.6 D (“The Church’s One Foundation”)

God, help the politicians who govern far and near,
from small towns to the cities, may justice persevere.
May each speak words of kindness and have humility,
and do their work with honor and with civility.

May they make just decisions based off what’s true and right,
Let words of wisdom flow out of every bill they write.
And may they work together to serve the common good
to help us live together and do the things we should.

God, we are so frustrated with all that’s taken place,
We struggle to have hope when we see so much disgrace.
Help us to fix what’s broken; make us courageous, too.
And may your people trust in the truth we find in you.

Legality and justice are not always the same,
So help the politicians make righteousness their aim.
Renew our love for mercy; may truth inform our laws,
and help our public servants to serve the common cause.

“The Lord, the Stronghold of Our Life” (Psalm 27 Paraphrase)

Text: Stephen M. Fearing
Tune: ELLACOMBE 8.6.8.6 D (“I Sing the Mighty Power of God”)

The Lord, the stronghold of our life, removes our cause for fear.
God shelters us in troubled times and saves when strife is near.
When light is dim and hope is thin we listen for God’s Word.
Our trust is found, God’s grace is sound, we sing and praise the Lord!

One thing I ask, to seek your home and dwell forevermore.
There beauty lives and comfort gives; your temple I adore.
Upon this place you show your face and fill my heart with mirth.
This song I’ll sing as my God brings each day a new rebirth.

The reason for my strong desire to have you make me whole
Is all around me evil things that test this wearied soul.
The armies shout, their taunts cry out, their threats against me stand,
But by your word, my prayer you’ve heard, they fall at your command.

Be strong, take heart, for God is good and goodness shall prevail.
Our hope is in the Lord, our Light, and God will never fail.
God’s love is pure, our faith is sure, with courage we live on
For we will stand on living land with God, our hopeful song.

Eternal Parent, Mother God

A Hymn of Lament and Hope

Text: Stephen M. Fearing, 2019

Tune: MELITA

Meter: 8.8.8.8.8.8

Music: John Bacchus Dykes, 1861



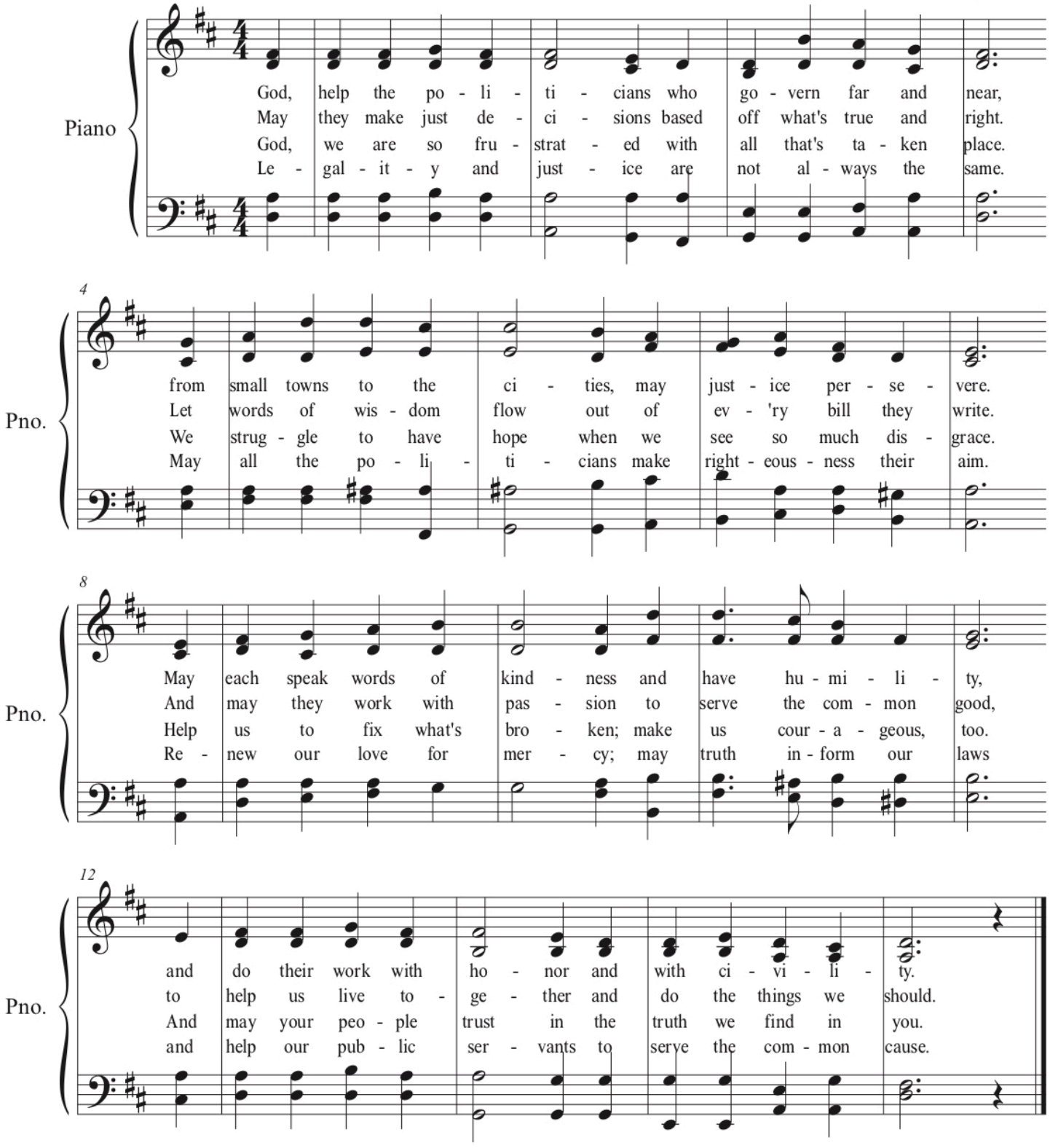
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God, Help the Politicians

A Hymn for Times of Political Turmoil

Text: Stephen M. Fearing, 2018 Tune: AURELIA

Meter: 7.6.7.6 D Music: Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1864



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The Lord, the Stronghold of Our Life

Paraphrase of Psalm 27

Stephen M. Fearing, 2014

Dedicated to my dear friend and mentor, Michael Morgan,
who instilled in my a love and wonder of the art of Psalm paraphrasing.

ELLACOMBE, 1784



OTHER RESOURCES

RITUAL OF IMAGINING

REV. DR. ROCHELLE A. STACKHOUSE
FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

When we teach a child to ride a bike, we tell them that the direction they look is the direction the bike will go. In this ritual, we call on one another to attend to the direction we are looking as we imagine the future, knowing that, with the help of God, we will move our bodies, brains, hearts, and spirits, to flow in that direction.

1. Choose one word that encompasses what you hope the world is like in the next 10 years. It might be a word about your life, your church's life, your family's life, your country's life, or about the whole world. Be as specific as possible.
2. Write that word in the center of a piece of paper. Now draw 5-8 circles on the page, like thought bubbles, around the word.
3. Seek first the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Then, inside the circles, write or draw what you imagine will lead to that hope becoming reality. Again, be as specific as possible.
4. Now start with any circle and place your hand on the word or picture you chose to represent an imagined step on the way to your hope. Repeat the word to yourself, or trace the drawing with your fingers, three times. Then be silent for a moment to listen for God's leading as you discern your part in moving to your hope.
5. When you have gone around to each circle, then place your hand in the middle, on the word that represents your hope, and do the same thing.
6. Finally, hold the paper in your hands and offer it to God with these words: *God of hope, lead me on the right path, find me the fitting task, give me the willing spirit, draw me to the right companions, no matter what tomorrow brings. Amen.*

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

REV. KARIE ANN CHARLTON
THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

Today, as we gather around this table,
we are untied with all who believe in Christ,
with all of the saints and sinners who have gone before us,
and with all of the saints and sinners we will not meet in this lifetime.
We are united with all believers in every time and place.
Christ welcomes all of us.
As we prepare to celebrate this meal, let us take a moment to remember who is here with us.
There is a short tax collector at this table and a woman singled out for a partnered crime.
And with them are all of those who shunned and scorned them to hide their own sins.
At the table are all of us who have clenched rocks in our fists
and finally decided to drop them instead hurling more injury and injustice into the world.

Around this table are holy people who were imperfect and made mistakes
and yet found in Christ freedom from sin and death
and went on to do God's work in the world.
At this table we are surrounded by our enemies and our loved ones.
And as we look into the face of each child of God,
we realize that the things that divided us on this earthly world do not matter,
there are no barriers between us,
there are no harsh words or hatefulness,
but only love and unity among the children of God.
This meal is a foretaste of the coming kingdom of God,
where true justice restores us to one another, and where love unites us.

PSALM FOR ELECTION

REV. EVELYN WHEELER

God who created all things, out of no thing,
who created order and connection
Where is your word and your creative power now,
when we are so conflicted?
Everything now is overturned,
everything is out of place, unstable, lost.
My ears are filled with my own thoughts
with the sounds of self drowning the voice of God.
Where is the music of other songs
the songs of other people?
where is the music of God?
Where are the voices we have let be silenced,
the voices we have silenced?
Have we lost our way?
have we lost your grace?
We feel like boats unmoored in a raging flood
like birds blown into the ocean by a mighty storm.
Bereft, lost, anxious and frightened,
we turn and turn in circles, seeking you, seeking guidance
seeking solace and hope.
For you, and you alone, have always been with us,
you, and you alone, have walked the road of darkness with us.
You, and you alone, have made whole things broken,
you, and you alone have made and remade creation.
When your Spirit moved over the face of the waters,
and life, life, life
took first breath.
You, and you alone, are the One we need now,
Come, Lord, come to your people,

We who cry now for your presence,
We who seek your voice.
And when we hear it, we will praise you,
we will sing songs of joy and deliverance.
We will sing songs of new creation,
songs of healing and renewal.
Yea, come Lord, come.
And we will sing our alleluias.