



Central UMC Pastoral Prayer

March 13, 2022

by Rev. Lisa Rettew

Loving God,

True North, all of creation points back to you, each stone, every drop of water, and the multitude of living things, all expressions of your being. In this Lenten season, our eyes turn inward to find how well we reflect your image back to you and the world, and if we are honest, we discover the many ways we have become dull and tarnished. It is so tempting, God, to believe we follow your ways because we don't pay attention to how our actions affect others or the world. It is so tempting to overlook our own shortcomings as we pay great notice to the faults of others. Forgive us, dear Lord. Help us instead to sharpen our focus on our relationship to you. Let these 40 days pare down the distractions that cover up the hunger in our souls. Without you at our side, we would crumble under the pressure of the enticements laid at our feet. We would take the easy way, and then find ourselves further out into the wilderness. Guide us by your teachings and by your Spirit to face the harder road that leads into your inbreaking Kingdom. We pray you will give us strength for the journey.

When we are powerless, when anguish steals the words from our mouths, your Spirit breathes our prayers into being and supports us through the pain. Let your Spirit bring relief to all who live in fear, to all who have lost home and loved ones, whose lives are turned upside down by disasters caused by storm or quake, or by wars waged by humans. We pray you will work in the hearts of those with power over others to use their privilege to care for them, not for selfish gain. Guide us so that we might be channels for your love and light for all who suffer in darkness.

God, your love is infinite, and we are so grateful that you extend it to us mere humans. You call us into relationship, you have made us for that relationship, and you entered the world as one of us to show the depth of your love. Strengthen our connection to you and to each other as we pray now the words that Jesus taught us, saying,

"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."

Amen

Text: Luke 4:1-13; Lenten study chapter 2, Harnish