



CHRIST CHURCH

1415 Pelhamdale Avenue

Pelham, New York 10803

Telephone (914) 738-5515

Facsimile (914) 712-0526

The Rev. Matthew Hoxsie Mead, Rector

January 7, 2021

PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

I write to you with a pastoral letter regarding the events in Washington, DC, on January 6, 2021. We have all seen the video of rioters, incited by the words of President Trump, storming the United States Capitol, terrifying members of Congress, and disrupting the Constitutionally mandated joint session of Congress to certify the election of President-Elect Biden.

Thank God no members of Congress, their staffers, the police, or the Vice President were seriously injured or killed. Thank God that order was restored. On a more local level, I thank God we were able to gather in person yesterday for a small Eucharist on Epiphany. My message to you is the same that I gave to the congregation last night. If you haven't already done it, pray with and for your family, your friends, our nation, and all of our elected and appointed leaders. Pray that we all "may be led to wise decisions and right actions for the welfare and peace of the world." Pray that yesterday was the low point, rather than a sign of things to come. Pray that our divisions which are deep are healed.

The Book of Common Prayer contains a treasure trove of prayers that have been passed on from generation to generation. These prayers were written by faithful Christians who lived and prayed through the sorts of things that we face today. The Great Litany includes petitions about sedition, conspiracy, rebellion, and plague; the Suffrage is provided for "times of war, or of national anxiety, or of disaster." The Prayer for our Country was written by the Rev. George Lyman Locke in 1882 following the Civil War and Reconstruction. It was written with times in mind that are not so different from our own. This prayer is my "go-to" prayer when I wonder how and what words God is calling me to pray for our nation and our leaders. I ask you to pray it with me.

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.

I also ask that you join me in praying this Prayer attributed to St. 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.

If you need anything, please call, text, or email me or one of the Parish Clergy members. It is so difficult to digest the disturbing events that we are witnessing. Do not be dispirited or disheartened for God is with us. Pray and know you are in my prayers.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Hoxsie Mead". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

The Reverend Matthew Hoxsie Mead, Rector