

Prayers of the People

- 2010 -

Prayers composed and shared by the liturgists of the
Woodland United Methodist Church

(Compiled in memory of liturgist John Wise)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYERS OF THE LITURGISTS.....	3
Prayers for the Opening.....	3
<i>Gregg Atkins.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Sam Fields</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Carol Furlong.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Lisette Henderson</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Joyce Smuda.....</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Jen Smuda-Cotter</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>John Wise</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Kathleen Yelle</i>	<i>43</i>
Prayers for the Offering.....	57
<i>Gregg Atkins.....</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>Sam Fields</i>	<i>59</i>
<i>Lisette Henderson</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>Jen Smuda-Cotter</i>	<i>60</i>
PRAYERS OF OTHERS WE SHARE.....	62
<i>Richard Allen.....</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>Lavon Bayer</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>Ruth Duck</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>Sandra E. Graham</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>Lonni Collins Pratt and Fr. Daniel Homan</i>	<i>65</i>
<i>Marcia Marion.....</i>	<i>65</i>
<i>Mother Theresa.....</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>D.T. Niles</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>Walter Rauschenbusch</i>	<i>67</i>
<i>Bradford Torrey (Lyrics)</i>	<i>68</i>
PRAYERS OF UNKNOWN AUTHORS	69
<i>“Mother Theresa’s Prayer”</i>	<i>70</i>
<i>Prayer from The Book of Worship, 1965</i>	<i>71</i>
<i>England, 20th Century Prayer.....</i>	<i>71</i>
<i>Traditional Native American Prayer.....</i>	<i>72</i>
<i>Traditional Dakota Tribe Prayer.....</i>	<i>72</i>
PRAYERS FROM UNKNOWN AUTHORS & SOURCES	73

PRAYERS OF THE LITURGISTS

Prayers for the Opening

Gregg Atkins

And God said...

Did you see the stranger today?
Did you put food for him in the eating-place?
Did you leave drink for her in the bucket by the well?
Did you share my music with them to comfort them?
Did you prepare my church to succor them?

And God said...

Have you heard my lark say in her warble,
Often, often, often goes Christ in the stranger's guise,
O, oft and oft and oft goes Christ in the stranger's guise.

- *Gregg Atkins*

Remind us, oh God:
Where charity and love are, you are there.
The love of Christ has gathered us as one.
Teach us to rejoice and be glad in him.
And in fullness of heart let us love one another.

O God, the Holy Spirit,
Come to us and among,
Come as the wind, and cleanse us;
Come as the fire, and burn;
Come as the dew and refresh!

Comfort, teach, strengthen, move, lead, gird,
Inspire, remind, carry, rescue...
hear these prayer words and others from those gathered here.

Convict, convert, and consecrate many hearts and lives
Here to our greater good and to your great glory.

- *Gregg Atkins*

Show us, oh God:
Where charity and love are, you are there.
When therefore we are gathered together,
Let us not be divided in spirit.
Let Christ our God be present in our midst, uniting us.

Hold us, oh God, that we may know that
Where charity and love are, so are you.
Let us feel the joy that is infinite and which makes us whole.
Help us take forgiveness and charity for us to use as a sacred gift we give to
others.

- *Gregg Atkins*

Sam Fields

Lord, we have come here today to worship the grace and beauty that you have bestowed upon our lives and we search for guidance and centering as the new week is in front of us.

You being our creator know that we as beings are not strong enough to bear tragedies, burdens and unfortunate happenings that occur in our daily lives and you ask us to give them all to you through prayer. So that is what I will do.

Lord I pray that the sad and unfortunate things which occur outside this sanctuary and in our daily lives be lifted up to you so that we all may focus on worship and celebrating your love.

- Sam Fields

Carol Furlong

10/17/99

Almighty God – our protecting father and loving mother. We as a church family gather together this Sunday morning. We each have traveled our own individual journey that brings us together in worship, in praise, in thanksgiving, in sorrow, in joy and in supplication. Anger and rage divide families, communities, governments and nations. At times even the raging of the weather – fires, hurricanes, earthquakes, the prevailing winds and the searing heat of the sun – stifles the breath that we breathe.

Mother and Father God, you are here with us now, in the quiet of this moment. Calm our troubled souls. Lift us up on eagle's wings. Bear us on the breath of life. Make our faces to shine like the sun. And hold us in the palm of your hand. Alleluia. Amen.

- *Carol Furlong*

01/28/02

Mother, Father God in the quiet of this morning, we gather here in this house of worship to seek your continued presence in our lives. We have physically stepped away from the frenetic pace of our lives, from the daily reminders of how tenuous are our civil liberties and from the need to be vigilant in the face of unknown dangers. The uncertainties of our daily existence, our jobs, our health and welfare often take away our focus from you, Oh Lord, our strength and our redeemer. But now we seek your wisdom and guidance through this hour of communing with you. For it is you, our Mother and Father through the words of Micah, the prophet of old who said,

Oh child of mine, this is what is good and this is what the Lord requires of you: do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us.

Melt us, mold us, fill us, use us.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us.

Amen. Amen.

- *Carol Furlong*

04/14/02

O God, creator and giver of all life, Mother and Father to us your children, we have come this morning seeking your presence and healing in our lives. Our daily lives are filled with a myriad of daily chores and activities that are mundane, necessary and important to us but yet, we come together to worship recognizing that you, O God, Almighty Comforter, bring meaning, purpose and fulfillment to our existence. "When we are living, it is in Christ Jesus. We belong to God." Grant us a spirit of vulnerability that we may reach out and accept your healing touch.

God touched us. O the joy that floods our souls! Something happened; and now we know, God touched us and made us whole.

Alleluia, alleluia. Amen. Amen.

- Carol Furlong

08/25/02

O God, creator and giver of life, Mother and Father to us your children, we rejoice in your presence this Sunday morn. The babble and confusion of our daily lives and the winds of war that whirl through the daily news often consume our attention and leave us feeling empty and bereft of your love. We come, this morning, to this house of worship to seek your presence, to be fed, nourished and made whole. We are your people. Wipe away the tears from our eyes. Dwell among us. As you, Oh God, spoke through Isaiah, the prophet of old, you speak to us today:

Be not afraid, for God has redeemed us;
You, our Creator, have called each of us by name, we are yours.
Shower, O heavens, from above,
And let the skies rain down righteousness;
Let the earth open, that salvation may spring up and let it cause
righteousness to sprout up also;
You, the Lord, have created all that is good.
We praise you, O Lord, our Savior and our Redeemer.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- Carol Furlong

A Prayer during Advent, 12/08/02

It is morning, O God. The night is over. Scatter the darkness that clouds our minds, spirits and hearts and prevents us from feeling your presence. We are here to worship you, Father Provider, Mother Wisdom, Giver of life and all that sustains us. Our hearts listen. God, speak to us. You have many voices. How can anyone fear you? We thirst as a panting fawn - thirst for your love, O God.

O loving God, fill our souls with your presence.

At this time of Advent, grant us the contentment, the wholeness, the hidden well-spring of laughter that comes from knowing in the depths of our souls that Jesus the Christ child will be born anew in our hearts.

Come, long expected Jesus, born to set us free from our fears and to release us from our shortcomings. May we find rest in you, our Strength and our Redeemer. Grant us strength to face the challenges of our daily lives and hope for our tomorrows. Be with us now as we seek your loving, healing presence in this hour of worship.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

01/26/03

Mother and Father God, You are our Lord.

This morning, we pause in our busy daily routines to come together in this house of worship to praise you, thank you for your love, and ask for your continued presence and guidance in our lives. Be with us when we cry, hear our prayers, open our eyes that we might see what is right and what is just.

Even though man's inhumanity towards one another darkens our perspective, the heavens tell the glory of you, our God and the firmament proclaims your handiwork. The inequities in the laws of our country baffle and perplex us. Because your law, O Lord is perfect, you revive our soul. With your strength, Mother and Father God, we rejoice and with your help we are exulted.

All love comes from you, God. You give us the capacity to love and worship you, O God and to extend that love to our neighbor. Open our eyes that we might see our neighbors and thus fulfill your commandment.

Let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable to you, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

04/06/03

Mother and Father God, morning has broken.

We are here together to worship you in this community of faith. You have promised that where two or more are gathered together, there you will be also. Life is tenuous. Thank you, God, for your guiding presence in our lives through the gift of your Holy Spirit. Now we beseech you, Oh Lord, our redeemer, for the grace to accept what we cannot change. Grant us, Oh Lord, the courage to stand up for our convictions. Oh Mother Creator and Father Sustainer, fill us your instruments, with your love. May the music of our lives reverberate and peal melodiously in peace, love, patience, forgiveness, compassion, and calm serenity. We know that we cannot affect change on an international scale but through your guidance, O Lord, Jaweh, we can affect change to bring harmony and a measure of peace into our daily lives and for those with whom we come in contact.

Thank you Mother and Father God for hearing our prayers.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

02/01/04

Holy Mother and Father God, we bow our heads humbly before you this morning.

Surely your presence, O Lord, is in this place.
We can feel your mighty power and grace.
We can hear the brush of angels' wings.
We see glory on each face.
Surely your presence, O Lord, is in this place.

We worship you O God, Giver of life, Sustainer of our faith, Fountain of our hope, and Creator of love. You have told us what is good and what you, O Lord, require of us – to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with you O God, our Mother and Father.

Thank you God, for your gift of love, which fills our lives with meaning, purpose and joy. Surely your presence, O Lord, is in this place.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

03/20/04

Mother and Father God, we gather this spring morning in this house of worship to worship you in prayer, in song, and by listening to your word spoken audibly and through the continuing presence of the Holy Spirit.

Morning is broken, yet in our hearts and our bodies, O God, only the sunshine of your forgiving love and eternal grace warms and sustains us.

Shackled by our heavy burdens, our load of guilt and shame, we feel the hand of Jesus, your son, who touches us. Now we are no longer the same. O the joy that floods our souls. Something beautiful happened and now we know, Jesus the Christ touched us and made us whole.

Thank you, O Mother and Father God, for your gift of Jesus the Christ who has given us the right to claim your forgiveness, love and redemption.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

05/16/04

Lord God Almighty, Mother and Father of us all, your love has called us here this morning, to this house of worship. We come with all our heart and mind, your call to hear, your love to find. We believe in you, the one true God, Mother and Father to us your children. We believe in you, Jesus the Christ, the Son of God. We believe in you Holy Ghost, ever present help in time of need. We praise you, Lord. We thank you, Lord! By your mighty power alone, all is made and wrought and done.

When Jesus the healer passed through Galilee,
The deaf came to hear and the blind came to see,
The ill and dying were made whole,
The bent were straightened,
The lame were made to walk.

Heal us, heal us today!
Heal us, Lord Jesus!

There's still so much sickness and suffering today.
There's still so much wrong for which we have no control, yet for which we
feel so responsible.

Heal us, heal us today!
We gather together for healing and we pray:
Heal us, Lord Jesus!

We believe! We just want to thank you, Lord!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

07/18/04

Mother and Father God, you call us to worship on this beautiful Sunday morning! You call us to turn our thoughts and minds from the chaos of the world in which we live to commune with you and to let your peace, hope, grace and love fill our souls and lives.

We would see Jesus, in the early morning, still as of old he calls, "Follow me!" O Mother and Father God fill us with your love; show us how to serve our neighbors, our brothers and sisters. When we walk with you, O Lord, in the light of your word, what a glory you shed on our way! While we do your good will, you abide with us still. We trust and obey for there's no other way to walk life's journey without you, O God, beside us each step of the way. We accept Jesus' call, "Follow me," that comes from you, O God, in your eternal Word. May our daily living reveal our witness of Christ, the master teacher.

Mother and Father God, thank you for sending your son, Christ Jesus, who showed us by his example how to trust and to obey your will. By living in Christ Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer, we are made whole. Praise be to God!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

09/04/04

O Mother and Father God, we humbly yet boldly approach you this morning in our house of worship. We come with joy, gratitude and love to be here in your presence, O Lord. Yet we also come bearing heavy burdens of grief, dismay and shock. We know not how to cope with the inhumane disregard for human life that is occurring in many areas of our war-torn world. You, O God, are our hope and our salvation. On Christ the solid rock we stand, all other ground is sinking sand; all other ground is sinking sand. Your word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. When we feel afraid or think we've lost our way, still you are there right beside us.

O Mother and Father God, you invite us to the gospel feast. Each of us is Jesus' guest. No one is to be left behind, for you O God, bid each of us to accept your grace. We accept your grace, O Lord. We deck our souls with gladness and leave the gloomy haunts of sadness. We come into the daylight's splendor and there with joy your praises, O God, we render unto Christ Jesus, whose grace unbounded has prepared a wondrous banquet. Son of God, you brighten our lives. Light of God, you enlighten our souls. Your joy and love fill our beings with breath, life and meaning. O Maker, our Mother and Father, we feel your mighty power and grace. We can hear the brush of angels' wings. We see glory on each face. Surely your presence, O Lord, is in this place.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

10/23/04

Mother and Father God, we gather this cool, fall morning to worship you, our Sovereign Lord. We claim this time in your presence, O Lord, to calm the troubled, chaotic waters of our daily lives. All around us whirl the winds of war and physical and emotional destruction. But you, O God, are our Provider, Sustainer and Comforter.

Praise the Lord!
We give thanks to the Lord with our whole hearts.
Mother, Father God, you are gracious and merciful.
Help us, O Lord our God!
Save us according to your abiding love.

Thank you, O Lord, for your steadfast commitment to walk beside us - in daylight and dark, through joy and sadness, through triumph and defeat. Mother and Father God, you are our constant guide and companion.

Praise be the name of the Lord from this time on and forevermore.
From the rising of the sun to its setting
The name of the Lord is to be praised.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

01/23/05

Mother and Father God, we gather this morning to worship you through song and prayer and to receive your word through scripture and the spoken message that you have for us. Incline your ear, O Lord, for we need you. Preserve our lives, for we are devoted to you. Save us, your servants, who trust in you.

You are our God; be gracious to us, O Lord. We lift up our hearts filled with heaviness, sadness, confusion, and bewilderment – unable to comprehend the uncertainty of war, turmoil, chaos and injustice that is so pervasive in our country and in many countries around the world.

But you Lord, our Mother and Father, have promised that when we pray, you will hear us. When we pray, you will answer us.

O God, you are great and do wondrous things. We glorify your name. You teach us your way that we may walk in your truth. You are merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

Lord, you have instructed us what is good and what you require of us – to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with you, O God.

Thank you Mother and Father God. We claim your promises. With grateful hearts, we accept your unconditional love and acceptance of us! Praise be to God, our Savior and Redeemer.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

03/20/05

CALL TO WORSHIP (In lieu of opening prayer)

Leader: Cry out, people of faith! Rejoice and praise God!

People: If we did not sing praise, the very stones would cry out!

Leader: Cry out, people of faith, for your Savior draws near to Jerusalem.

People: Hosanna! God saves! Blessed is the One who comes in God's name!

Leader: Blessed is Jesus Christ, who did not turn back for fear of the cross. Let us praise the God who loves us, sharing Christ's sufferings, and facing with courage our path of faith.

People: Hosanna! God saves! Blessed is the One who comes in God's name.

- *Carol Furlong*

03/26/05

O Mother and Father God, we seek you. We approach you this morning bringing all our cares, fatigue, stress and distractions. You are our hope, our comfort, our salvation. As the psalmist of old said, our soul thirsts for you, our flesh faints for you as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

You give us cause to rejoice even in our sorrow. You give us hope when we see no hope. Your grace and love sustain us. Therefore, we will lift up our hands and call your name, Blessed Comforter.

Because of the hope of your risen Son, Jesus Christ, we dare to approach you boldly. We sing aloud to you, O God, our mother and father, our strength. We shout for joy to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Moses.

So we have looked upon you in this, your sanctuary, beholding your power and glory.

Thanks be to God!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen. Amen.

- *Carol Furlong*

A Call to Worship for Pentecost, 05/15/05

Leader: We have come to celebrate the birthday of the church.

People: We have come to celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Leader: We have come to celebrate Pentecost and to open ourselves to God's Spirit that we might be filled anew.

People: Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Leader: Come, Holy Spirit, and impart your many gifts to us, that we may be the body of Christ's presence in the world.

People: Come, Holy Spirit, come to unite us and empower us to serve as Christ's people to all the world.

- *Carol Furlong*

07/03/05

Mother and Father God, we come before you this morning to pray, to sing, to partake of the bread of life and to receive the message that you have for us during this hour of worship.

Turn our doubts and fears into joy and thanksgiving. Open our eyes that we may see your grace. Open our ears that we may hear your words of encouragement and guidance. Open our hearts that we may feel your everlasting love. Your word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path.

Our soul waits for you, O Lord. You are our help and shield. Our hearts are glad in you because we trust in your holy name. Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you.

O thanks be to you O God who are both Mother and Father to us, your children!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

08/27/05

Mother and Father God, we are assembled together this morning to worship you. O Lord, God of our salvation, we cry out in your presence this morning, in this house of worship. Let our prayers come before you; incline your ear to our cries. Our souls are troubled. The forces of injustice, hurt, loneliness and indifference can isolate us from your love and protection, O Mother and Father God. But you have not forsaken us. Your steadfast love is established forever; and your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

It is good to give thanks to you O Lord! We sing praises to your name, O Most High. You have touched us with your everlasting love. We love you, O Mother and Father God. You know us by name and you protect us. We call upon you Almighty God this morning and you answer us through silence, prayer, song, Holy Scripture and the spoken word.

Fill us with love, loyalty and justice that we may walk from this house of worship with integrity of heart and mind. We rejoice, O God, and give thanks for your healing gifts - grace, mercy, and forgiveness.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

10/09/05

Almighty God, who in past years led our ancestors to good places in creation, give your grace, we humbly ask, to us, their children. Mother and Father God, may we always be a people remembering your blessings and glad to do your will. Bless our land with honorable work, sound learning and true religion. Defend our liberties. Preserve our unity. Save us from violence, discord and confusion, from pride, arrogance, and other evil ways. Make us content to live here with all the people who have come here from many other places and cultures. Give wisdom to those whom we elect to lead us so that there is peace at home and a place for us among the nations of the earth.

In times of prosperity fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in times of distress do not let our faith in you, Oh Mother and Father God, either weaken or fail, all of which we ask in your son's name, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Amen. Amen.

- *Carol Furlong*

11/27/05

We lift up our eyes to you, O Lord, our everlasting Mother and Father God, the Creator of the ends of earth. You do not fail or grow weary, and your understanding knows no bounds. You give power to the faint and strengthen the powerless. We wait for you, O Lord, for you shall renew our strength, you shall make us to mount up with wings like eagles. We shall run and not be weary; we shall walk and not be faint.

We are your servants. You have chosen us and have not cast us off. Thus we shall not fear, for you are with us. We shall not be afraid, for you are our God. You will strengthen us, help us and uphold us with your victorious right hand.

Fill us with your Holy Spirit, this hour of worship. Come Lord Jesus, come into our hearts.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

02/05/06

Almighty God, our Mother and Father, we give thanks to you and sing praises to your name, O Most High. We declare your steadfast love and faithfulness this morning as we gather in this house of worship.

Create in us clean hearts, minds and spirits that we may truly be receptive to your presence here among us. We make a joyful noise to you, our Lord and Redeemer, worship you with gladness and come into your presence with singing.

Mother and Father God, we give thanks to you for you are good, for your steadfast love endures forever.

You, O Lord, have told us what is good and what you require of us – to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with you, our God.

Grant us the strength and courage to do what is good and what you require of us. May our lives reflect justice; kindness and our daily walk with you, O Mother and Father God.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

08/20/06

Mother and Father God, morning has broken. Surely the presence of the Lord is here with us in this house of worship. We step aside from our daily cares and concerns to commune with you, to raise our voices in song, to pray, to read scripture and to hear the spoken word.

Make us to know your ways, O Lord; teach us your paths. Lead us in your truth, and teach us for you are the God of our salvation. When we are weak, O God, you give us strength. When we falter, you lift us up. You turn our failures into strengths and our despair into hope. Mother / Father God, you fill our lives with joy and love that passes all understanding. You protect and guide us even when we do not ask.

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on us. Fall afresh on us. Melt us, mold us, fill us, use us to your honor and glory! Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on us during this hour of worship!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

11/12/06

Mother and Father God, we gather this morning in this house of worship to sing to you, our Lord. We lift our voices in prayer and song to you, the rock of our salvation! We come into your presence with thanksgiving.

For you our Lord, are a great God, our King and our redeemer. In your hand are the depths of the earth. The heights of the mountains are yours also. The sea is yours, for you O Mother and Father God, you made it and the dry land you formed with your hands.

We come this morning to worship you. We bow our heads before you O Lord, our Maker!

You are our God, and we are the people of your pasture and the sheep of your hand.

We come humbly, yet boldly claiming your promises to guide us, to protect us, to love us just as we are, and to forgive our shortcomings. You turn our failures into successes and our sorrows into joys. Thanks be to you, our Mother and Father, for your love that fills our hearts and transforms our lives.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

01/14/07

O Mother and Father God, make your Spirit to fall afresh on us this morning in this house of worship. Surely your presence is with us. As the psalmist, David has said, we have waited patiently for you, our Lord. You have heard our cry. You have drawn us up from the depths of our despair and depression. You, O God, have set our feet upon a rock and made our steps secure. You have put a new song in our mouths, a song of praise to you our Mother and Father God.

Melt us, mold us, fill us with your Spirit and use us that all may know of your wondrous deeds, your compassion towards the oppressed, your everlasting forgiveness, and unconditional love.

As a deer longs for flowing streams, so our souls long for you, O God. Our souls thirst for you, the living God. Our hope and trust is in you, our help, our God.

You have lifted us up on eagle's wings. You have born us on the breath of dawn, made us to shine like the sun, and you hold us in the palm of your hand.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

04/29/07

Gracious and merciful God, we praise you! Great is your steadfast love toward us and your faithfulness endures forever. When we focus on our own personal grief, our own concerns, the uncertainties and strife that exist in this world, we stumble and fall; yet you are there to lift us up! When we go astray like sheep, you shepherd us to you, O Mother and Father God, you are the guardian of our souls.

We have come, O Lord, our Good Shepherd, to be fed through song, prayer and supplication, and by hearing your written and spoken word. You gently lead us in the paths of righteousness. You guide us to the springs of the water of life, and wipe away the tears from our eyes.

We give thanks to you, O Mother and Father God, for you are good and your steadfast love endures forever! Praise the Lord!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

08/12/07

On this beautiful summer morning, we gather, O Mother and Father God, to worship, to sing, to pray and to hear your spoken word. You have said to us, "Seek and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you." We ask for the joys of the heavenly kingdom, knowing that you have promised that if we only ask, you will give us your joys.

Our prayers rise to heaven, to the mystery of your power, O God.
Have mercy on us, Lord and grant us your grace.
Our voices glorify you, Lord God of majesty.
As the thirsty earth looks to heaven for life giving rain to save flower and tree, so we raise our hands high in prayer.
O Lord God, you are love and justice and truth; all your judgments are just.
O Lord God, you are truth beyond compare.
Lord, in you do we trust.

Mother / Father God, we lift our prayers up to you asking for your love, your grace and your joys. Grant us our prayers that we may live in harmony with your will.

Thank you O God for hearing and answering our prayers.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

11/11/07

O Mother / Father God, hear our prayer this Sunday morning. We come before you burdened with the cares of everyday life, bearing grief from our losses, and dispirited by the news of strife and war around the world. Humbly we bow before your presence. Your unchanging love endures forever. We bless you O Lord, who forgives all our iniquity, who heals all our infirmities, and who redeems our very lives.

You, O Mother / Father God, are merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

As the heavens are high above the earth, so great is your steadfast love toward those who serve you.

Bless the Lord, all your works, in all places of your creation.

As your servant David, we bless you O Lord, with every fiber of our beings.

We sing praises to you, lift our hearts in supplication, and are ready to receive your word.

We glorify your holy name. Our hearts rejoice in you.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

02/17/08

O Mother / Father God, we gather this beautiful Sunday morn to seek you, our Lord and Savior. We call on you because you are near. May we forsake our wandering thoughts and turn to you, O Lord. We know that you will have mercy on us and that you will freely pardon our transgressions.

As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are your ways, O Mother / Father God, higher than our ways and your thoughts greater than our thoughts.

We trust in the knowledge that the rain and the snow that come down from heaven nourish and water the earth and make it bud and flourish, and yield seed for the sower and bread for the eater. So we also trust that the word, O God, that goes out from you does not return to you empty, but accomplishes what you desire and achieves the purpose for which you sent it. Through us your children, may your divine purpose be made manifest in us.

With joyful hearts we sing praises to you O Lord. We praise you O Lord with music on bells, piano, and organ. We sing and shout for joy.

Your word is right and true. You are faithful in all that you do. Let all the earth fear you O Lord, let all the people of the world revere you. May you foil the winds of war, calm fiery tempers and thwart the purposes of those who would deny benevolence and mercy to the needy, sick and poor.

You are our hope and shield. In you our hearts rejoice, for we trust in your holy name.

May your unfailing love rest upon us, O Lord, even as we put our hope in you.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

A Prayer for Pentecost, 05/11/08

Spirit of God, descend this Sunday morning on our hearts, our souls and minds as you did on your disciples in Jerusalem so long ago. Grant us the fruits of your Holy Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Enfold us with your Spirit and your love. Fill our hearts and satisfy our souls. Take away those things that hold us back from knowing you, O Lord. Make your Spirit like a dove descend upon our lives and make us whole.

We sing to you with gladness as our hearts are filled with joy. We lift our hands in quiet surrender to you, our Risen Lord and Savior. We give you all our sadness, all our years of pain as we enter anew into everlasting life with you O Mother and Father God.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

07/27/08

It is morning O Lord. We are gathered together to worship you, O Mother and Father God. We bow humbly before you.

In you we seek refuge against the stresses of our daily lives. Rescue us from our own fears. You, O Lord, are our rock of refuge, a strong fortress against the evils of our society.

For your name's sake lead us and guide us in our daily journey more closely to you that we may hear your still, small voice of comfort and assurance. Into your hand O Lord, we commit our spirit. You have redeemed us, you O God who is forever faithful even when we falter and forget that you are by our side.

Be gracious to us, O Lord, for we are in distress. Uncertainty plagues our existence. Are our homes and lives secure? When will wars and turmoil in our world cease? When will truth supplant lies and deception?

O Mother / Father God, may your everlasting peace fill our hearts. We trust in you. Let your face shine upon us, your servants; save us in your steadfast love.

O how abundant is your goodness that you have laid up for those who fear and trust you. In the shelter of your presence, you hold us safe.

Blessed be the Lord! Your steadfast love enfolds us. You give us courage and strength.

Lord and Savior Jesus, we wait for you. Come! Come into our hearts, Lord Jesus!

Alelluia! Alelluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

11/16/08

To you, O Lord, we lift up our soul this beautiful Sunday morning. O Mother / Father God, in you we trust. Make us to know your ways. Teach us in your paths. Lead us in your truth, and teach us, for you are the God of our salvation; we wait for you to speak to us through prayer, scripture, song, the celebration of baptism, and the spoken word.

The earth is yours, O Lord, and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it. You have, O Mother / Father God founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers.

Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in your holy place, O Lord? Those who have clean hands and pure hearts.

May we, your children, have clean hands and pure hearts. May we not lift up our souls to that which is false, and may we not swear deceitfully. May we receive your blessing and your salvation O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Our souls wait for you, O Lord. You are our help and shield. Our hearts are glad in you, because we trust in your holy name. Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen! Amen!

- *Carol Furlong*

Lisette Henderson

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, send your Spirit to help us read and understand the Scriptures in the same way that you read them to the disciples on the road to Emmaus. Create in us the silence necessary to hear your voice in creation and in the Scriptures, in the events of daily life and in people, above all in the poor and the suffering. May your word give us direction, so that we too will experience the power of your resurrection and bear witness to others that you are alive in our midst as the source of community, of justice and of peace.

We ask this of you, God, in Jesus name, Amen.

- *Lisette Henderson*

Joyce Smuda

Well Sir,

Here we are again. We've been getting along together quite a while now. We're certainly much obliged... about Ardith – thanks for sending her to us. We hope and pray she'll be happy in her new home.

Remember, all we ask is just to go along the way we are. Keep our health. As far as anything else is concerned, we leave that up to you.

Thank you. Amen.

- *Joyce Smuda*

Jen Smuda-Cotter

A prayer for Advent.

Let us pray this Advent for joy and hope in the coming Lord.

Father, ever faithful to your promises and ever close to your church, the earth rejoices in hope of the Savior's coming.

Prepare our hearts and remove the sadness that hinders us from feeling the joy of hope which his presence will bestow, for he is Lord for ever and ever.

- *Jen Smuda-Cotter*

A prayer for Confirmation Sunday.

"This is a day of new beginning, time to remember and move on." Every day is a new beginning, a new opportunity to follow the examples of Christ. Sometimes, we fail to see this opportunity. We fall into old patterns and bad habits. But, the choice to follow Christ is always there. Today, we chose to come to worship, to hear the scriptures, to praise God, some of us even came here for baptism and confirmation. Today we embrace the new beginning we have so generously been given through Jesus Christ. Amen.

- Jen Smuda-Cotter

Lord, we come here this morning from tiring weeks, from hectic days and lonely times, from happy experiences and pleasing results, from all different types of lives. We come seeking forgiveness, seeking friendship, comfort, knowledge, solitude, or perhaps we come without reason. We are here to sing, to listen, to talk to love and to be loved. For whatever reason we find ourselves here Lord, may we be open to You and to others around us, so that we may experience your love and will. Amen.

- Jen Smuda-Cotter

O God, our resurrection and life, the promise of your new life in Christ is like a breath of fresh air in a dry and thirsty land. We have gathered as believers, and as those who are honestly seeking the truth. Guide our worship this hour.

- Jen Smuda-Cotter

John Wise

All-merciful and tender God, you have given birth to our world, conceiving and bearing all that lives and breathes.

We come to you today, as your sons and daughters;
Aware of our faults and our fears,
Aware of our anger and aggression,
Aware of our selfish drive to manipulate and dominate others.

For this we ask you to forgive us, and by the gentle touch of your Spirit, help us to find a renewed sense of compassion for one another, that we may truly live as your people, in service to all. Amen.

- *John Wise*

Almighty and most merciful God, you know the thoughts of our hearts. We confess that we have sinned and transgressed your holy laws. You call us to unity and love and ask that we reach out to others in this name of love, yet our circle of love is repeatedly broken.

We create separate circles: the inner circle and the outer circle, the circle of power and the circle of despair, the circle of privilege and the circle of deprivation.

Forgive us for our sins of exclusion.

We confess that the circle of love is broken whenever there is alienation, whenever there is misunderstanding, whenever there is insensitivity or a hardening of the heart.

Forgive us for our sins of arrogance and 'uncaringness'.

We confess that the circle of love is broken whenever we cannot see eye to eye, whenever we cannot link hand to hand, whenever we cannot live heart to heart and affirm our differences with civility and love.

Forgive us for our sins of pride and indifference.

Grant us, Oh Lord, the grace and power to put away all hurtful things. Deliver us from the bondage of sin that we may bring forth fruit worthy of repentance, and from henceforth walk in your holy ways; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

- *John Wise*

An Easter prayer.

Almighty God, for whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets can be hid, enter each of our hearts this morning. We have just celebrated your Easter experience and we ask this morning that our lives, also, may experience this rebirth of the spirit, this rekindling of the divine presence, so that we may live life anew.

Be with us. Ease our cares and heartaches by the gentle touch of your love; banish all despair and pain that may mar our daily lives; comfort those shattered by loss, through the promise of your eternal presence.

Fill us, O God, with hope and courage that we may walk the path that you have chosen, inspired by your holy spirit, striving always to perfectly love you and magnify your name.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

- *John Wise*

Almighty God, who fills all things with your presence, we beseech you this day to keep us near to you. Give ear to our prayers and pour out upon us your loving tenderness; grant that in all our ways and doings we may remember that you see us, and may we have the grace to know and perceive the things you would have us do. Graft in our hearts the love of your name; nourish us with all goodness, and with mercy keep us in your grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

- *John Wise*

Awesome God of all power and might, author and giver of all good things, bless all who worship you this day. We come to you this morning seeking your steadfast presence in a ceaselessly changing world. Seasons come and go, and our busy and often fragmented lives leave us yearning for the calmness and comfort of your eternal presence.

We come to you as sons and daughters aware of our faults and fears, aware of our anger and aggression, aware of our incivilities, aware of our selfish manipulation of others. For this we ask your forgiveness.

Lord, help us to realize that this is a new day, and we yearn for a new song to sing. By the gentle touch of your spirit grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please you in newness of life and a renewed sense of compassion for one another.

Inspire us by your love. Protect us by your power. Guide us by your spirit. And in your mercy, receive us, now and always. Amen.

- *John Wise*

O awesome God, author and giver of all good things, bless all who worship you this day. We yearn to feel your presence, and we yearn to give voice to our song, that a thousand tongues would sing our great Redeemer's praise.

Yet in our conflicted, every day lives, our voices are often mute when they should be clear and strong.

We fail to take you seriously:

You ask us to be peacemakers, yet we are children of war;
You ask us to care for the widow and the orphan, the sick and the poor,
yet their increasing numbers are met with our indifference;
You ask us to love one another, yet our civility decreases, our enmities
increase, and we find it so easy to keep our distance from those who seem
different than ourselves. We covet the familiar and the safe.

For this we ask your forgiveness. Forgive our silence in the face of great joy or blatant wrong. Forgive our reluctance to be extravagant in our love for others. Forgive our fear and timidity which stifles the joys of sharing.

O heavenly father, hold us close. Inspire us with your love. Guide us by your spirit. Protect us by your power. And in your mercy and grace, receive us now and always. Amen.

- *John Wise*

Adapted and modified from a prayer by Walter Rauschenbusch.

O God of all times and places, be with us today as we gather to worship you. We pray for your church as it faces a perplexing, changing world.

Baptize her afresh with the life-giving spirit of Jesus.

Bestow upon her a swift compassion with suffering, and a responsiveness and loyalty to your will.

Fill her with a Christ-like tenderness for the heavy-laden and downtrodden.

Put upon her lips the ancient gospel of her Lord, whose good news brings us hope, and joy, and forgiveness.

Bid her cease from seeking her own life, lest she lose it, and make her valiant to give up her life to humanity, that, like her crucified Lord, she may follow the cross's path to higher glory.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

- *John Wise*

Adapted and modified from a prayer from the Chicago Temple (First United Methodist Church, Downtown, Chicago)

O most awesome and compassionate God, Hold us close for a moment that we may have the courage to look deep inside and not be afraid to offer ourselves to you.

Only in your tender grasp can we face our struggles:
Our reluctance to do something extravagant for another;
Our quick rise to anger when our pride is offended;
Our ease with which we let someone else play our part, or fulfill our task;
Our clamor for center stage, to be noticed and approved;
Our silence in the face of great joy or blatant wrong.

Hold us close so that in the telling of our tale, in the exposing of our frailties and errors to you, we might find shelter under your wings, claim the joy of your love, and feel our burdens roll away.

Help us to face this new day, set our feet on the Jerusalem road, and guide us to be true Disciples of Christ.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

- *John Wise*

A prayer for wartime.

Oh God of many names and faces, yet one in being and spirit, we call out to you today. We name you God, Allah, Jehovah, Abba, Eternal Father... and with each calling we give thanks for that holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us.

Guide the people of your church as we walk through the wilderness of this world, beset by war, and killing, and death. Comfort and protect those now in harm's way. Help us to bring swift resolution to the chaos which we face. Bring loved ones safely home, and healing and rebuilding to a torn and damaged earth.

Have mercy upon us. Forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may hereafter serve and please you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

- *John Wise*

A New Year's prayer.

Oh God, we come to you at the beginning of a new year, called to face your gracious way of living. Yet, we are conflicted. We yearn to make the New Year a better time and place yet our resolutions and promises are often trivial. We want to enlarge our spiritual horizons yet the cacophony and static of daily living often drowns out the still, small voice which ever calls us, in love and compassion, to follow you.

You ask us to leave the past behind and walk into these new days, yet we often fear discipleship. We have stumbled on our pathway, confusing hubris with vision, and selfishness with concern, yet deep inside we know that you walk with us day by day.

We acknowledge that this is a new day, and that you reach out to us asking that we put aside all fear and doubt and take courage in your loving call. Oh Lord, confirm our faith. Steady our hands in your service that we may serve and please you in newness of life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

- *John Wise*

Oh, living God you come among us to share our WHOLE lives:
Our joys and our laughter,
Our fears and anxieties,
Our anguish and our pain.

But far too often we ignore your voice, and fail to acknowledge you as the source of our successes, our substance, our very selves. We find it far too easy to complain when things go wrong then to praise when all is well. We feed our bodies a rich diet while neglecting to feed our souls. We find the tug of power and wealth often outweighs the importance of service and sensitivity, and we allow religious words and forms to substitute for living encounters with those persons you have called us to love.

Forgive our unbelief, our misdoings, and our trembling faith as we face our daily lives. Save us from rendering unto Caesar what belongs to you, and forgive us for forgetting your eternal gospel amid the temporal pressures of our troubled days.

Eternal God, we give thanks for the holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may henceforth go into the world in the strength of your spirit and love to give ourselves for others in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

- John Wise

Oh living God, you came among us to share our whole lives; our joys and laughter; our fears and our anxieties, our successes and our failures. You walk with us in times of trial and suffering and you call us to come into the safety of your love.

Encourage us today to trust that your love is, indeed, wrapped around us even when we feel most frightened, most alone, most lost. You see us as we are, and you still call to us and love us.

We yearn to be your people yet our lives often contradict these goals. We know it is not enough to say we are your people if we do not stand with you in places of pain. We know it is not enough to say we are your people if we do not travel with you into places of distress. We know it is not enough to say that we are your people if we do not act with you in places of oppression, or hunger, or loss.

Help us this morning to come together as your people not in word alone but in deed also. Help us to comfort and be comforted, to welcome and be welcomed, to shelter and be sheltered, to reconcile and be reconciled.

As you have provided hospitality to us, Oh Lord, may we offer it to others, and receive it with grace, and so enable all people to feel safe, and loved, and at home, wherever they may be.

Amen.

- *John Wise*

Oh Lord of all power and might, who art the author and giver of all good things, be with us today. As we quiet our hearts and minds, listening for your still, small voice, surprise us again with that love that surpasses all our understanding.

Enfold us in your presence. Embolden us by your spirit that we may seek in all things to know your will, and then perform it with humbleness and gladness of heart.

Be with us on our journey. Give us the grace and power to put away all hurtful things. Nourish us with all goodness and mercy, so that our lives may be lived in newness of purpose, with compassion for those in need, and in honor of your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

- *John Wise*

Shall we pray:

Oh Lord of all power and might, who art the author and giver of all good things, bless all who worship thee today, from the rising of the sun unto its going down.

Of thy goodness, give to us with abundance.

With thy love, inspire us.

By thy spirit, guide us.

By thy power, protect us.

And in thy mercy, receive us, now and always. Amen

- *John Wise*

Oh Lord of all times and places, the author of all power and might, bless all who worship you this day. Rekindle within each of us your divine, encompassing love so that our lives may mirror your commandments to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly in that pathway you have called us to follow.

For our myriad shortcomings, forgive us. You, who have given birth to our world, watch as we pollute it. You, who have called us to unity and love, watch as war proliferates and communities are divided by hate and greed, by ethnic fears, and by callous disinterest. We stand scripture on its head as we turn ploughshares into swords, humbleness into hubris, and as we promote values where the first stay the first, and the last remain in anonymity.

Forgive us our unbelief, our hypocrisy, our anger, and our selfishness, and lead us, by the gentle touch of your spirit, to find, again, our sense of compassion for one another, and a renewed dedication to the work of your church.

Oh Lord we give thanks for that holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us, and we take comfort in that promise that your presence will always be with us. We pray that you will guide us by your spirit, inspire us by your love, protect us by your power, and receive us, now and always, in your mercy.

This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen

- *John Wise*

Our heavenly father, you call us to face into your gracious way of living, asking that we leave the past behind and walk into new days of ministry.

We confess that we often take comfort in how things used to be, in the familiar and the safe response, afraid to open our lives to bold new paths and directions. We some times are even afraid of discipleship with its potential demands on our stressful lives.

But still you call, reminding us that this IS a new day, and that Christ is sharing freedom with us. It is OUR day to put aside all fear, to leave doubting behind, and to take courage in God's loving embrace.

Be with us on our journey. Lead us on that path that brings us closer to you, and help us, with your grace and compassion, to reach out to those in need, renewing and healing the world around us.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

- *John Wise*

A prayer for Advent.

Our heavenly Father we come to you in this Advent season with hearts full of expectations and hopes... and worries... and fears. We come to celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace yet we live in a world beset by growing fears of war and terror. We yearn for discipleship yet we often turn from opportunities to serve, and our lives are troubled by perplexity and discord. We confess to feeding our bodies a rich diet while neglecting to feed our souls, and often power and wealth assume more importance to us than sensitivity and service.

Forgive us, compassionate redeemer, for sometimes allowing religious words and forms to substitute for living encounters with those persons you have called us to love, and grant us the opportunity to start over again.

Help us, like Mary, to be the bearers of Christ to our world. Keep us in your love and care and be close with us on our journey. Through God the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, we pray, Amen.

- *John Wise*

Kathleen Yelle

Abba - A prayer for Father's Day.

The divine Creator, the holy One, the Alpha and Omega...

Dust of your creation... yet we still seek... how shall we dare approach that which is - I Am...??

We follow the one from ages long ago... Yeshua is our guide. He has given us the word that we now speak...

Abba

Abba... Father...

Yeshua has opened our eyes and we see that we are not dust – we are your beloved children. As we rise before you with open eyes we see our provider, our protector, our guide, and our rock. We rejoice in your embrace and celebrate together now as the beloved sons and daughters to whom you gave life!

- *Kathleen Yelle*

Changing Seasons – A prayer for the end of the school year.

As the family of Christ, we bow our heads in prayer...

To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven.

Heavenly Father, we come to you today in celebration of the change of season. Today we celebrate the end of the school year and the beginning of summer. We are thankful as we remember the many people in our lives who have nurtured our children during the past year: teachers and educators, counselors, coaches, administrators, and support staff. We give thanks for those in our church family who have nurtured all of our family with their service as Sunday school teachers, adult education and Disciple leaders and ministers. We also thank you for the glorious gift of music, our music director and the many people who have shared their musical talents with us. We have so many reasons to celebrate your goodness... truly we are blessed as a community and as a family of faith.

Today the change of season also brings new beginnings for some of your family. We now see the fruition of the many seasons that have gone before as we celebrate the graduation of several young adults. As they venture out into the larger world, we submit our prayers for your continued guidance, protection and blessings upon them. Nurtured in your family of faith, we send them out as Disciples of your Son. May they share their blessings and the light and love of Jesus Christ with all that they meet, as we have shared with them.

We see that God is good... and He is good all the time!...

We continue our service of celebration, thanks and praise, Amen.

- *Kathleen Yelle*

A prayer for Mother's Day

Gracious God,

We thank you for adopting us into your family through the miracle of your grace, and for calling us to be brothers and sisters to each other.

In the sacrament of baptism we recall that Jesus was nurtured in the water of the womb, taking on the form of a human; the beloved son of your humble servant Mary. We give praise to the mother of our Lord and thanksgiving for all of the mothers you have placed in our lives - women who have taught us your commandments, exemplified your love and revealed your grace.

As we remember the women who have blessed our lives in so many ways we also pray for your blessing on mothers both known and unknown who are struggling to raise their children in the midst of illness, poverty and war. Use us as your servants in their lives making us channels of your care, comfort and healing for them and for their families.

We ask now that your perfect love flow abundantly within us, through us and around us as we hold up these women in prayer and prepare to celebrate with one another the awesome miracle of your creation.

In the name of Mary's son Jesus we submit these our prayers.

Amen.

- Kathleen Yelle

A Prayer for Girl Scout Week

(3/7/09)

Great Jehovah, Creator of us all – we ask you to center us in this place. Help us now recall our behavior and actions since we last came before you as one body...

O Lord, have we done our best to be
honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong, and
Have we done our best to be
responsible for what we say and do?

O Lord, have we done our best to
respect ourselves and others,
respect those in authority, and
have we used our resources wisely?
Did we do our best this week
To make your world a better place?

If not - if we fall short - then we ask that you would have us spend time with the humble girls among us who can teach us that which we have spoken – the Girl Scout Law.

From the mouths of our Girl Scouts we find your eternal wisdom shining forth.
So, we would also do well to learn their promise:

“On my honor, I will try:
To serve God and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.”

Let us celebrate now together, the gift of these children and the wisdom that they speak as we continue in our worship, our praise and our lesson.

Amen.

- *Kathleen Yelle*

Heart Beats

Let us come together in the presence of our Creator to pray...

The groceries are few
 Heart beats in fear
Our clothes grow ragged
 Heart beats in fear
His job is gone
 Heart beats in fear
My house is lost
 Heart beats in fear.

In our hearts lies your seed of faith...

I am your Creator
 Heart beats in faith
You are my people
 Heart beats in faith
I am with you always
 Heart beats in faith
You are my beloved
 ... Heart beats in love.

In our hearts we are transformed by your love...

Divine giver of faith, divine author of love – we worship, we praise, and we rejoice
as many hearts in faith, and one heart in love...

Amen.

- *Kathleen Yelle*

Hosannah! - An interpretive prayer for Palm Sunday.

God of my fathers, God of my mothers, I come to you in prayer! I come to you in elation!

Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth came to us today. They say he has been healing the sick and lame. They say that he has cured the blind and the lepers with his touch. Lord, he is like a good shepherd to the people!

It is hard to believe that Jesus is really here today... They said that he turned water to wine and fed five thousand people with five loaves of bread and two fishes. How can that be? Yet, some in the crowd said that they were there. Lord, he is like bread and water to a starving and thirsty people!

Jesus rode his donkey right by my house. His Disciples followed him. They say Jesus has given authority to his Disciples – so that they may do miracles in his name. Lord God, he is like a healthy vine with branches full of sweet fruit!

Jesus is not like the other holy men – he confronts the Pharisees and Sadducees (with their hearts of stone). A woman who followed him told me that he saved her from an angry mob – that he looked at her with eyes filled with love and compassion, and told her that her sins were forgiven. He is like a bright light in the darkness of the night.

Yaweh – I even heard that he raised a man from the dead!

The woman told me that when he prays, Jesus calls you Abba! Lord, let me know – is he the one? Is he the Christ? We have been waiting so long. Surely he must be the Holy One foretold by your prophets of old.

I shouted Hosannah with the people. I sang Hosannah with the crowd. Your blessings are surely upon this man. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

... Abba, is he the one?

- *Kathleen Yelle*

God's Glory

In the garden,
Rose leaves glisten with morning dew,
And the glory of God astounds.

In the garden,
Jonquils sway gently in the breeze,
And the glory of God surrounds.

In the garden,
A dove coos softly to her mate,
And the glory of God abounds.

In the garden,
The glory of God astounds, surrounds, abounds;
Come celebrate the glory of God, Amen!

- *Kathleen Yelle*

Open My Heart

Let us begin with a quiet moment to center ourselves in this Holy space...

The faith of Abraham,
The guidance of Moses,
The passion of David,
The wisdom of Solomon,
The visions of Isaiah,
The loyalty of Ruth,
The love of Jesus

The chronicles of your sons and daughters written down to study, to ponder, to example... your word, breathing life in each new generation of your children.

In the words of the modern lyricist:

Lord, open my eyes that I may see, glimpses of truth you have for me.
Lord, open my ears that I may hear voices of truth you send so clear.
Silently now I wait for thee, ready my God your will to see.
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

- *Kathleen Yelle*

Some for Joy

Let us join together in prayer.

We live each in our own way -

Some in one town, and some in another,
Some in large families, and some by ourselves,
Some very young, and some very old
Some in health, and some in pain.

Yet, near or far, together or alone, young or old, in health or pain, we come together this day bound by the joy we have found in you and in your Son Christ Jesus. As we sing our songs of praise, listen to your holy word and give thanks for the blessings you have given us, let us also echo the words of the psalmist "The Lord has done great things for us and we are filled with joy."

AMEN!

- *Kathleen Yelle*

This Place

Let us join as one body to pray...

Heavenly Creator, all of us come to this place out of world filled with chaos - a world where your children go hungry and dying.

Many of us come to this place out of life filled with strife – a life where we love not our neighbor, where families are torn apart, where your children go hungry and dying.

Some of come to this place out of our own inner turmoil – an inner place where we have lost our direction, where our possessions possess us, where we are hungry and dying.

Yaweh, your children come to this place to worship, pray, confess and praise. We come to this place for hope, renewal, food and life.

Heavenly Creator, in the stillness of your sanctuary come fill us with your holy presence...

Come banish turmoil strife and chaos,
Come renew us, feed, us, and give us life,
Come bring your hope and your peace in the stillness of this place.

(pause for quiet reflection)

We give thanks for your indwelling Spirit. Let us continue in praise and worship!

Amen.

- *Kathleen Yelle*

**Through Goodness and Grace
(Pour forth Your Spirit)**

Creator of Heaven and Earth,

From a single cell, you have brought us forth from our mother's womb.

Through your goodness we have received all that our bodies require
Shelter when we have been cold,
Drink when we have been thirsty,
And food when we have been hungry.

Through your grace we have received all that our souls require...
We have followed your Son's call and received your holy light,
We have been baptized in His name and received your holy water,
He has taught us your commandments and we have received your holy word.

Now you come to us seeking to harvest the fruit of your labor; but we remain fearful and anxious. Continue to shower us with your blessings as we seek to lay aside our fears and inhibitions so that we may live for you with passion – so that our lives may be heavy with your fruit.

As we come together to worship –
Open our eyes Lord,
Open our ears Lord,
Open our minds Lord,
Open our hearts Lord.

Pour forth Your Spirit into the garden,
Pour forth Your Spirit on your children,
Pour forth Your Spirit with abundance,
Pour forth Your Spirit with abandon.

Come Lord God - Pour forth Your Spirit! – pour into us, pour through us, pour all around and about us.

Come Lord God – pour forth your spirit!

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

- *Kathleen Yelle*

Time to Forgive

"I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt."

Lord, forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

How many times Lord? How many times have we uttered these words in your presence without taking them into our hearts?

Now is the time Lord and now is the place. We open our hearts to you Lord and invite you in...

Sacred Creator, we ask you to bring before our mind's eye, those in our lives that have been difficult...

I Am, we ask you to bring before our mind's eye those that have been hurtful...

Almighty Jehovah, we ask you to bring before our mind's eye those that have been our enemies...

... Lord, we give to you all of our frustration...

Surround us O Lord, surround us now in your healing light,

.
.

... Lord, we give to you all of our pain...

Infuse us O Lord, infuse us now with your perfect love.

.
.

... Lord, we give to you all of our anger

Wash us O Lord, wash us now in your holy grace.

"Then [Joseph] fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them..."

... surrounded by your light, infused with your love, and washed by your grace - Lord God we worship you anew - Amen!

- *Kathleen Yelle* (Quotes taken from Genesis 45:1-15)

Unbound

The threads of our lives spin together to make a mighty garment
A baby's first breath, children's hands held in friendship, warm bodies entwined
in love... the woof and warp of our existence.

The strings of our experience sewn together... binding us, holding us tight – a
toddler's nighttime fears, a child alone on the playground, couples voices raised
in anger... the woof and warp of our existence.

Why do we come to this Holy place? For what do we search?

We have heard the call, we have heard his voice. The Lord of Life stands before
us... He has bid us come.

Our wrappings are undone, the binding is unloosed, and the mighty garment falls
at his feet...

We stand before Him unclothed.

He lifts us up before Him and His holy spirit pours forth... around us, through us,
and into us. It wells up within us. It wells up as a spring of living water as we are
clothed anew in his everlasting love...

All praise to the Creator, all praise to the Son, all praise to the Spirit that unbinds
us and sets us free! Come let us celebrate life with our Lord!

- *Kathleen Yelle*

With a Grateful Heart

Creator, it has been a week since we last gathered together. In that time, refrigerators have been filled, meals shared, laundry folded and beds made.

We have hurried along our way to school or work - soccer, band and choir. Homework has been handed in, customers have been served, and money has changed hands.

For some of us, a baby was welcomed, doctors consulted and grief shared. There have been smiles, laughter, hugs and tears.

Our lives are so full!

Too often in our busy lives we see all that we have and all that we do as the product of our own hands. But today, this hour, this minute we open our eyes to see, our ears to hear, our minds to discern – You our Creator.

With trembling and grateful hearts we offer our praise, thanksgiving and adoration... Let the celebration begin! Amen.

- Kathleen Yelle

PRAYERS OF THE LITURGISTS

Prayers for the Offering

Gregg Atkins

I call you to a time of giving with this prayer:

Thou who art over us,
Thou who are one of us,
Thou who art:

Give us

Pure hearts, that we may see thee;
Humble hearts, so to hear thee;
Hearts of love, to serve thee;
Hearts of faith, to abide in thee;

And generous hands that we may act as your witness in the world.

- *Gregg Atkins*

Sam Fields

A Call for Pledges

The other night I was thinking about what I was going to say for this very moment and how I could relate it to the Lord when suddenly the word GIVE came to my mind. I thought the Lord has given a lot to us. He gave his only son to us knowing what the outcome was going to be. To me that is a very big sacrifice. If you don't believe me put yourself in the Lord's shoes for a minute and someone were to ask you to give your child and they would die a horrible death. You would say NO WAY, not in a million years. Yet he did.

Knowing this makes me want to be more Christ-like and it is here where I challenge myself and all of you as well. I challenge all of us to become more Christ-like and to give. Today and in the coming week I challenge us to take time each day to give. Give help, love, affection, generosity - anything that helps to change someone's day and expect nothing in return because I know that when I'm helping others I am at peace with myself and I feel more Christ-like.

Today is a great time to start giving because that extra change from the coffee that was bought this morning or the groceries that were bought earlier in the week will be used to help change many others lives. Now individually it doesn't seem like one person's generosity will change another's life but if we all work together and offer what we can to the Lord I know we can. Because after all change does add up. So please give what you can today and whenever you can tomorrow.

Amen.

- *Sam Fields*

Lisette Henderson

God is especially good at the impossible – water from a rock, healing the broken-hearted, and showing us that we in fact have more than enough. Do you believe it? As we present our gifts to God, dream about the possible happening in your life. Let God's spirit touch your heart with compassion, healing, and generosity. Let us give to God out of the rich blessings we have already received.

- *Lisette Henderson*

Jen Smuda-Cotter

In this Christmas season, as we focus on holiday festivities, obligations, and gift-giving, let us not forget to give back some of what you have given. Open our hearts for generosity today Lord, that we give first to you.

- *Jen Smuda-Cotter*

Living God,

We thank you for the privilege of giving in your exalted name. We value our ability to give in a way that honors your Spirit. As we present our offerings, we remain secure in our knowledge that you will sustain us by your redeeming grace and your infinite love. May your righteous Spirit always dwell in our hearts.

Amen.

- *Jen Smuda-Cotter*

A call for the offering.

Money is tight right now for a lot of us. With an unemployed husband and bills to pay, I understand. A lot of us are worrying about how to take care of ourselves, and we aren't thinking so much about how to take care of our church. But, I knew if I dug deep enough, I could find something to give. So I checked my couch, and the ashtray of my car, and my spare purses, and coat pockets. I picked up some coins in the parking lot, and took the pile of change my husband leaves on the nightstand. In bits and pieces, it didn't seem like much, but, when you put it all together... it adds up. Let's all dig deep, and see what we can give. You may be surprised. I was.

- *Jen Smuda-Cotter*

"Yet for us there is one God... from whom are all things and for whom we exist"
(1 Corinthians 8:6).

God, we exist because of you and live for you. All that we have, we have through you. Help us to remember that as we open our hearts and our wallets to give back some of what we have been so generously given.

Amen.

- *Jen Smuda-Cotter*

PRAYERS OF OTHERS WE SHARE

Richard Allen

We believe, O Lord,

That you have not abandoned us to the dim light of our own reason to conduct us to happiness, but that you have revealed in Holy Scriptures whatever is necessary for us to believe and practice.

How noble and excellent are the precepts, how sublime and enlightening the truth, how persuasive and strong the motives, how powerful the assistance of your holy religion.

Our delight shall be in your statutes, and we will not forget your Word. Amen.

- *Richard Allen*, African Methodist Episcopal Bishop

Lavon Bayer

Lift up your eyes, seeking to know your God.
Attune your spirit to the One in whom we dwell.

God's love surrounds us here today.

God calls us to be children of light.

We belong to the day when we have faith.

We live confidently in the hope of salvation.

We seek to be faithful to the best we know.

We want to invest the talents God gives us.

Faithfulness gives us a sense of greater abundance.

Doing justice adds to our sense of worth and dignity.

We are here to build up on another.

May our worship encourage each of us today.

- *Lavon Bayer* from *Taught by Love*

Ruth Duck

God, like a bakerwoman,
You bring the leaven which causes our hopes to rise.
With your strong and gentle hands, shape our lives.
Warm us with your love.
Take our common lives and touch them with your grace,
That we may nourish hope among humanity.
We pray trusting in your name, through Jesus our Christ. Amen.

- *Ruth Duck*

O God, in mystery and silence you are present in our lives,
Bringing new life out of destruction,
Hope out of despair, growth out of difficulty.
We thank you that you do not leave us alone but labor to make us whole.
Help us to perceive your unseen hand in the unfolding of our lives,
And to attend to the gentle guidance of your Spirit,
That we may know the joy you give your people. Amen.

- *Ruth Duck*

Sandra E. Graham

We have been called here to face into God's gracious way of living.
We are to leave the past behind us and walk into these new days of our ministry.
Sometimes we'd rather remember how things used to be.
Sometimes we are afraid to be disciples.
But this is a new day, and Christ is sharing freedom with us.
It is a day to put aside all fear, to leave doubting behind, and to take courage in
God's loving call.
We will look to the new day, and we will set ourselves on the Jerusalem
road.
We will strive for faithfulness, even at the cost of popularity, and we will be
Disciples of Christ, renewing and healing the world around us.

- *Sandra E. Graham*

Lonni Collins Pratt and Fr. Daniel Homan

Faithful Creator and Parent, you have seen into the depths of me. There's no reason to hide anything from you or to pretend that I am not what I'm not or that I have no fears. The antidote to fear is not courage; it is love. Make me more loving. Open me to your love. Take this callused heart of mine and break it if you must. I won't fear love. Teach me to love. Amen.

- Lonni Collins Pratt and Fr. Daniel Homan

God, today I say yes to another day and all its opportunities. Tonight I say thank you for another day and all its opportunities. I am in a cycle of seasons that seems to be taking me somewhere. Help me remember that time is an ally and not an enemy. These seasons that come and go are taking me to you. Give me faith to hold on to that knowledge. Amen.

- *Lonni Collins Pratt and Fr. Daniel Homan*

Marcia Marion

God, who has promised eternal life to all, we come before you as humble people. You give us many opportunities to serve, but we turn away. Sometimes we think of ourselves before we think of others. We take paths that lead away from you, not toward you. We confess that we need you and your help. Be with us on our journey. Help us to grow closer to you and to reach out to those in need. Through God the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, we pray. Amen.

- *Marcia Marion, Taken from Touch Holiness*

Mother Theresa

Dear Jesus,

Help me to spread Thy fragrance everywhere I go. Flood my soul with Thy spirit and love. Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly that all my life may only be a radiance of Thine. Shine through me and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with may feel Thy presence in my soul. Let them look up and see no longer me but only Jesus. Stay with me and then I shall begin to shine as you shine, so to shine as to be a light to others.

- *Mother Theresa*

D.T. Niles

O God, the Parent of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our Parent,
You are to us both Father and Mother.

We who are your children draw around your lotus feet to worship you.
Your compassion is as the fragrance of the lotus.

Though you are enthroned in the heavens , we may draw nigh to you,
For your feet stand upon the earth where we humans dwell.

We see your compassion in Jesus.

Teach us that we belong to you and that you alone belong to us.

And you are enough. Amen.

- *D.T. Niles*, Bishop, Methodist Church of Sri Lanka

Walter Rauschenbusch

"O God, we thank you for this universe, our home; and for its vastness and richness, the exuberance of life which fills it and of which we are part. We praise you for the vault of heaven and for the winds, pregnant with blessings, for the clouds which navigate and for the constellations, there so high. We praise you for the oceans and for the fresh streams, for the endless mountains, the trees, the grass under our feet. We praise you for our senses, to be able to see the moving splendour, to hear the songs of lovers, to smell the beautiful fragrance of the spring flowers.

Give us, we pray you, a heart that is open to all this joy and all this beauty, and free our souls of the blindness that comes from preoccupation with the things of life, and of the shadows of passions, to the point that we no longer see nor hear, not even when the bush at the roadside is afire with the glory of God. Give us a broader sense of communion with all living things, our sisters, to whom you gave this world as a home along with us.

We remember with shame that in the past we took advantage of our greater power and used it with unlimited cruelty, so much so that the voice of the earth, which should have arisen to you as a song was turned into a moan of suffering.

May we learn that living things do not live just for us, that they live for themselves and for you, and that they love the sweetness of life as much as we do, and serve you, in their place, better than we do in ours. When our end arrives and we can no longer make use of this world, and when we have to give way to others, may we leave nothing destroyed by our ambition or deformed by our ignorance, but may we pass along our common heritage more beautiful and more sweet, without having removed from it any of its fertility and joy. And so may our bodies return in peace to the womb of the great mother who nourished us and our spirits enjoy perfect life in you."

- *Walter Rauschenbusch*

O God, we pray for thy Church, which is set today amid the perplexities of a changing order, and face to face with a great new task. We remember with love the nurture she gave to our spiritual life in its infancy, the tasks she set for our growing strength, the influence of the devoted hearts she gathers, the steadfast power for good she has exerted. When we compare her with all human institutions, we rejoice, for there is none like her. But when we judge her by the mind of her Master, we bow in pity and contrition.

O baptize her afresh in the life-giving spirit of Jesus! Grant her a new birth, though it be with the travail of repentance and humiliation. Bestow upon her a more imperious responsiveness to duty, a swifter compassion with suffering, and an utter loyalty to the will of God. Put upon her lips the ancient gospel of her Lord. Help her to proclaim boldly the coming of the Kingdom of God and the doom of all that resist it. Fill her with the prophets' scorn of tyranny, and with a Christ-like tenderness for the heavy-laden and down-trodden. Give her faith to espouse the cause of the people, and in their hands that grope after freedom and light to recognize the bleeding hands of Christ. Bid her cease from seeking her own life, lest she lose it. Make her valiant to give her life to humanity, that like her crucified Lord she may mount by the path of the cross to a higher glory.

- *Walter Rauschenbusch*

Bradford Torrey (Lyrics)

Not So in Haste, My Heart

Not so in haste, my heart! Have faith in God, and wait; although he linger long, he never comes too late.

He never cometh late; he knoweth what is best; vex not thyself in vain; until he cometh, rest.

Until he cometh, rest, nor grudge the hours that roll; the feet that wait for God are soonest at the goal.

Are soonest at the goal that is not gained with speed; then hold thee still, my heart, for I shall wait his lead.

- Lyrics: Bradford Torrey
Tune: Dolomite Chant

PRAYERS OF UNKNOWN AUTHORS

“Mother Theresa’s Prayer”

This prayer has been read in the Woodland United Methodist Church once a year as a tribute to Woody Pearson, M.D., a former member of the congregation.

Found among the meager possessions of Mother Theresa following her death, was a piece of paper thumb-tacked next to the door of her quarters. She would stop and read this piece of paper each morning before beginning her day. She called it her “Opening Prayer” from God. This is what it said:

People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered. Love them anyway!

If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives. Do good anyway!

If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies. Succeed anyway!

The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway!

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway!

The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds. Think big anyway!

People favor the underdogs but follow only top dogs. Fight for a few underdogs anyway!

What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight. Build anyway!

People really need help but may attack you if you do help them. Help people anyway!

Give the world the best you have and you’ll get kicked in the teeth. Give the world the best you have anyway!

- *Author Unknown* (“Mother Theresa’s Prayer” - adopted from a composition by Keith Kent)

Prayer from The Book of Worship, 1965

O God, our guide and guardian,
 You have led us apart from the busy world into the quiet of your house.
Grant us grace to worship you in Spirit and in truth,
 To the comfort of our souls
 And the building of every good purpose and holy desire.
Enable us to do more perfectly the work to which you have called us,
 That we may not fear the coming of night,
 When we shall resign into your hands
 The tasks that you have committed to us.
So that we may worship you not with our lips at this hour,
 But in word and deed for all the days of our lives;
Through Jesus Christ our savior, Amen.

- *Author Unknown*

England, 20th Century Prayer

We confess to you, all-knowing God, what we are.
We are not the people we like others to think we are.
We are afraid to admit, even to ourselves, what lies in the depths of our souls.
But we cannot hide our true selves from you.
You know us as we are, and yet you love us.
Help us not to shrink from self-knowledge.
Teach us to respect ourselves for your sake.
Give us the courage to put our trust in your guiding power.
Raise us out of the paralysis of guilt
into the freedom and energy of forgiven people.
And for those who through long habit find forgiveness hard to accept,
we ask you to break their bondage and set them free;
Through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

- *Author Unknown*

Traditional Native American Prayer

O Great Spirit, whose voice we hear in the winds, and whose breath gives life to all the world, hear us.

We come before you as your children.

We are small and weak; we need your strength and wisdom.

Let us walk in beauty and make our eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.

May our hands respect the things you have made, our ears be sharp to hear your voice.

Make us wise, so that we may know the things you have taught your people -

The lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.

We seek strength not to be superior to our brothers and sisters, but to live in harmony with ourselves and all of your creation.

Help us to be ever ready to come to you, so when life fades as a fading sunset, our spirits may come to you without shame. Amen

- *Author Unknown*

Traditional Dakota Tribe Prayer

Grandfather, Great Spirit,

You have always been, and before you nothing has been.

There is no one to pray to but you.

The star nations all over the heaven are yours, and yours are the grasses of the earth.

You are older than all need, older than all pain and prayer.

Grandfather, Great Spirit, fill us with light.

Give us strength to understand and eyes to see.

Teach us to walk the soft earth as relatives to all that live.

Help us, for without you we are nothing. Amen.

- *Author Unknown*

PRAYERS FROM UNKNOWN AUTHORS & SOURCES

When you are the neediest,
He is the most sufficient.
When you are completely helpless,
He is the most helpful.
When you feel totally dependent,
He is absolutely dependable.
When you are the weakest,
He is the most able.
When you are the most alone,
He is intimately present.
When you feel you are the least,
He is the greatest.
When you feel the most useless,
He is preparing you.
When it is the darkest,
He is the only light you need.
When you feel the least secure,
He is your rock and Fortress.
When you are the most humble,
He is the most gracious.

- *Author Unknown*

Who I am in Christ

I am accepted in Christ.
I am God's Child.
I am Christ's friend.
I have been justified.
I am united with the Lord and one with Him in spirit.
I have been bought with a price; I belong to God.
I am a member of Christ's body.
I am a saint.
I have been adopted as God's child.
I have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit.
I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins.
I am complete in Christ.

I am secure in Christ.
I am free forever from condemnation.
I am assured that all things work together for good.
I am free from any condemning charges against me.
I cannot be separated from the love of God.
I have been established; anointed and sealed by God.
I am hidden with Christ in God.
I am confident that the good work God has begun in me will be perfected.
I am a citizen of heaven.
I have not been given a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind.
I can find grace and mercy in time of need.
I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me.

I am significant in Christ.
I am the salt and light of the earth.
I am a branch of the true vine, a channel of His life.
I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit.
I am a personal witness of Christ's.
I am God's temple.
I am a minister of reconciliation.
I am God's coworker.
I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realm.
I am God's workmanship.
I may approach God with freedom and confidence.
I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

- *Author Unknown*

The light of God surround me –

The love of God enfolds me –

The power of God protects me –

The presence of God watches over me.

Wherever I am, God is!

- *Author Unknown*

Glorious Mystery,

We rise up as one voice to salute you, to thank you especially, but, firstly, importantly to worship you with our whole heart and our whole mind and with our whole being.

But for you, we are *less* than nothing. Thank you, for your steadfastness, your loyalty to us, and of paramount importance, your unyielding care and love and your unyielding devotion to us, your cherished possessions.

As of old, we have only to ask and you are there. As we walk our personal faith walk, walk with and guide us we pray. In gratitude for the life of your son, whom we reverence now! Amen.

- *Author Unknown*

Dear Lord,

Please give me...

A few friends who understand me and yet remain my friends,
A work to do which has real value without which the world would feel the poorer,
A mind unafraid to travel even though the trail be not blazed,
An understanding heart,
A sense of humor,
Time for quiet, silent meditation,
A feeling of the presence of God,
And the patience to wait for the coming of these things and the wisdom to know them when they come.

- *Author Unknown*

As your children, we can't comprehend or fully realize the meaning of a Father's love -

How tender and how wise
His patience and his guidance
His helpful caring ways
The special thoughtful things he does to brighten up the days.

Years go by before we know the depth of his concern.
the love of his protectiveness – it takes so long to learn.

But, as we grow, we understand, for we look back and see through older eyes
and older hearts your love and loyalty.

It's these and many other things that make you grow more dear, more admired
and more appreciated with every passing year.

- *Author Unknown*

O, Eternal Wonder,

We can only try,
To give this day the best we have.
The same for all the rest we have,
We can only try.

We can only try,
To find our share of happiness.
And if we find more or less,
Help us, O Father, not to question why.

It wouldn't be far wrong to say,
We've climbed some hills along the way.
But, after all, that might just be
Why we're so free and strong today.

As for tomorrow, on you we can rely,
Whatever's meant to be, will surely be.
We can only try.

- *Author Unknown*