

# PRAYER OF APPROACH, CONFESSION, & THE LORD'S PRAYER

God in whom we live and move and have our being,  
We have entered into a month where there is so much celebration:  
It is Pride month, and we celebrate that all people are loved by you,  
no matter their sexuality, no matter their gender.

Your Spirit is gifted to us all.

There are peaceful protests happening all over the world  
in support of Black lives and against systemic racism;  
mayors choosing to write the words "Black Lives Matter"  
across main streets in their cities.

We see and sense and feel hopeful about positive changes in this world.

And yet, loving God, we continue to see the opposite, as well.

We see people sneering at protesters,

we see the rights of people of sexual and gender minorities being toyed with  
as if their human rights are less important.

It is hurtful to our communities.

And oftentimes, it feels personal.

Creator God,

We want to shout out;

we want to shake those who can't see beyond their own small bubbles.

We want to find a way to get rid of the negativity,

and we confess that sometimes we even imagine vindication

by removing the humanity of someone we dislike

in order to hand it over to someone else we deem to be more deserving.

But this is not justice, O Lord.

Forgive our desire to gain control by removing what we don't like  
rather than doing the hard work required to find common ground.

Forgive our yearning to banish what makes us angry

rather than take the time to find the words to express injustices

and stand up with others to say them.

Help us take what's on our hearts and turn it into action

instead of complaining behind closed doors.  
Help us to seek peace when frustration boils over.  
God of hope, show us how to work for justice together,  
standing up for what is right,  
stepping in when something's wrong,  
shouldering each other's burdens,  
holding each other accountable,  
righting the wrongs we've done,  
speaking truth to power.

Be the healing presence we need this day and always.  
We pray this in the name of Christ, who knows our suffering, and who taught us to pray,  
saying, Our Father...

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name;  
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;  
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever...

May the Peace of Christ be with you all... And also with you...