

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

O God of all time and space.

How are we to go about these prayers of the people?

Each one here wants a word with you! How can one of us speak for all of us? How can we lift each other's prayers to you without knowing what they are?

So we'll try being quiet long enough for each of our heart's deep longings to come to consciousness and then to be brought before you.

God, in your mercy...Hear our prayer.

(space for silence before God)

God of me.

We could use more time being still before You, absorbing your Grace that casts out fear and shakes loose vision.

O Holy Spirit, penetrate our emptiness, guilt, enslavement so that we come clean from distractions, and know that You are God – know ourselves known, know ourselves overwhelmed with fullness, forgiveness and freedom.

God, in your mercy...Hear our prayer.

God of all.

You have it so that we can have fullness, forgiveness and freedom only if all of us on this planet earth have them also. Along with You, we need to hear the cries of your beloved throughout the world.

Keep giving us to each other.

Enlarge our hearts. Uphold all your righteous servants, especially the hidden ones. Raise up generations of human liberators. Recreate in us all your love of the world as we behold it in Jesus Christ our Lord.

God, in your mercy...Hear our prayer.

God, we pray for the Church.

We especially pray for churches in hard places under threat, or where injustice and fear looms large.

We pray for the Church meeting today around the world, in European cathedrals, under baobab trees in Africa, in house churches

of Russia, and in secret. May all churches bask in Christ's liberating love, and dispense your mercy to all who seek it.

God, in your mercy...Hear our prayer.

Now we unite our voices in a modern telling of Jesus' prayer, so we say –

Our Father in heaven,

help us to honor your name.

Come and set up your reign,

so that everyone on earth might obey you,

as you are obeyed in heaven.

Give us our food for today.

Forgive us for doing wrong,

as we forgive others in equal measure.

Give us a way out from being tempted

and protect us from ultimate evil.

For you are the one God worthy of following in this life,

and for ever and ever. Amen.

A CREED OF OUR FAITH

(inspired by our 8th grade confirmation class)

We believe in God who creates –

Strong like a builder,
Firm like a father,
Tender like a mother,
Watching like a lifeguard,

**Planets, praying mantises, peoples' souls –
Creator God is in it all and the reason for it all.**

We believe in God who is Jesus Christ –

Spoke for God and followed God to the max!
Like Father, like Son,
Like a lion he roared, still roars through the Gospel stories,
Shows us how to face down evil & oppression & fear,
Washes away sin,
Can touch our human heart because he too has a heart,

He's the one we go to school on.

We believe in God who is Spirit –

Surrounds us like wind,
Protects us like a force field,
Leads me down the right path,
Lives in all people, even if they don't know it,
Pushes us to do the right thing & to spread God's ways,

Hands out handfuls of courage for us to live like Jesus.

We believe God is in the Church –

The place where I get to be myself,
The place I come back to myself when I've lost my way,
The place God really listens in when we eat & pray & sing & work together,
Where everything we've said here gets to show up in the people.
Old, young, rich, poor, sinful, joyful – our God somehow uses us in spite of us.

We think that is a very good thing.

Thank you, Holy God!