



CHRIST CHURCH

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The Rev. Matthew Hoxsie Mead, Rector

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A PASTORAL LETTER

Dear Friends in Christ,

I write to assure you that God is with you, even in the darkest hours, and to offer you prayers that I hope will comfort you, reassure you, and strengthen you. We are living in very trying times. We are in the midst of a pandemic, lockdowns and stay at home orders, mass unemployment, and protests against racism, police brutality, and abuse of power. The past few evenings have seen rioting and looting in cities across the nation. I am worried at the sights I see and the things I read as I imagine you all are. I want you to know that you are all in my prayers.

I pray especially that our Lord Jesus Christ will bless you with the fruit of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23)

I pray also that we will “love one another, because love is from God.” (1 John 4:7)

Please never forget that “love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.” (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

I offer several prayers from our Prayer Book.

A Prayer Attributed to Saint Francis

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

A Prayer for our Country

Almighty God, who hast given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favor and glad to do thy will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into

one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in thee to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer in Times of Conflict

O God, you have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominion and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

A Prayer for the Human Family

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I invite you to join me in praying from our Prayer Book the Supplication which is suggested “especially in times of war, or of national anxiety, or of disaster.”

O Lord, arise, help us; and deliver us for thy Name's sake.

O God, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us, the noble works that thou didst in their days, and in the old time before them.

O Lord, arise, help us; and deliver us for thy Name's sake.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

O Lord, arise, help us; and deliver us for thy Name's sake.

From our enemies defend us, O Christ; Graciously behold our afflictions.

With pity behold the sorrows of our hearts; Mercifully forgive the sins of thy people.

Favorably with mercy hear our prayers; O Son of David, have mercy upon us.

Both now and ever vouchsafe to hear us, O Christ;

Graciously hear us, O Christ; graciously hear us, O Lord Christ.

We humbly beseech thee, O Father, mercifully to look upon our infirmities; and, for the glory of thy Name, turn from us all those evils that we most justly have deserved; and grant that in all our troubles we may put our whole trust and confidence in thy mercy, and evermore serve thee in

holiness and pureness of living, to thy honor and glory; through our only Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

You all remain in my prayers. God bless you, if you need anything please don't hesitate to call. My cell is 914-471-0260.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Hoxsie Mead". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping flourish at the end.

The Reverend Matthew Hoxsie Mead, Rector