CALL TO WORSHIP AND SONG ("Be Not Afraid")
Almighty God, grant us a quiet night and peace at the last. Amen.
It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praise to your name,
to herald your love in the morning, and your truth at the close of the day.

You shall cross the barren desert, but you shall not die of thirst.
You shall wander far in safety though you do not know the way.
You shall speak your words in foreign lands and all will understand.
You shall see the face of God and live.

If you pass through raging waters in the sea, you shall not drown.
If you walk amid the burning flames, you shall not be harmed.
If you stand before the pow’r of hell and death is at your side,
know that I am with you through it all.

Blessed are your poor, for the kingdom shall be theirs.
Blest are you that weep and mourn, for one day you shall laugh.
And if wicked tongues insult and hate you all because of me,
blessed, blessed are you!

READING FROM SCRIPTURE & SONG

CANTICLE FOR COMPLINE (Chanted by the Cantor)
Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping;
that awake we may watch with Christ and asleep we may rest in peace.
Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace: your word has been fulfilled.
My own eyes have seen the salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of every
people: a light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel.
PRAYERS
Eternal God, the hours both of day and night are yours, and to you the darkness is no threat. Be present, we pray, with those who labor in these hours of night, especially those who watch and work on behalf of others. Grant them diligence in their watching, faithfulness in their service, courage in danger, and competence in emergencies. Help them to meet the needs of others with confidence and compassion; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Gracious God, we give you thanks for the day, especially for the good we were permitted to give and to receive; the day is now past and we commit it to you. We entrust to you the night; we rest securely, for you are our help, and you neither slumber nor sleep; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be 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, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING
Let us bless the Lord!
Almighty and merciful God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep us, this night and forevermore. Amen.
A Confessional Litany and Lament Commemorating Nine
Who Were Slain at Mother Emanuel AME Church

They were doing what we are called to as they engaged in bible study. It was Wednesday night—a stranger walked in, and these people welcomed him and prayed together: the Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethel Lee Lance, the Rev. DePayne Middleton-Doctor, Tywanza Kibwe Diop Sanders, the Rev. Daniel Lee Simmons, the Rev. Myra Singleton Quarles Thompson, and the honorable state senator and pastor of the church, the Rev. Clementa C. Pinckney.

This stranger wanted to ignite a “race war,” he said, after he shot and killed them, denying them the very humanity he claimed for himself, claiming rights and privileges associated with “whiteness.”

Now we are grieved, once again in pain, burning and anguished, lamenting the horror of evil unleashed. And so we cry out, Have mercy, O God, have mercy on us.

Sorrow and heartache have come to us. Death and mourning have visited us. We feel far from you, O God, and distant from one another. And so we cry out, Have mercy, O God, have mercy on us.

Evil besets us in our land. We acknowledge that our nation is socialized in ways that promote and normalize colonialization. We cry out against the horrors and agonies of racism. And so we cry out, Have mercy, O God, have mercy on us.

The privileged of our nation have benefited from practices that dehumanize indigenous peoples. We have claimed as “discovery” lands that were not ours. These lands have been stolen and the nations, that were the original occupants of these lands, slain. And so we cry out, Have mercy, O God, have mercy on us.

Tribalism has led to the denial of your presence, O God. Present generations, the children whose ancestors were kidnapped and sold into slavery, those forced to labor not on their own behalf, still suffer and struggle to live in freedom while the children of colonizers, live out of “white privilege,” denying the fullness of your presence in all people. And so we cry out, Have mercy, O God, have mercy on us.

Assaults born of greed and murder continue propping up white privilege that is institutionalized in our church and nation, preventing us from recognizing the twin evils of racism and nationalism still perpetuated among us. And so we cry out, Have mercy, O God, have mercy on us.

Open our eyes, O God, open our hearts. Open our ears, O God, open our minds. Help us to behold one another as you behold us. Help us to be more firmly rooted in the practices of the gospel—so that, when we pray, the way we live will make real the dream of your beloved community within and among us. And so we cry out, Have mercy, O God, have mercy on us.
With the help of your mercy and grace, lead us to think, believe, and change. May your gospel’s transforming power by the working of the Holy Spirit be present in us, in our churches, in our nation and all the nations of the earth. May it be so. And the people said, “Amen.” Amen.

When Pain of the World Surrounds Us

1 When pain of the world surrounds us with darkness and despair, when searching just confounds us with need, confessing to each other our grace, your saving word that guided a false hopes everywhere, when lives are starved for meaning and wastefulness and greed. May we with steadfast carrying the purpose to fulfill. May we with humble courage be struggling human race. O God, with all creation, your destiny is bare, we are called to follow Jesus and hungry children feed. We are called to follow Jesus and open to God’s will. We are called to follow Jesus and future we embrace. We are called to follow Jesus and let God’s healing flow through us.

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