



Search Me, O God
Lent 2024
Wesley Monumental UMC

**Search me, O God,
And know my heart;
Test me and know my thoughts.
See if there is any
wicked way in me.
And lead me in the way
everlasting.
Psalm 139:23-24**

Cover photo by the late Denise Hughes.
Easter Sunrise at Tybee Island Pavilion.
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Forward

Some of us mistakenly think genuine prayer should be spontaneous and extemporaneous or led by the Spirit, but the spiritual practice of writing prayers is at least as old as the Psalms. I can only imagine that David's creation of the Shepherd's Psalm (23) was crafted during repeated days of watching his father's sheep and placing himself in God's presence. I doubt he could have imagined that it would still be prayed thousands of times a day all over the world.

Writing prayers is a way of loving God with our mind,
making prayer an intentional
thoughtful reflection on God, ourselves,
and the intersection of our lives.

For almost ten years our prayer lives have been enriched in worship as Carolyn Cubbedge leads us into God's presence with her deeply thoughtful and beautiful prayers. It is with deep gratitude to Carolyn that I look forward to the Lenten discipline of meditating on these prayers and allowing them to lead me into God's presence where God's grace can search my heart and lead me in the way everlasting.

Rev. Dr. Ben Martin
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Lent 2024

The prayers included in *Search Me, O God*, are adapted from Morning Prayers written for Wesley Monumental United Methodist Church from 2014 to the present.

It is my belief that prayers used in corporate worship should reflect the heart of the people who gather as a Faith Community. These prayers begin with praise and thanksgiving and always include a strong element of confession.

Confession plays a significant role during Lent as we prepare our hearts for the Crucifixion and the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. During this time, we are called to a time of reflection, introspection and confession as we focus on our relationship with Jesus.

My prayer for the reader is that these words will serve as a means of discernment that will lead to the recognition of our sins, the confession of those sins, and the joy of receiving forgiveness by the God who loved us so much that He gave his only Son to die for the remission of our sins.

May it be so.

Rev. Carolyn Hale Cubbedge
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Wesley Monumental UMC
Savannah, Georgia

Lent 2024

Wednesday, February 14, 2024
Ash Wednesday

God of our Salvation,
We approach You as people who need to be reminded
of your great love for us and of the sacrifice made through Jesus
Christ for the remission of our sins.

Today we begin our observance of Lent which will lead us through a
time of penitence as we focus on our mortality and sinfulness and
deep need of You.

We confess that we do not want to be seen as needy.
We want to be seen as strong and in charge.
We want to be seen as wise and capable of all things.
We want to be seen as all-sufficient and able to make it on our own.

Forgive us Lord, for being foolish:
For setting ourselves up as idols to be admired,
For desiring the best seat at the table,
For always wanted to do things our own way.

During this season of Lent, would You help us to do away with all
notions that we are more than we are, that we are more deserving
than we are, that we are less needy of you?

Would you draw our attention to the truth that without You we are
nothing and that You are the source of all our being, and knowing
and doing.

Lead us through this Lenten journey to turn from ourselves and to
hold fast to You.

May we be faithful to journey with You as You move
to the Cross.

May we not deny You along the way.

May we willingly bear witness to your great love for
us and all the people of the earth.

For it is in His name that we pray. Amen

Thursday, February 15, 2024

Loving God, creator of all things, even Love itself,
We approach You in sheer wonder of your love for us.
You taught us that loving one another was next to loving You.
You showed us your love in Jesus Christ.
Jesus showed us how to love one another,
 loving us when we are unlovable,
 loving us in spite of ourselves,
 loving us just because it is your nature to love.

Thank you.
 From the depths of our hearts we feel your love.
 We see the fruits of your love.
 We know what it is to be the recipients of your love.

We confess that often we are loveless.
 Our selfishness exceeds our desire to share.
 Our pride prevents our extending forgiveness.
 Our sin stands in the way of reflecting your love to
 those who need it most.

Forgive us, Lord, for we have sinned by being indifferent to the
 needs of those You told us to love as You have loved us.
Hear our prayers as we pray for one another.
God, would you strengthen us as a family of faith that chooses
 to be in community with one another and with You?
As we lean on each other, will You sustain us?
As we learn from each other, will You be our source of all
 knowledge?
As we love one another, would You shine your love through us
 to all the world?

We pray in the name of the One who is Love. Amen.

Friday, February 16, 2024

Gracious and Loving God,
Maker of Heaven and Earth and all that dwells therein,
We praise You for who You are, for all that You do,
 especially for the way You love us no matter what.
We have not earned your love.
We do not deserve its depth.
But we are humbled by it, and we give You thanks.

We are on a journey Lord.
Sometimes that involves us reading your Word.
We confess that we are amazed as we learn that many biblical
figures are just like us:
 promising much and delivering little,
 concerned about ourselves and not others,
 greedy, and jealous, and dishonest, and seeking our
 own way.

But just as you did for those of old,
You love us and are redeeming us for your kingdom's work.
How grateful we are for your love that saves us and sets us
 free; that calls us from where we were and takes us
 to where we ought to be; that prods, and leads, and
 redirects, and never gives up.
Thank you, God, for the sacrifice of Jesus and the guiding of
the Holy Spirit.

We pray for our world. There is so much need:
 so much poverty and hunger,
 so much anger and hate,
 so much tragedy and war.
Lord place your healing hand upon our world.
 From its chaos, bring order.
 From its darkness, bring light.
 From its lostness, bring salvation.

May we learn to rely fully on You and your will for us.
Bring us close to You.
Amen

Saturday, February 17, 2024

God of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow,
We give You thanks for today as we are called to remember
those who have gone before us into your eternal glory.
We have been blessed by their lives and time among us.
Because they lived and bore witness to your love,
we too know the love of Jesus and His saving grace for us.
May their witness live on in us so that future generations will
know You, too.

May your continued presence through the work of the Holy Spirit
comfort all who mourn, strengthen them with courage,
grant them peace, and guide them with wisdom.

Today, we are bombarded with troubling news—
School bus accidents, senseless shootings,
political rhetoric that does little to truthfully inform the
people.
Lord, we long for the days
when our children were safe on the highways and in our
schools,
when our outings carried no threats of danger,
when we trusted what we heard and worked together for
each other.

We confess that when we look at the world around us, we want to
blame others for all that needs mending,
And yet, if we are really honest, we know that we all need to do a
better job of caring for all that you have entrusted to us:
each other,
our institutions,
our country,
our world.

Lord, forgive us where we have sinned, and help us to do better
in all things.

Lord, we praise You for being the God of all time—
Of our past, of our present, and of our future.
May we follow You, knowing that the God who has brought us to
this time and place is the God who leads us still.

Amen

Sunday, February 18, 2024

Gracious and most merciful God,
It is Sunday, and in our community of believers in worship, we feel
your presence among us.
And we are truly grateful.
Grateful for companions on our faith journey.
Grateful for moments of reflection and wisdom and truth.
Grateful for open hearts who welcome us as we come and love us
anyway.
Grateful that it is your undying love for us that brings us
together as Christ-followers.

We confess that if we are honest,
we will drop pretenses in search of honesty,
independence in search of community,
pride in search of humility,
human frailty in search of Christ-likeness.
We confess that we fall short of what You want for us to be.
And yet, even in our failures, You are faithful and just to
forgive us our sins and to cleanse us of all
unrighteousness.
Forgive us Lord, for we have sinned and come short of the glory of
God.

Lord, we long to live as forgiven people.
People who understand what it means to mess up and to
be cleaned up.
People who are willing to forgive because we have been
forgiven.
People who offer redemption because we have been redeemed.

We long for the Holy Spirit to move into us, and to work within us
and through us, in such a way that all that flows out of us will be
acceptable in your sight.
We long for all there is of us to be full of You.
And when we become too comfortable and complacent, would you
stir us up to be more attentive and responsive to your
living and moving among us.

Amen

Monday, February 19, 2024

God of all Creation,
whose Word spoke into being all the peoples
of the earth,
whose Son died to save us all from our sins,
whose Spirit moves and works among us all,
We praise You for your power and love and call on our lives.

We offer our thanks for your goodness to us,
for your provisions for life,
for our lives made whole in You.
But even as we rejoice in all that is ours,
we acknowledge that there are many who do
without adequate food, shelter and
healthcare,
there are many whose freedoms are diminished by
tyrants and war,
there are many whose futures have no hope.
If we truly believe that You have come to give us abundant life,
then we must confess that there is work for us to do to
share that abundant life with those who have no hope.
Open our hearts to love as You love,
to give as You give,
to share the gospel of peace.

We pray for your moving among us, that we will become
vessels of your Spirit,
instruments of your bidding,
channels of your blessings.

May we work together to share your saving grace.
Thank you for the privilege of prayer.

Amen

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

In your good time, O God, You have given us another day of life
which we will fill with much that has little to do with You.

We confess that often our attention is not very focused.
We have scattered minds, and scattered lives, and scattered
loyalties.

We allow too many plans, and too many worries, and too many
obligations to confound our lives and direct our
priorities.

Forgive us, Lord, for taking our eyes off You,
tuning our ears to other voices, and
following the dictates of our own hearts.

Redirect our focus that we might see You, and hear You,
And follow You.

Nearly all of us have much for which to be grateful:

Family and friends,
Home and work,
Shelter and clothing,
Money to spend and,
Life to live.

And we know that there are many who have very different
things:

Loneliness, Homelessness,
Unemployment, Poverty and Illness.

Lord, we lift them to You asking for Your abundance to
flow to them. Help us risk letting that abundance
flow through us to them.

May we be their friends, and their shelter, and their
employers, their healing and their provision.

Woo us, mold us, use us, we pray.

May we be wholly yours.

Amen

Wednesday, February 21, 2024

God of Peace,
We approach You as people who need and want to
be people of peace.
We confess that we often fall short of living peaceably with all.
Sometimes our efforts to be peacemakers are rejected by those
with whom we seek to be at peace.
Sometimes we miss opportunities for peacemaking because we
are not attuned to situations that are not peaceful.
And sometimes, O God, we are not peacemakers because we
intentionally chose not to be.

Forgive us when we fail.
Increase our awareness of opportunities for peace.
Make us instruments of your peace.

We lift
Those who grieve the loss loved ones.
Those who grieve the loss of security,
Those who grieve the loss of beauty,
Those who grieve the loss of the peace that was theirs.
We lift up their troubled hearts and minds.
Give comfort to those who mourn.
Lead the way to recovery.
Turn their eyes toward the spring when green will
again appear upon the earth.
May they find your peace in the midst of the pieces of their
lives.

In the name of Jesus, who brings wholeness, we pray,
Amen

Thursday, February 22, 2024

God, as we prepare for Easter, dare we remember
Christmas?

When we waited like wide-eyed children?

When we experienced your peace?

When we received Your gift that is more precious
than gold?

Our Advent focus was on You.

But we confess that our Lenten focus has a whole lot to do
with our focus on ourselves, for we would attend to
our sinfulness and failures that come between us
and You.

We need such a focus that we might confess our sins before
You.

But we also need a strong sense of your forgiveness
that will bring us closer to You.

Help us to know that Lent like Advent is not
about us but about You.

Not about what we are about to get, but about what you are
about to give.

Not about receiving but about the fulfilling of your
covenant of love.

We wait in a world that needs You.

We wait in a world that needs us to be faithful to You.

We wait in a world that needs us to be faithful to all
the peoples of the earth.

May our lives bear faithful testimony to your great love for
us and all the world you came to save.

Thank you for the faithful witness of those who
came before us,

Who walked with You and learned from You.

May we be like them.

Amen

Friday, February 23, 2024

God of all Hope,
We confess that there is a lot on our minds and hearts.
 We are unsure about the world in which we live.
 We are unsure about the future of our nation.
 We are unsure about the future of our families.
 We are unsure about the future of our health.
 It is the uncertainty that gets us.

Lord, we are just unsure, and we need a new found passion for
 the Hope You have given to us in Jesus Christ.
In the midst of uncertainty, we long for the certainty of
 Hope.

We are reminded that Hope is not wishful thinking. .
It does not come from within as we try to figure it all out
 for ourselves.
It does not come from big boxes wrapped in beautiful
 paper and tied with big bows.
But Hope is a gift.
A gift from you.
To your people.

Your Hope is a sure and steadfast anchor for our souls.
Your promises have been fulfilled down through the ages.
Just as You have been found faithful in the past,
so You are faithful today.

Your Hope calls us to be faithful in seeking You, in following
 You, and in serving You.
Bless the hungry, and move us to set another plate at our tables,
Heal the sick, and help us fix our broken healthcare system.
Fill lonely hearts, and teach us to be a friend.
Restore the disheartened, and cause us to open our hearts to them.
For those with no hope, we share the Hope we know in You.
Help us to be faithful just as You are faithful.
Amen

Saturday, February 24, 2024

Almighty God, it is good to know that you are the beginning and the end of all that is.

Alpha God,

You were there when the world was created from nothing but your spoken word. We know You are Word.

You were there when the breath of life was breathed into our bodies. We know You are Life.

You were there when the light was separated from the darkness. We know You are Light.

You were there when you entered into a relationship with your creation. We know You are Love.

We confess that through our own failures, we have tarnished your beautiful creation,

We fail to speak the truth of your Word.

We fail to share life with those who are dying.

We fail to shine your light in the darkness.

We fail to love as You have loved us.

Forgive us Lord. We would be more like You:

speaking your truth.

allowing your Spirit to flow through us,

shining your light in the darkness,

loving because You love us.

Omega God,

We fear the uncertainty of the days that lie before us,
but we know You hold those days in your hands.

We dread the threats and trauma that surround us,
but we know that You are the Prince of Peace.

We walk on paths of the unknown,
but we know that it is your Spirit that guides our feet.

Lord, we believe. Help our unbelief.

Just as You were the beginning Word, we know that you will be the last Word. Alpha **and** Omega. May we walk with You, wherever you lead, whenever You go, doing whatever You choose.

Amen

Sunday, February 25, 2024

We are here again, Lord, at the beginning of a new week.

We have come for many reasons:

to praise you,

to give you thanks for your goodness.

Sometimes we come to just make ourselves feel
better about our own lives.

Regardless of why we have come, we ask that You
will use this hour of worship to draw us closer
to You and your will for our lives.

When we look for answers and reason, we are
called to confess that that even on our best
days, we seek our own ways and not your way.

Forgive us Father, for we have sinned.

Remold us and make us anew in your image that We might be
more like You:

Loving our neighbor as we love our selves,

Loving our enemies as You love them,

Loving You for Who You are and not for what You
can do for us.

Healing and Redeeming God,

We lift to You

those whose lives are crippled by sickness,

those whose relationships are broken,

those whose dreams are shattered.

Be known to them through your healing grace and peace.

Generous God,

Receive our thanks for all that is ours.

Grow us into the followers of Christ You long for us to be.

Amen

Monday, February 26, 2024

God of all Ages, Places and People,
We come to You as people of the here and now
 who stand in a long line of the faithful who have worshipped
 and served you through all the ages of time.
We are grateful that we have been called to be your people and
 stand in such a line of faithful servants.

We are grateful that You are not anchored to time and space,
 nor are You subject to our expectations and whims about
 how our lives ought to be lived out today;
But You know us, far better than we know ourselves, and
 You have planned for us all the days of our lives.

Like those of old, we can claim that Your steadfast love never
 ceases, Your mercies never come to an end; They are new
 every morning,

The hymn writer's words echo that assurance:
 Great is thy faithfulness, O God our Father,
 There is no shadow of turning with Thee.
 Thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not,
 As thou hast been, thou forever shall be.
 Great is thy faithfulness
 Morning by morning new mercies I see.
 All I have needed, Thy hand hath provided;
 Great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me.

Even so, we do confess that change is sometimes hard for us:
 New people and places,
 New jobs and expectations,
 New responsibilities and challenges,
 Loss of familiarity and comfort,
 Loss of skills and direction,
 Loss of title and power.

Teach us not to fear but to rest all of our days in You.
Change us for the better. Change us for the sake of our world today.
Change us for our own sake. Change us for the sake of your
kingdom here on earth.
Amen

Tuesday, February 27, 2024

Creator God, who formed us from dirt,
and gave your son Jesus to cleanse us from our sins,
We are ever aware that it is the redeeming work of Jesus that has
saved us from our sins and cleansed us from all unrighteousness.
Your love draws us into relationship with You.
Your Word teaches us that You are the Way, the Truth
and the Life.
And Your Spirit guides us to walk in your ways.
Thank You for your saving grace and mercy that makes our
salvation possible.

Thank you for the work of the Holy Spirit that convicts us of our
sin, helps us discern your leading, and walks with us along the
way.

Lord, if we are honest with ourselves and with You, we must
acknowledge that though we have put our faith and trust in Jesus
as Lord of life, we find ourselves always in need of conversion,
for our lives are filled with thoughts and actions that are not
pleasing in your sight.

Would You take our unkind words and deeds and turn
them into gracious words and deeds?

Would You take our selfish thoughts and attitudes and
turn them outward to those who need affirmation
and encouragement?

Would You take our sinful selves and forgive us when we
fail to be the children you want for us to be?

Would You take all of us—our hearts and minds and
wills—and use them to further your kingdom here
on earth?

And we pray for us that we may be sources of healing, and
friendship, homes and jobs, hope and help, and discernment and
encouragement. Make us all we need to be for You and for oth-
ers.

Wednesday, February 28, 2024

God of all time and space,
Creator and Sustainer and Comforter,
We confess that it is frightening Lord, to witness the days of our
lives.

There is so much that is in need of repair or replacement
after storms.

There is fear of earthquakes or wildfires.

There are threats to peace in our streets and in the air.

There is need for the redemption of your creation.

We confess that we can easily be caught up in our fears and
forget that over and over again in your Word You have told us to not
be afraid

of what we have experienced,

of what we are facing,

of what we are dreading,

of what we do not know.

Often, we just see our lives in the aftermaths and in the what-ifs.

Forgive us Lord, for fearing and not trusting.

Help us to claim the comfort of your presence,

For before there were hurricanes, or earthquakes, or fires, or wars,

there was You--Not an afterthought or a Plan B:

the One who was there in the beginning,

who goes before us wherever we go,

who promised to be with us always—even to the end of time.

Lord, we ask that you would enable us
to cast aside our fears in favor of your promise to sustain us,
to feel your comfort in the uneasiness that we experience,
to seek your guidance in our attempts to right all that is
wrong.

And in the midst of all that troubles us,
Help us to remember that even in these days,
We find our hope in You.

Amen

Thursday, February 29, 2024

All-knowing God,
We are grateful for the gift of the Holy Spirit
which You promised and delivered when You ascended
into heaven.

What a gift that not only provides us comfort and strength but
also that gives us discernment and guidance.

Maybe more than all else, we stand in need of discernment and
guidance

as individuals,
as a small part of your Church,
as a nation,
as your world.

We see disrespect on many levels and long for right
relationships

between parents and children,
between neighbors,
between citizens and their government,
between the governments of this world.

We witness intolerance at every turn and long for understanding
When ideas and opinions are different and
When cultures and races clash.

We decry harm inflicted on men and women and their children
by those who would do them no good.

We wish we knew how to fix all of the troubles
experienced by all of the people, all over the world.

Lord, help us to know what to do and how to do it.

We long for a world that knows You and the peace that only
You can give.

May all that we say and do point them to the Christ who is the
way, the truth, and the life.

May we follow your leading in all things as we seek your
guidance.

Amen

Friday, March 1, 2024

Today, O God, we are overwhelmed by the lack of
peace in our world.

We confess Father that we struggle with your Word which so
pointedly tells us "To love our enemies and to pray for
those who persecute us."

Lord, do you really mean that you want us to pray for extremists
who commit horrendous acts of violence on innocent
people?

Lord, do you really want us to lift them up as your children who
are in need of Your care?

Lord, is this what You meant when you said for us to love one
another as You have loved us?

Forgive us Father for even having to ask these questions:
For of course, that is exactly what You mean.

And so Father, we lift up those we call our enemies.

We pray that You will endow them with wisdom and loving
hearts for all your people everywhere.

We don't know how You would do that or what it would look
like, but we ask that You do it anyway.

We lift up those whose duty it is to uphold the law and
maintain order.

We ask that You would meet their needs and calm their
fears.

Will you bless them and sustain them as only You know
fit.

We lift up families of our enemies.

We are pretty sure that parents and children of all people hurt for
their own and weep for their children.

Will you move among them, comfort them in their need.

Move in their lives, and Draw them to You and your great
love for them.

God of peace, we ask for understanding.

Give us minds to know your will,

Hearts to love our enemies,

Wills to be instruments of your peace.

Amen

Saturday, March 2, 2024

God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,
Sarah, Rebecca and Rachel,
We remember
From whence we came,
Whose we are.
And whom we serve.

Father God, whose son Jesus is our Savior and Lord,
We give thanks for your Messiah who lives and reigns with You.
You love us, and You call us to love You and one another.
You have been faithful to us, and You call us to be faithful
to You.
You have blessed us beyond measure, and You call us to
be a blessing to others.

You call us as individuals, and You call us as a community of
faith.
Reach deep into our hearts and quicken our desire to
follow.
Enable our spirits to commune with your Spirit,
Mold our wills into your liking.

Forgive us when we fail to be all that you want us to be:
When we stray from your way and make paths of our own,
When we depend on ourselves too much and not enough
on You.

Receive our gratitude for your goodness, and provision and love,
Make us ever mindful that all that we have and are or every hope
to be is from You.

We lift to You those who need a strong sense of your presence in
their lives:
Be in their sickness and in their healing,
And in their dying and in our grieving,
And in their seeking and in their understanding.
Help us to see You in all things—no matter what.

Amen

March 3, 2024
Third Sunday of Lent

Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer of all that is,
We are humbled to be in your presence and in the company of
your children everywhere who have gathered to
worship You.

When we worship, we need to be reminded that our presence
here is about You and not about us.

In the midst of all that is good, we know that we live in a world
that is broken and hurting in many ways.

Violence kills.

Storms destroy.

Christians are free to believe, and Christians are
persecuted because of their beliefs.

This world is so filled with dichotomies, and
contradictions, and paradoxes.

Sometimes it is just so hard to understand why life is
the way it is and not the way you intended it to be when
You declared that all of your creation was good.

Gracious God, forgive us for any part we have played in
destroying that which You made good as we confess that we
have been poor stewards of the earth.

We have hated instead of loving.

We have hoarded instead of sharing.

We are guilty of harming instead of helping.

Forgive us Father, for we have sinned--over and over again.

Fill us anew with a great sense of your working in our lives.

May our deeds be deeds You would do,

May our words be words You would speak,

May our thoughts be thoughts You would think.

Amen

Monday, March 4, 2024

O Holy God,
All knowing, forever present and eternal,
Only You, and You alone, are worthy of our praise.
May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts
be acceptable in your sight.

We give You thanks for this day of life, for indeed it is a gift
from You.
We give You thanks for health, and pray for those who are ill.
We give You thanks for provision of food and clothing and so
many comforts we do not deserve.
Make us truly grateful for these and all your many blessings.

As people of much, we confess that
we are often ungrateful,
we are often greedy,
we are often stingy.
Forgive us for hoarding that which You have given to us.

Teach us to see the needs around us:
to respond to those needs with grateful hearts,
to see our responsibility to share and care
for one another,
for the stranger among us,
for the down and out,
for the different and the same.
May we do so in the here and the now,
and for the future everywhere.

Teach us your ways.
Renew our commitments to You and
Strengthen our resolve to share your good news with those who
need to hear it that they may respond and be saved.

Amen

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

We stand amazed at the depth of Your love, and we wonder
“How can that be?”
We are not very loveable.

It only takes a political election to show us at our very worst.
We focus on the bad about those who run.
We demonize the opponent and turn a blind eye to the evils of
our own candidate.
We degrade our own acquaintances who disagree with us.
Seems we can only support our candidates by villainizing the
other along with his or her followers.
We have lost the ability to disagree agreeably.
We have allowed reason to give way to unfettered passion.
We fail to test the truth of our words, and we speak out of
ignorance.
Forgive us Lord, for our sins are many.

Lord, is it possible for us, who call ourselves Christian, to be
better citizens of our nation?
Can we listen with ears that will hear words of hope for our
nation and other nations of the world?
Can we speak with words that build up and not tear down?
Can we open our hearts to our neighbors with compassion and
understanding?

Can our conversations and our Facebook posts and our tweets and
our Instagram pictures reflect concern and not disdain
for each other.
Sometimes we need to be reminded that our Christian witness is
seen in all that we do and say and post.
Lord, in your mercy, help us do better.

O God, most Holy, embed in our every word and action the
responsibility we have for being the Christians that will bring
even our most dangerous enemies into a saving relationship with
You—for we must acknowledge that You love them just as much
as You love us.

Amen

Wednesday, March 6, 2024

Mighty God, who parted the waters for the Hebrews,
Who calmed the sea from inside the boat,
Who led the shepherd beside still waters,
We praise you.

Some of us experience sunny days while others tread
the waters of storms.
Some of us are fortunate while others receive devastation.
We confess that we wonder why some suffer while others do not.
Our hearts hurt for those who do, and we yearn to do something
that will make a difference for them.

We begin and continue with our prayers for them:
For those who suffer and mourn,
For those who respond,
For those who make tough decisions.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

As we pray, we also focus on the resources that we have that can
be useful: our money, our stuff, our blood donations,
our grocery carts filled with staples and necessities.
Lord, in your mercy, use what we have to offer.

As we pray, and as we give, we give thanks to You for your
constant presence. We know that You did not target precious
people for destruction. You are not trying to punish anyone for
their deeds. You are not indifferent to the ways that nature be-
haves and the destruction it sometimes brings.
Lord, in your mercy, forgive us if we try to blame You.

And Lord, while we do not want to blame You, we do trust that
you will make things right again.
Calm the waters and frightened hearts.
Restore hope to those who have lost everything.
Give strength to those who are barely holding on and to
those who are holding the ropes for others.
May good sense prevail as we all work together for the
good that comes from You.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers. Amen

Thursday, March 7, 2024

God of Joy,
We give you thanks for Jesus, whose birth, life and death give
cause for worship.
Seems like our deepest joy sets in as we prepare for and celebrate
Christmas.
But could it be that we also find deep joy as we prepare for the
Cross?

We confess there was giddiness among us as we enjoyed parties,
and dinners, children's plays and wonderful music.
But that giddiness is not the heart of the Joy we know.
We confess that there were visions of perfect holiday gatherings
with family and friends. But this longed-for perfection is
not the heart of the Joy we know.
We confess that there was pleasure in beautiful decorations and
sparkling lights, but this perfection is not the heart of the
Joy we know.
While we enjoyed that which was giddy, and planned for
perfection, and took pleasure in our own creations, we
know that nothing we can do will match the Joy made
known to us by the birth of Jesus who was born to die for
us.

We can never thank you enough for sending Jesus into our dark
and sinful world
to save us from our sins,
to give our lives meaning,
to give our doing purpose and direction.

In the days that remain until we celebrate your Resurrection, we
ask that you will cause us to open our hearts to receive a
deeper understanding of your Joy.
Deepen our desire to share your Joy with our world that needs to
know your love.
Will you once again startle us with Joy to the World.

Amen

Friday, March 8, 2024

Holy Spirit God,
We would like to think that we can do all things all by ourselves,
but we know differently.

So we must confess that without the work of the Holy Spirit in
our lives, we would flounder in our ways and be far less
than You want for us to be.
Without your comfort, we would drown in our grief.
Without your guidance, we would wander aimlessly in
the darkness of what is a very dark world at times.
Without your correction, we would be getting life wrong
as we live in a life of sin--always in need of
forgiveness and restoration.

Forgive us, Lord, when we think we must always be stoic in the
face on loss and hardship and refuse to accept the comfort of the
Holy Spirit, often made known through our brothers and sisters
in Christ.

Forgive us, Lord, when we try to lean on our own understanding
instead of your wisdom made known by the Holy Spirit.

Forgive us, Lord, when we refuse to acknowledge the sin in our
lives that is revealed by the Holy Spirit.

Forgive us, Father, for we have sinned, again and again.

We are grateful for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Thank You for not
leaving us alone. Guide us as we seek to learn more about the
One we call Helper, Comforter, Guide and Restorer. May we
learn to listen for the movement of your Spirit in our lives.

Come, Lord Jesus. Help us to slow down and not miss You
because we are listening for the wrong things.

Amen

Saturday, March 9, 2024

Creator God,
We give You praise for your creative Word and work in our
world and in our lives.

You have given each of us so much for reasons we do not
understand. We have food to eat, clothes on our backs and shoes
on our feet. We have schools where we learn, churches where we
worship, and platforms from which to speak our minds.

We stand amazed that we are made in your image, with the ability
to learn and reason and love. In so many ways we are alike. But
we are also different.

We do not all look alike. We do not all reason alike.

We do not all like the same thing. We do not all have the
same needs.

We do not all see the same solutions for those needs.

So much around us calls us to remember that all of us have been
created in your image, that all of us are equal in your sight, and
that all of us are equal in the eyes of the law.

We are grateful for equality, but we confess that in our country
we are so divided, so fearful of each other, and so skeptical of
each other in so many ways. Use words and events to speak to us
that we may listen to others with open ears. Grant new understand
of our hearts and new resolve of our wills to work together with
You to make this world like You would have it be.

Give us a strong sense of your leadership.

Help us be faithful in praying for our leaders.

Cause our leaders to seek your face in all that they do.

Guide us to seek the welfare of our neighbor over
our own.

But it is not only for our country that we pray today.

We also pray for your other children in other lands.

May we be faithful to them and their needs.

Hear us when we pray and lead us through the perplexities of life.

Amen

Sunday, March 10, 2024

Most gracious and loving God,
 Maker of Heaven and earth, giver of life and love,
We gather in your presence to praise You for who You are,
 to thank You for your gifts of love and grace.
We are also here to listen for your voice in a world of noise and
 confusion and unrest.
And in that noisy and confused and restless world there is a
need for
 understanding at home,
 peace in the world, and
 actions motivated by justice and love.
Forgive us for failing to be instruments of your peace
 and love,
And move us to live lives of mercy which reflect the
 God we serve.

We are grateful for this gathering of your church
And the ways its members are faithful to
 you through their ministry in the
 world.
And thank You for all the organizations that are
 meeting needs in our community.
Thank you for the opportunity to learn from them and to join
 them in serving.
Lord, we seek to know you more fully,
 to serve you more effectively,
 and to share the Good News of your love more lovingly.

We lift ourselves to you.
Amen

Monday, March 11, 2024

And so it is, O God, that we are always facing something new,
standing at the end of one thing that has become so
familiar,
standing at the threshold of another which has more
unknowns than guarantees.
And we boldly say that we are in need of your presence.
How grateful we are that You are with us.

In your presence we remember:
We remember those days when dreams did come true;
When sickness gave way to healing;
When the loneliness of death gave way to the comfort of
memories;
When darkness gave way to the light of dawn.
We remember more days when the regular routines of life
filled our time;
When it was the familiar and the comfortable that
surrounded us.

And we remember the difficult days that numbly melted
one into the other;
The frustrating days of questions;
The hard days of pain.
We remember these days and we give You
thanks for them.
For we made it through these days, even when we
thought we could not.
And for some of us who have not quite made it through to
the other side, we give you thanks that by your
grace, we have come this far.

Accept our thanks, we pray, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

Holy Spirit, Gift from God,
Your presence among us is truly a gift.
When early believers were together, You descended upon them.
Because your power was poured upon them, your word was
spoken and heard and received.

Just as You worked among the people at Pentecost, You work
among us.
When we sin, You convict us of our sin and draw us
to confession.
When we mourn, You comfort us.
When we stumble in our doing, You give us discernment
and guide us in the ways that we should go.

And so today, we ask that you will convict us of our sin.
Make us aware of all that is not pleasing to You.
Turn our hearts to repentance and forgive us of our sins.

When we are at a loss, when a loved one dies, or a friend
suffers, or relationships break apart, we know that it is the work
of the Spirit that covers us with peace.
Thank you, Holy Comforter.

When there are too many choices to make, and too many
pressures from too many sources, when dreams die,
or a child has lost his way, and we do not know what to do,
we turn to You for discernment and guidance from the Spirit.
Thank You for your leading,

May we allow You to work in us, and through us,
and for the benefit of others who need to hear and
understand and receive your salvation.
We are grateful for the witnesses who were a part of the
Church at Pentecost.
We are grateful for their faithfulness to the Gospel of
Jesus Christ.
May we be like them.

Amen

Wednesday, March 13, 2024

Loving God,
Giver and Sustainer of Life,
We give you thanks for this day and all of its promise:
For the fellowship we share in our community of faith,
For the spiritual nourishment of worship,
For your presence in our lives.

As we give thanks for all the blessings which we have
been given,
And for the ability and the means to help in time of need.
Will you make strong our resolve to help.
Make us quick to action,
steadfast in prayer,
and slow to criticize or complain.

We confess the importance of the stewardship
of our thoughts and actions,
of our time and talents,
of our finances and other resources.

We know that it is our corporate responsibility to give to the work
You are calling us to do.
And we also know that it is our individual responsibility to ensure
that the Church has the means to be your witness in this
community and throughout the world.
Encompass our hearts for wider service to You and the Church.
Harness our energy for actions that speak of your love and grace.
Discipline us to use the finances You have made available to us to
spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
As we pray for your church here, we also pray for those in all
places who worship and honor You and seek to be your
Church.

Hear all of your children everywhere as we pray.

Amen

Thursday, March 14, 2024

God of rejoicing, it is with thanksgiving that we bring our
prayers to you.

You have invited us to let our requests be made known;

You have told us not to worry about anything, and yet

We confess that it is not easy for us not to worry:

We see family members whose lives are broken and
hurting, and we want to do something that will fix
the pain.

We see the violence that threatens the lives of children
and adults and we want weapons off the street.

Not only do we want to replace guns with toys, but also
we want to trade war for peace.

We see the faces of the homeless and the jobless, and we
want economic prosperity that will eliminate all
such need.

We see the results of our own neglect and abuse, and we
look for places to focus our blame.

Forgive us Lord, for we sin when we fail to let our requests be
made known and to leave the worrying to You.

And while we leave the worrying to You, help us to work.

This we pray through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Friday, March 15, 2024

Creator God, who makes all things new,
Thank You for your creative power among us.
Thank You for your Word that spoke us into being.

Remind us that
 we are being loved with an everlasting love,
 we have been created to love You and praise You
 forever,
 we are called to love others as You have loved us.

Your Word is a strong reminder of
 our own shortcomings and unfaithfulness,
 your tenacious love for us, and
 your provisions for new beginning.

Seems like there is always something new going on.
We have to confess that we do not always relish change.
 It scares when we do not know the future.
 We do not like days of uncertainty.
 We much prefer to have a clear-cut blueprint.
Forgive us for wanting to control and not trusting You with our
futures.

Be with us, Lord.
 Open our eyes to new possibilities.
 Open our minds to new knowledge and challenging
 experiences.
 Open our hearts to those new among us who long for
 friendship.

Be is all of our lives—in the living and the dying.
 Fill young families with laughter and awe,
 Fill empty hearts with courage and solace.
 Let your peace which passes all understanding reign anew.

Draw us closer to You.
May You live in and through us.
For the sake of your kingdom and your children everywhere we
pray in Jesus name.
Amen

Saturday, March 16, 2024

Spring is getting close, and it is a great day to celebrate new life.
We praise You for being the Life Giver of us all.

For children, we give You thanks.
For parents we ask your blessing and guidance.
For our church, we ask your moving among us
to cause us to be examples and helpers
these families need in the days ahead
as together we take seriously our responsibility
to lead these children to put their trust in Jesus Christ.

It is a joyous time for most,
yet, we are called to remember that it is not for some.
Some families are without their children:
children who were stillborn,
children who died from disease or illness,
children who died in war,
children who are absent for reasons we do not understand.

Lord, we ask that You will meet them in their loss and grief.
Wipe their tears.
Calm their spirits.
Heal their wounds.
Be their peace that passes all understanding.
They need you Lord. Be thou with them all of their days.

We give you thanks for mothers and fathers,
For grandparents,
For aunts and uncles,
And friends and neighbors who care for us and love us.

Help us always to remember that You are our Parent,
You love us unconditionally, and
You want for us to be in right relationship with You.
Draw us near by your Holy Spirit.
We are your children, and Christ is our brother.

How blessed we are.

Amen

Sunday, March 17, 2024

Loving and merciful God,
We are here again to worship You
by our presence and with our words, our music and
our gifts.

We have also come to fellowship with each other and to be
renewed.

Many of us come with needs that are pretty obvious to all.

We confess that many more come with needs that are only
known to You.

How grateful we are that You are a God
who sees the very deepest and darkest places of
our hearts and who chooses to bring light and life
where we need it most.

Thank You for your healing and renewing ways among us.

We pray for our world, O God.
for nations in despair because of wars
and disease,
for people who are hungry and thirsty
for lack of rain,
for people whose future is filled with
uncertainty and little hope for
peace and safety.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers for them and for us.
Move us to action that will ease their pain and improve their
lives. Shower your great love upon them as only You can do
for your children.

Thank you for loving us enough to send Jesus to save us from
our sins.

Draw us ever closer to You that we might love You more
deeply and serve you more faithfully.

Amen

Monday, March 18, 2024

Loving Lord,

We hear through scripture that

“They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength,
They shall mount up with wings like eagles,
They shall run and not be weary,
They shall walk and not faint.”

(Isaiah 40:31)

We have to confess that sometimes this does not ring true for us.

When we sit by the bedside of a loved one, we do
not feel very strong.

We certainly do not see ourselves flying like mighty
eagles.

Running is out of the question.

We can barely put one foot in front of the other.

Forgive us Lord.

We are still trying to hold on with our own power,
And we are not relying on the strength that You provide.
If we would look higher than the eagles, we would see
You reaching your hand to steady us.

Hold us Lord.

Our grasp is too weak to hold to You.

We have no control, and that is the way it should be.

We can only wait on You.

Fill us with a strong sense of your power in our lives—

While we wait, forever and always.

Amen

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

All seeing, all knowing and all understanding God,
who created us, who has loved and will love
us all of our days even until the day You call
us home to be with You,
We are constantly reminded of the many stages of
life You have in mind for us.

Every time we experience the joy of another child born into
our Family of Faith, along with the child's family, we
joyfully pledge to live out our faith before her so that she too
will profess her faith in Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior.
Lord, cause us to remember with frequency our commitment
to all of the children You have sent our way. And may our
remembering cause us to be faithful to them.

We celebrate birth, and yet we know that all of us are
growing toward our own death and return to you. All too
often we say our earthly farewells to those we love who
have lived very long and full lives in service to You and to
others. We give you thanks for them and the world made
better because of them. May we be like them for as long as
You grant us life.

And what a joy it is to witness the commitment to two who
pledge their love for one another before You and in the
presence of your Church. Just as we do for children, we make
a commitment to them to pray for them and their marriage,
to support them and to love them. What a privilege that is
for us.

Our days are full--sometimes overflowing with joy; some-
times overcome with grief and fear. But always Lord, our
days are held by You. Grow our faith as we lean into your
arms of love.

Amen

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

Creator God,
Maker of Heaven and Earth, and all who dwell therein,
We come before You with gratitude
 for all who have come and gone before us.
When we think about the people whose faith and witness brought
 us to Faith in Jesus Christ, and to this place we call our
 church home, among these we call family,
 we cannot help but be glad and rejoice.

While we rejoice, we also grieve for those we have lost,
Especially those whose deaths are fresh on our hearts.
Our prayer as we remember them is to be like them:
 to be found faithful in our love for each other,
 to be faithful in our witness to Jesus as our Savior,
 to be faithful stewards of our responsibilities in this place,
 to be faithful in our worship and honor of You.
Indeed, may all who come behind us, find us faithful.

For all your children in other places, we pray:
 for those whose lives are filled with weapon-fire, no
 matter the side of the conflict they are on;
 for those whose lives are filled with want but whose
 stomachs are not;
 for those whose lives are lacking in loving relationships
 and whose days are lonely and void.

Hear our prayers as we lift them to You, and stir us to greater
faithfulness as we
 learn peace,
 practice compassion,
 and love as You have loved us.

Amen.

Thursday, March 21, 2024

Eternal God,
Our help in ages past and our hope for years to come,
We are grateful and have praise on our tongues for You every
time we celebrate the anniversary of our church, one
small portion of your Church everywhere.

We are grateful for
your leading that brought Wesley Monumental
into being,
the faithfulness of those who came before us to
the Gospel of Jesus Christ,
the work of the Holy Spirit that has sustained
us to this very day.

We can do nothing but give thanks for the blessings which have
been ours through the years:
for ministers who lived out their calling among us.
for laity who served in every aspect of our church's life,
for those whose who even now have caught the vision
that You have for us in this day and time.

But lest we get wound up in patting ourselves on the back, we
must confess that there have been times when we have been less
than the faithful people You have called us to be.

Sometimes we have doubted when we should
have believed.

Sometimes we have withheld when we should
have given.

Sometimes we have been silent when we should
have raised our voices.

Sometimes we have left it all to the others and
did not do our part.

Forgive us Lord, for we have sinned
against Heaven,
against You and
against one another.

Make us ever aware of our failings, and grow in us hearts that are
receptive to You and each other.

Empower us to serve boldly because of your great love for us.

Amen

Friday, March 22, 2024

Loving and Guiding God,
Who created us with bodies, spirits, and minds,
We give you thanks for the commencement seasons of our lives.

We celebrate with children who complete their first school year,
or their pre-K work, or elementary school or junior high or high school.
We honor college graduates and those who compete for graduate work,
or medical degrees or law degrees. We celebrate technical training and military service and new jobs.

We are grateful for all who have helped and supported along the way:

Parents
Teachers
Friends
Classmates
Ministers
Employers

And most of all, You, O God.

We ask your blessings to all who finish courses of study or work,
and who move on to new commitments and responsibilities.

Be with them in the transitions. Surround them with good people
who have their best interest at heart.

Give them energy to work, and wisdom to make good choices,
and the integrity to meet responsibilities with honesty and honor.

Continue to surround them with your love and hold them
close to You.

We pray that they will remain faithful to You and your will for
their lives.

We also lift to you those whose place in life it is to keep on doing
what they have been doing,

Those without work who want and need your provision,

Those seeking a new place to serve.

May they all see your hand at work in their lives.

Use us to aid them if and when we can.

Amen

Saturday, March 23, 2024

Gracious and Loving God, we bow with grateful hearts for all the blessings you have bestowed upon us:

for another day of life with all of its promise,
for food and shelter that feeds and protects,
for family and friends that love and support.

Through your infinite grace You have given us life eternal:

not because we deserve it, for we do not,
not because we have earned it, for we can not,
but because You love us and desire that we know You.

For your love and all you many blessings, receive our thanks,
O Lord.

Understanding and Forgiving God, we bow with confessing hearts for we know that we are not all that You want us to be:

We do things we should not do.
We do not do things that we should.

We seek our own way when we should be walking after You.

We want to be loved without loving.
We want to receive without giving.
We want to reap without sowing.

Forgive us Father, for we have sinned.
Hear our confessions, O Lord.

Sustaining and Healing God, we intercede on behalf of your children everywhere who are ever in need of your presence and power:

for bodies ravaged by disease and injury,
for lives in turmoil because jobs are gone or relationships
are broken.

for lives without hope because they do not know You and
your saving grace.

For these needs and others that only You can know,
we ask for a strong sense of your presence and healing.

Hear our prayers, O God, for we pray in the name of our
Living and Loving Lord, Jesus Christ,

Amen

Sunday, March 24, 2024
Palm Sunday

Lord, we remember.

It was a great day for a parade, and we confess that we were excited to see Jesus headed our way. He might as well have been riding in a gold coach for all the attention He was getting. It may not have been a red carpet, but those palm branches spread before Him all along the way sure made a beautiful carpet for Him. We had heard that He had set his face toward Jerusalem, and sure enough here He was. We were so glad we were able to get tickets for the show.

Lord, we had heard so much about Jesus.

He healed people who very sick.

He cast out demons.

He celebrated at a wedding feast and turned water into wine.

He fed over five thousand people who gathered to hear him preach.

He was just so amazing. We wondered what miracles He would do while He was here among us. We were pretty sure that it was going to be a great week. It was off to such a good start.

But, then reality began to set in.

He overthrew tables in the Temple area where moneychangers were doing their thing.

The talk about the Temple being destroyed and rebuilt in three days was confusing.

It just didn't seem to fit with our belief that He was going to be our Messiah. When was He going to establish His rule?

And then we heard that the religious leaders were out to get Him.

Why would that be?

We just did not understand.

What was going on?

Lord, we need You to be in our understanding.

Amen

March 25, 2024u

Lord, we have come to call this week Holy.
In hindsight, we can see that it truly is.

It was such a busy week.
 Following the triumphal entry,
 You cursed a fig tree.
 You cleansed the Temple.
 You had your authority questioned.
 You told parables.
You reminded them, yet again, that they were to love the Lord
 their God, with all of their hearts, souls, minds and
 strength.

And then there was Passover.
 You shared the meal with your disciples—
 even the one who was betray you.
What is it about sharing a meal that can be so revealing?
Is it that we get so comfortable that we let down our guard?
We confess we did not need to let down our guard with You.
We need to be honest with ourselves about who we are.

We confess that we do not need to be in your presence to be
transparent to you.
 You have searched us, and You know us.
 You discern our thoughts from far away.
 You are acquainted with all our ways.
 There is no way that we can flee from your presence.

This week is Holy, O God, because You and
 You alone are Holy.
Help us remember that Holy Week is about You, but You made it
 about us, because You were preparing to die for us
 and our sin.

Lord, be merciful to us sinners.
Amen

,March 26, 2024
Tuesday of Holy Week

Lord, we are often confused but never as much as we are by the plot to betray Jesus.

Why would religious leaders be so against your Son?
Why would one of His own disciples join in the scheme
to betray Him to the authorities?
Surely, we would never do such a horrendous thing.

We had such great expectations for Him and
all He could do for us:

He could feed us.
He could heal us.
He could teach us.

What was not to like? He was perfect for us.

But, we confess that we did join in the plot.
We turned the tables on Him just as He turned the tables on the
moneychangers.

Like the moneychangers, we do not honor His house of
worship.
Like the disciples, we talk a big game, and then we do not
keep our promises to follow.
Like Peter, we do not speak up for You when given
the opportunity.

Forgive us Lord, for we are so guilty of doing all of those things
that the You came to save us and the disciples for.

If we are honest, we confess that Jesus came to save us from
ourselves, and we are so humbled by His sacrifice and
love for us.

Convict us Lord.
Show us our sin.
Be in our repentance.
Be in our restoration.

Amen

March 27, 2027
Wednesday of Holy Week

Dare we pray the prayer of David?
Psalm 51:1-13

Have mercy on me, O God,
 According to your steadfast love;
According to your abundant mercy
 Blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
 And cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions,
 And my sin is ever before me.
Against you, you alone have I sinned,
 And done what is evil in your sight,
So that you are justified in your sentence
 And blameless when you pass judgment.
Indeed, I was born guilty.
 A sinner when my mother conceived me.
You desire truth in the inward being:
 Therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.
Purge me with hyssop,
 And I shall be clean;
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
Let me hear joy and gladness;
 Let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.
Hide your face from my sin,
 And blot out me iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
 And put a new and right spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
 And do not take your holy spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
 And sustain in me a willing spirit.

Amen

March 28, 2024
Maundy Thursday

On this darkest of Holy Nights, O God,
We confess that we have sinned.

We have sinned by doing that which does not honor You.
We have sinned by doing that which is harmful to others.
We have sinned by doing what makes us less than You
created us to be.

We confess that there is nothing that we can do that will make
us right with You save the work of Jesus through His life,
death and resurrection.
We are grateful for His saving work and Your grace.

We remember the events of this day.
We remember the preparations for the Passover meal
with your Disciples.
We remember the meal itself and those who gathered
there with You.
We remember Your example of servanthood as You
washed the feet of Your disciples.
We remember that one was to betray You.
And we remember that all pledged not to.
But they did, and so do we.

Lord, would You forgive us, yet again.
Would You cleanse us, yet again.
Would You right our ways and use us, yet again.

In the stillness of this hour, may we commit ourselves to fully
live the events of this day,
For the sake of Your work in us.

Amen

March 29, 2024
Good Friday

Almighty God, it is Good Friday.
All that comforts us is knowing that you are the beginning and the end of all that is.

Alpha God,
You were there when the world was created from nothing
but your spoken word. We know You are Word.
You were there when the breath of life was breathed into
our bodies. We know You are Life.
You were there when the light was separated from the
darkness. We know You are Light.
You were there when you entered into a relationship with
your creation. We know You are Love.

We confess that through our own failures, we have tarnished your
beautiful creation.
We fail to speak the truth of your Word.
We fail to share life with those who are dying.
We fail to shine your light in the darkness.
We fail to love as You have loved us.

Forgive us Lord. We would be more like You:
speaking your truth,
Allowing your Spirit to flow through us,
shining your light in the darkness,
loving because You love us.

Omega God,
We fear the uncertainty of the days that lie before us,
but we know You hold those days in your hands.
We dread the threats and trauma that surround us,
but we know that You are the Prince of Peace.
We walk on paths of the unknown,
but we know that it is your Spirit that guides our feet.

Lord, we believe. Help our unbelief. Just as You were the
beginning Word, we know that you will be the last Word. Alpha
and Omega. Amen

March 30, 2024
Holy Saturday

It's dark.
The tomb is cold behind that big stone.
We're at a loss.

What to do?
Go fishing?
What's the point?
He was to be our Messiah,
But He's dead.

Is there something He did or said that we can hold on to?
What was that bit about three days?
Will He live again?
Too hard to believe!

God, are You there?
Speak to us.
We are afraid.
Help us!

March 31, 2024
Easter Sunday

Most Holy, Loving and Living God,
We will worship this morning with
spirits full of joy,
lives full of hope,
and hearts full of love for You and the gift of salvation
made possible through Jesus Christ.

How could we not be filled with praise when we bear witness to
your resurrection
following your betrayal by Judas,
the denial of your disciples,
your condemnation by the leaders and the people,
your cruel death on a cross,
and your burial in a tomb.?

Yet, You were raised from the dead, just as You said.
And today, we stand in a very long line of witnesses
who know that, indeed, You live and reign with God in
Heaven.

We claim to be resurrection people,
And that is very easy to do on a day like today.
We see your beauty in all of the flowers.
We see your life in the children in this place.
We are moved by the music, and the spoken words.

But we do confess, O God, that we do not live as
resurrection people all of the time.
We do not come near as often as we should.
Sometimes we go out too far, and we stay out too long.
We devise our own plans, and we steer our own course in ways
that are not in keeping with your will for our lives.
Though we have walked with You, we deny that we know You.
We betray You when we do not profess our faith before others.
We crucify You on the cross of indifference and bury You in the
dark places of our lives.

Forgive us Lord, for we have sinned against Heaven
and against You.

Bring to the forefront a sense of our sins.

Open our hearts to our need for your forgiveness,
our minds to the instruction of your Word,
our wills to returning to You with all of our selves.

We lift to You those who need a strong sense of your presence in
their lives:

those who are ill,
those who are dying,
those who are recovering,
those who grieve
the Loss of a loved one,
the comfort of home,
the security of work,
the assurance of peace.

We know that the power that brought Jesus back to life is
sufficient for all our needs. And we give you thanks.

May our gratitude be genuine.
May our assistance be loving.
May our praise be pleasing to You.

Today, we stand in a long line of followers who call
themselves Christians.

We are grateful for those who came before us and for their witness
of your salvation.

May those who come behind us, find us faithful, that they too may
come to know your saving grace.

Amen