



Central UMC Pastoral Prayer

June 19, 2022

by Rev. Lisa Rettew

Eternal and loving God,

We are blessed to be surrounded by your being. There is nowhere that we can go where you are not also. Your Spirit guides and sustains us, your children. How can we not thank and praise you all the hours of the day and night?

And yet, we forget. We take hold of our lives while ignoring the very source. Our minds, immersed in the world, override the deep language of our souls. We fall into the danger of our perception of you our Creator being distilled into so much less, being reduced to what our minds deem comfortable and easy. In this forgetting, our worldview grows smaller and more judgmental, our thoughts and actions become self-centered. We allow ourselves to deny our shortcomings while in the same breath criticizing the shortcomings of others. God, protect us from the slippery slope of disconnection from you. Awaken us from this sleepwalking and ignite within us the spark of your gifts that we might offer in relationship to others. Protect us from ourselves – lead us in your ways of grace, open our ears to hear your call, our eyes to see your Spirit moving out ahead.

We pray this for ourselves and for the whole world, so that wars might cease, so that violence against the innocent would forever stop, so that no person went hungry or thirsty, so that each and every person would know they are loved and made worthy by your grace. These troubles feel so large dear Lord, that it is hard not to throw up our hands and give up, but you do not call us to sit on the sidelines. Jesus, you commission us your disciples to go and serve, and you equip us to do just that.

So, following your lead, we offer ourselves as your hands and feet, to bring comfort to those who grieve, even if it's only being a quiet presence when we cannot find the words. We offer ourselves as voices for justice when the oppressed are not heard, or are silenced. We offer ourselves to walk alongside those who are troubled, by fear, anxiety, depression and by all of life's difficult circumstances. We offer these small contributions with the hope and faith that we are partnering with you in the bringing of your Kingdom on this Earth.

And so now, knowing that you surround us with your love and grace, and resting in the wonder and mystery of your being, we join our voices together with the hope and gratitude of being your children 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."

Amen