

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING & PASTORAL CONCERN

Awesome God. What a beautiful world you have created and are creating for us to enjoy. It is changing and evolving all the time as are we too. But your love is the energy of life and new life in us all. We thank you. For those who have loved us from the time of our birth... for those who have been there for us to teach us, guide us, embrace us, understand us, sympathize with us and support us regardless of whether we have always been at our best or more like our worst at times; we thank you. We thank you because all genuine love is your inspiration, O God, whether people know its source or not.

Hear us now as we take a moment in silence, to thank you for specific blessings and people in our lives...

We also pray for our world, O God, because people don't always know your love or feel your love...

For those who are queer and live in Russia, those in Hong Kong afraid for freedom and democracy with China's growing grip of control, for those black and brown and Jewish and Muslim in North America and Europe as White Supremacist boldness grows. For all those struggling with their health and for health care workers on the front lines in the U.S. as the virus' spread grows rapidly out of control... It's hard to imagine a crazier time to be alive, O God, globally speaking... we pray for some wisdom, some bridge building, some cooperation, some compassion and some focus on the collective good over personal freedom alone, to influence more of our world at this time... May your divine energy flow through the many cracks in human relationships and human hearts, O God...

We continue to pray for all those struggling with their mental health in our own nation, O God, even as there is much progress in controlling and containing the virus at this time... We are cautious and afraid, even as we're desperate to break free, gather together and hug all our friends and family... Grant us patience, O God, ground us in hope for the long term good over short term pleasure... and keep opening us up to the good life lessons to be learned during this strange time, O God, that we keep growing to become your children not just as your creations, but your children in spirit and in truth...

We can go on and name many more concerns and issues that live in our hearts, O God... for your love in us is what makes us alive even as it causes us pain to care... Bless us even as we are challenged... inspire and encourage us even as we can feel overwhelmed... Provoke us even as we can feel inadequate or guilty... Remind us that we are yours forever, even as we continue to falter and fail as much as we succeed...

Finally, we take a moment, O God, to pause in silence and to name before you, those situations or persons we are carrying especially heavily in our hearts at this time...

We pray for courage and compassion, O God... we pray for growth... we pray for healing inside and outside... and we pray for the grace of acceptance and peace, recognizing that the richest blessings often come in times where we cannot control the outcome... In Jesus' name we make this our prayer... Amen.