

Beavercreek UCC:

A Month of Prayer before the Election



Beloved BUCC,

We are moving closer to perhaps the most contentious and most important election of our lifetimes. Anxiety and fear are nearly overwhelming for many of us. We find ourselves trying not to hate, not to judge and not to be so angry. We have also been in pandemic, so we all carry wounds and grief. It is so hard. We long for peace, but not at the expense of those who are oppressed and marginalized. We want healing for our nation, but healing cannot come without reconciliation, without honesty, and they are hard to see.

This is a time to work for justice and peace. It is also a time to pray. Prayer does not create justice on its own, but it is essential to upholding the spirits of those of us who care about making justice in our country. Thoughts and prayers have been rightly mocked when they are a substitute for action, but when they accompany action, thoughts and prayers are powerful. Kierkegaard wrote, "Prayer does not change God, but it changes him who prays." So I offer these daily prayers. We who believe that Black lives matter, love is love, science is real, and no human is illegal believe this because of who God is- the God of creation and love. The Kin-dom of God is a place of Shalom: a peace that is just, loving, compassionate, and allows for the flourishing of all creation and her inhabitants This is what Jesus described, what he told those who love him to work to create.

So we organize and protest and create justice and fight for what is right, and also we vote. And along with all this action, we pray, for the God who dreams of a better world is with us. Without prayer, it is easy to feel that we are alone in our longing for Shalom. We are not alone. The spirit is with us, and she will remain with us, regardless of what happens in the election. There will also be much work to do to dream and make a better world, regardless of what happens in the election. Standing for justice and peace has always been the calling of people of faith, in any country and any form of government or administration.

This booklet contains a prayer for each day until the election- and the day after. I suggest reading the prayer for the day, perhaps several times, and meditating on that prayer. You may use this resource however you wish though. These prayers are an offering in the hope that we might allow prayer to change us and to change this world and those for whom we pray- out of love for God, for our neighbors (all our neighbors- no exceptions), and for ourselves. Remember you are loved.

Shalom, Pastor Jennifer

October 3- Anna Misleh

God of mercy, our nation is in a time of great transition.

With all of the injustice and fear in our world today,
we ask you to inspire us and guide us as we participate in the upcoming presidential elections.

We seek a government that upholds and protects human rights and justice for all its citizens,

regardless of race, class, gender, or religion.

Move and inspire us by your presence among us in the most vulnerable in our society.

For their tears are your tears, their pain is your pain, their suffering is your suffering.

In gratitude for the right to vote, we pray.

October 4- Emilie Townes, from Yale Divinity School Convocation 2005

ultimately, i believe that somewhere deep inside each of us

we know that perhaps the simplest, yet the most difficult, answer to the challenge of "what will we proceed to do

with the fullness and incompleteness of what we have brought to this time and place" is: live your faith deeply

now i am not talking about perfection—

i'm talking about what we call in christian ethics, the everydayness of moral acts

it's what we do every day that shapes us and says more about us than those grand moments of righteous indignation

and action

the everydayness of listening closely when folks talk or don't talk to hear what they are saying

the everydayness of taking some time, however short or long, to refresh ourselves through prayer or meditation

the everydayness of speaking to folks and actually meaning whatever it is that is coming out of our mouths

the everydayness of being a presence in people's lives

the everydayness of designing a class session or lecture or reading or writing or thinking

the everydayness of sharing a meal

the everydayness of facing heartache and disappointment

the everydayness of joy and laughter

the everydayness of facing people who expect us to lead them somewhere or at least point them in the right direction

and walk with them

the everydayness of blending head and heart

it's the everydayness of getting up and trying one more time to get our living right
 it is in this everydayness that "we the people" are formed
 and we, the people of faith, live and must witness to a justice wrapped in a love
 that will not let us go
 and a peace that is simply too ornery to give up on us

October 5- - From the Lutheran Book of Worship: Minister's Desk Edition

O God,
 you created all people in your image.
 We thank you for the astonishing variety
 of races and cultures in this world.
 Enrich our lives by ever-widening circles of friendship,
 and show us your presence
 in those who differ most from us,
 until our knowledge of your love is made perfect
 in our love for all your children;
 through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

"Without prayer, without
 faith in the Almighty, the Civil
 Rights movement would have
 been like a bird without
 wings" *John Lewis*

October 6 - David Steindl-Rast OSB

You, the one
 From whom on different paths
 All of us have come.

To whom on different paths
 All of us are going.

Make strong in our hearts what unites us;
 Build bridges across all that divides us;
 United make us rejoice in our diversity.
 And at one in our witness to your peace,
 A rainbow to your glory.

"I have so much to do
 that I shall spend the
 first three hours in
 prayer."
Martin Luther

October 7- Chinook Psalter

The garden is rich with diversity
 With plants of a hundred families
 In the space between the trees
 With all the colours and fragrances.
 Basil, mint and lavender,
 Great Mystery keep my remembrance pure,
 Raspberry, Apple, Rose,
 Great Mystery fill my heart with love,
 Dill, anise, tansy,
 Holy winds blow in me.
 Rhododendron, zinnia,
 May my prayer be beautiful
 May my remembrance O Great Mystery
 Be as incense to thee
 In the sacred grove of eternity
 As I smell and remember
 The ancient forests of earth.

"Then you will call
 on me and come
 and pray to me, and
 I will listen to you".
Jeremiah 29:12

October 8- Pope Francis

Merciful God, we pray to you for all the men, women and children who have died
 after leaving their homelands in search of a better life.
 Though many of their graves bear no name, to you each one is known, loved and
 cherished.
 May we never forget them, but honour their sacrifice with deeds more than words.
 We entrust to you all those who have made this journey, enduring fear, uncertainty
 and humiliation, in order to reach a place of safety and hope.
 Just as you never abandoned your Son as he was brought to a safe place by Mary
 and Joseph, so now be close to these, your sons and daughters, through our
 tenderness and protection.

In caring for them may we seek a world where none are forced to leave their home and where all can live in freedom, dignity and peace.

Merciful God and Father of all, wake us from the slumber of indifference, open our eyes to their suffering, and free us from the insensitivity born of worldly comfort and self-centredness.

Inspire us, as nations, communities and individuals, to see that those who come to our shores are our brothers and sisters.

May we share with them the blessings we have received from your hand, and recognize that together, as one human family, we are all migrants, journeying in hope to you, our true home, where every tear will be wiped away, where we will be at peace and safe in your embrace. Amen.

October 9- Chief Yellow Hawk

O Great Spirit, whose voice I hear in the winds and whose breath gives life to all the world, hear me.

I come before you, one of your children. I am small and weak. I need your strength and wisdom.

Let me walk in beauty and make my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.

Make my hands respect the things you have made, my ears sharp to hear your voice.

Make me wise, so that I may know the things you have taught my people, the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.

I seek strength, not to be superior to my brothers, but to be able to fight my greatest enemy: myself.

Make me ever ready to come to you with clean hands and straight eyes, so that when life fades as a fading sunset, my spirit may come to you without shame.

October 10- Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr

O God, we thank you for the fact that you have inspired men and women in all nations and in all cultures. We call you different names: some call you Allah; some call you Elohim; some call you Jehovah; some call you Brahma; some call you the

Unmoved Mover. But we know that these are all names for one and the same God. Grant that we will follow you and become so committed to your way and your kingdom that we will be able to establish in our lives and in this world a brother and sisterhood, that we will be able to establish here a kingdom of understanding, where men and women will live together as brothers and sisters and respect the dignity and worth of every human being. In the name and spirit of Jesus. Amen.

October 11 Thomas Merton

My Lord God,

I have no idea where I am going.

I do not see the road ahead of me.

I cannot know for certain where it will end.

nor do I really know myself,

and the fact that I think I am following your will

does not mean that I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please you

does in fact please you.

And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.

I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.

And I know that if I do this, you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore will I trust you always though

I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.

I will not fear, for you are ever with me,

and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

"Prayer is a surge of the heart, it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love"
St. Therese of Lisieux

October 12 Theresa of Avila: A Prayer for Peace & Calm

May today there be peace within.

May you trust your highest power that you are exactly where you are meant to be.

May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.

May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you.

May you be content knowing you are a child of God.

Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance.

It is there for each and every one of you. Amen.

October 13 Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu - Prayer Before the Prayer

I want to be willing to let go, to forgive.

But dare not ask for the will to forgive,

in case you give it to me. And I am not yet ready.

I am not yet ready for my heart to soften.

I am not yet ready to be vulnerable again.

Not yet ready to see that there is humanity in my tormentor's eyes Or that the one who hurt me may also have cried

I am not yet ready for the journey.

I am not yet interested in the path

I am at the prayer before the prayer of forgiveness

Grant me the will to want to forgive.

Grant it to me not yet but soon

Can I even form the words? Forgive me? Dare I even look?

Do I dare to see the hurt I have caused:

I can glimpse all the shattered pieces of that fragile thing That soul trying to rise on the broken wings of hope

But only out of the corner of my eye.

I am afraid of it.

And if I am afraid to see

How can I not be afraid to say: Forgive me?

Is there a place where we can meet?

You and me

The place in the middle where we straddle the lines

Where you are right and I am right too.

And both of us are wrong and wronged. Can we meet there?

And look for the place where the path begins The path that ends when we forgive.

October 14: A poem for Papatūānuku - Mother Earth by Ngāti Hine/Ngāpuhi

writer Nadine Anne Hura,

Rest now, e Papatūānuku

Breathe easy and settle

Right here where you are

"Prayer is an opening of the self so that the Word of God can break in and make us new. Prayer unmasks. Prayer converts. Prayer impels. Prayer sustains us on the way. Pray for the

We'll not move upon you
 For awhile
 We'll stop, we'll cease
 We'll slow down and stay home
 Draw each other close and be kind
 Kinder than we've ever been.
 I wish we could say we were doing it for you
 as much as ourselves
 But hei aha
 (Maori phrase meaning "something small")
 We're doing it anyway
 It's right. It's time.
 Time to return
 Time to remember
 Time to listen and forgive
 Time to withhold judgment
 Time to cry
 Time to think
 About others
 Remove our shoes
 Press hands to soil
 Sift grains between fingers
 Gentle palms
 Time to plant
 Time to wait
 Time to notice
 To whom we belong
 For now it's just you
 And the wind
 And the forests and the oceans and the sky full of rain
 Finally, it's raining!
 Ka turuturu te wai kamo o Rangi ki runga i a koe
 (Maori phrase meaning - "tears from the eyes of Ranginui drip down on you")
 Embrace it
 This sacrifice of solitude we have carved out for you
 He iti noaiho - a small offering
 People always said it wasn't possible
 To ground flights and stay home and stop our habits of consumption

"It is better in prayer to have
 a heart without words than
 words without heart."
Mahatma Gandhi

But it was
 It always was.
 We were just afraid of how much it was going to hurt
 - and it IS hurting and it will hurt and continue to hurt
 But not as much as you have been hurt.
 So be still now
 Wrap your hills around our absence
 Loosen the concrete belt cinched tight at your waist
 Rest.
 Breathe.
 Recover.
 Heal -
 And we will do the same.

"Stop and imagine for a minute.
 Think and imagine. Think and
 imagine a world where love is the
 way" *Bishop Michael Curry*

October 15 John Birch

We are moulded, each one of us,
 in the image of God,
 and within our souls there is a fingerprint
 none can erase.
 We pray for those who have no regard
 for anyone but self,
 who put no value on human life.
 For nations and individuals who abuse and kill.
 We are not called to be judge or jury,
 but we are called to be agents of change,
 and if the butterfly that flaps its wings
 should be our attitude to others
 then so be it, Lord,
 and may the hurricane this generates
 somewhere within the world
 reach into the hearts and souls of those
 for whom we pray, and reveal to them
 how precious are those
 for whom they have no love,
 and how precious are they
 who now bring tears to the eyes of God.

"Pray without ceasing"
Thessalonians 5:17

October 16 Sister Ruth Fox, OSB - Four-Fold Blessing

May God bless you with a restless discomfort
 about easy answers, half-truths and superficial relationships,
 so that you may seek truth boldly and love deep within your heart.
 May God bless you with holy anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of
 people,
 so that you may tirelessly work for
 justice, freedom, and peace among all people.
 May God bless you with the gift of tears with those who suffer
 from pain, rejection, or the loss of all that they cherish,
 so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and transform their pain into
 joy.
 May God bless you with enough foolishness
 to believe that you really CAN make a difference in this world, so that you are
 able, with God's grace, to do what others claim cannot be done.
 And the blessing of God the Supreme Majesty and our Creator, Jesus Christ the
 Incarnate Word who is our brother and Savior, and the Holy Spirit, our Advocate
 and Guide, be with you
 and remain with you, this day and forevermore. Amen

October 17 Rev. Loey Powell, retired UCC pastor and member of the UCC national executive council

Dear God,

I don't do this very often but I need prayers for myself, for my heart, for my troubled soul. There are fires burning, disrupting and challenging life, and I can't put them out. There are storms causing flooding and damage to homes and crops and lives, and I can't stop them. I can only pray and support efforts being done to accost those most affected. There is a pandemic causing massive deaths and illness, and I can only put on my mask and keep a distance.
 But there is also unrest, fear, distrust and intentionally crated divisions among us, your people. This causes me the most pain because I have always believed in your

Beloved Community, your love for us, your justice meant for all. And we are failing and flailing around the chaos. At least it feels like it some days.

So, dear God, I ask for your love and strength to infuse my soul so that I continue to be lifted by those calling out for truth, for justice, for fairness, for righteousness on the days when it feels most bleak. I ask for your love and strength to continue to infuse my soul so that my own actions crack open barriers to hope and to peace.

For your love, I am most grateful. Thank you.

October 18 *Rabbi Joshua Zlochower, Rabbi Erica Steelman and Dr. Gloria Becker*

Mekor HaChayim,

Source of Life, You have blessed each of us with Your Spirit. In Your Wisdom, you have made each of us a unique treasure.

M'ayan Chayeinu, Wellspring of our Lives, cause us to flow with courage, strength, and compassion to live our stories openly, proudly, and joyfully.

Shekhina shel Ahavah, Presence of Love, You embrace us with Your Love. May we embrace ourselves, our partners, our lovers, our friends, our children, our dear ones with the power of Your *Ahavah Rabbah*, Your Unending, Boundless Love.

Ru'ach HaShalom, Spirit of Peace and Wholeness, open our eyes to the gifts and blessings we offer and receive from each other; open our hearts to welcome each other fully and truly; open our hands to embrace, to support, to lift each other *b'geela*, *b'reena*, *b'shalom*, *uv'rei-ut*—with joy, with song, with peace, and with deep friendship.

Today, as we celebrate renewal, Pride, and community, let us walk together with strength, compassion, and love.

נְבָרֶךְ אֶת מְעַיִן חַיֵּינוּ תְּקַדֵּשׁ וְתַשְׁמֵחַ אוֹתָנוּ (וְאֵת הַשָּׁבָת)

N'varech et Ma'a-yan Chayeinu, T'kadesh u'T'Sa'me'ach Otanu [V'et HaShabbat].

Amen.

We bless You, Wellspring of our Lives; May You fill us with joy and sanctity. Amen.

October 19 Dr. Walter Brueggemann - When the World Spins Crazy

When the world spins crazy,

spins wild and out of control

spins toward rage and hate and violence,

spins beyond our wisdom and nearly beyond our faith, When the world spins in chaos as it does now among us...

We are glad for sobering roots that provide ballast in the storm.
 So we thank you for our rootage in communities of faith,
 for our many fathers and mothers who have believed and trusted as firm witnesses
 to us,
 for their many stories of wonder, awe, and healing.
 And when we meet you hiddenly,
 we find the spin not so unnerving,
 because from you the world again has a chance
 for life and sense and wholeness.
 We pray midst the spinning, not yet unnerved,
 but waiting and watching and listening,
 for you are the truth that contains all our spin. Amen
 From *Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth: Prayers of Walter Brueggemann*

October 20- Jay McDaniel, Professor of Religion, Hendrix College, Arkansas

In this century and in any century,
 Our deepest hope, our most tender prayer,
 Is that we learn to listen.
 May we listen to one another in openness and mercy
 May we listen to plants and animals in wonder and respect
 May We listen to our own hearts in love and forgiveness
 May we listen to God in quietness and awe.
 And in this listening,
 Which is boundless in its beauty,
 May we find the wisdom to cooperate
 With a healing spirit, a divine spirit
 Who beckons us into peace and community and creativity.
 We do not ask for a perfect world.
 But we do ask for a better world.
 We ask for deep listening.

"Yet we keenly sense Your
 presence here with us,
 sheltering in place and
 preparing us for our 'what's
 next'. Divine change is in the
 air and many things will
 never be the same again"
Rev Dr Yvette Flunder

"Perhaps all the good that
 ever has come here has
 come because people
 prayed it into the world."
Wendell Berry

October 21 Mary Lou Kownacki, OSB

I bow to the sacred in all creation.
 May my spirit fill the world with beauty and wonder.
 May my mind seek truth with humility and openness.
 May my heart forgive without limit.
 May my love for friend, enemy, and outcast be without measure.
 May my needs be few and my living simple.
 May my actions bear witness to the suffering of others.
 May my hands never harm a living being.
 May my steps stay on the journey of justice.
 May my tongue speak for those who are poor without fear of the powerful.
 May my prayers rise with patient discontent until no child is hungry.
 May my life's work be a passion for peace and nonviolence.
 May my soul rejoice in the present moment.
 May my imagination overcome death and despair with new possibility.
 And may I risk reputation, comfort, and security to bring this hope to the children.

October 22 *For Courage to Do Justice* - Alan Paton, South Africa, United Methodist Hymnal #456

O Lord, open my eyes that I may see the needs of others
 Open my ears that I may hear their cries;
 Open my heart so that they need not be without succor;
 Let me not be afraid to defend the weak because of the anger of the strong,
 Nor afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich.
 Show me where love and hope and faith are needed,
 And use me to bring them to those places.
 And so open my eyes and my ears
 That I may this coming day be able to do some work of peace for thee.

October 23 Edwina Gateley - Let Your God Love You

Be silent.
 Be still.
 Alone.
 Empty before your God.
 Say nothing. Be silent. Be still.

Let your God look upon you. That is all.
 God knows.
 God understands.
 God loves you
 With an enormous love. God only wants
 To look upon you
 With love.
 Quiet. Still. Be.
 Let your God Love you.

"Prayer is nothing
 else than being on
 terms of friendship
 with God."
Teresa of Avila

October 24 - Sensei Ulrich, Manitoba Buddhist Temple 3

We gently caress you, the Earth, our planet and our home.
 Our vision has brought us closer to you, making us aware of the harm we have done
 to the life-network upon which we ourselves depend.
 We are reminded that we have poisoned your waters, your lands, your air.
 We have filled you with the bones of our dead from war and greed.
 Your pain is our pain.
 Touching you gently, we pray that we may become peace-bringers and life-bringers
 so that our home in its journey around the Sun not become a sterile and lonely
 place.
 May this prayer and its power last forever.

October 25 A Litany for Those not Ready for Healing - Dr Yolanda Pierce

Let us not rush to the language of healing, before understanding the fullness of
 the injury and the depth of the wound.
 Let us not rush to offer a band-aid, when the gaping wound requires surgery and
 complete reconstruction.
 Let us not offer false equivalencies, thereby diminishing the particular pain being
 felt in a particular circumstance in a particular historical moment.
 Let us not speak of reconciliation without speaking of reparations and restoration,
 or how we can repair the breach and how we can restore the loss.
 Let us not rush past the loss of this mother's child, this father's child...someone's
 beloved son.

Let us not value property over people; let us not protect material objects while human lives hang in the balance.

Let us not value a false peace over a righteous justice.

Let us not be afraid to sit with the ugliness, the messiness, and the pain that is life in community together.

Let us not offer clichés to the grieving, those whose hearts are being torn asunder.

Instead...

Let us mourn black and brown men and women, those killed extrajudicially every 28 hours.

Let us lament the loss of a teenager, dead at the hands of a police officer who described him as a demon.

Let us weep at a criminal justice system, which is neither blind nor just.

Let us call for the mourning men and the wailing women, those willing to rend their garments of privilege and ease, and sit in the ashes of this nation's original sin.

Let us be silent when we don't know what to say.

Let us be humble and listen to the pain, rage, and grief pouring from the lips of our neighbors and friends.

Let us decrease, so that our brothers and sisters who live on the underside of history may increase.

Let us pray with our eyes open and our feet firmly planted on the ground

Let us listen to the shattering glass and let us smell the purifying fires, for it is the language of the unheard.

God, in your mercy...

Show me my own complicity in injustice.

Convict me for my indifference.

Forgive me when I have remained silent.

Equip me with a zeal for righteousness.

Never let me grow accustomed or acclimated to unrighteousness.

October 26 - Shantideva, Indian Buddhist sage 700 A.D. Prayer performed each morning by His Holiness the Dalai Lama

May I be a guard for those who need protection

A guide for those on the path

A boat, a raft, a bridge for those who wish to cross the flood

May I be a lamp in the darkness
 A resting place for the weary
 A healing medicine for all who are sick
 A vase of plenty, a tree of miracles
 And for the boundless multitudes of living beings
 May I bring sustenance and awakening
 Enduring like the earth and sky
 Until all beings are freed from sorrow
 And all are awakened.

"To be a Christian without prayer is
 no more possible than to be alive
 without breathing."
Martin Luther King Jr

October 27 Hope. Victoria Safford.
 "Our mission is to plant ourselves at the gates of Hope—
 Not the prudent gates of Optimism,
 Which are somewhat narrower.
 Not the stalwart, boring gates of Common Sense;
 Nor the strident gates of Self-Righteousness,
 Which creak on shrill and angry hinges
 Nor the cheerful, flimsy garden gate of
 "Everything is gonna' be all right."
 But a different, sometimes lonely place,
 The place of truth-telling,
 About your own soul first of all and its condition.
 The place of resistance and defiance,
 The piece of ground from which you see the world
 Both as it is and as it could be
 As it will be;
 The place from which you glimpse not only struggle,
 But the joy of the struggle.
 And we stand there, all of us, beckoning and calling,
 Telling people what we are seeing
 Asking people what they see."

"God speaks in the silence of
 the heart. Listening is the
 beginning of prayer."
Mother Teresa

October 28 Helen Weaver

Almighty God, who are mother and father to us all,
 Look upon your planet Earth divided.
 Help us to know that we are all your children,
 That all nations belong to one great family,
 And that all of our religions lead to you.
 Multiply our prayers in every land
 Until the whole Earth becomes your congregation,
 United in your love.
 Sustain our vision of a peaceful future
 And give us strength to work unceasingly
 To make that vision real.

October 29 - Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand

We thank you, O God for your love for us.
 Love that reaches out to accept us, wherever we are, whoever we are.
 Love that demands a lot, but at the same time, somehow, amazingly, enables us to
 meet those demands.
 Love that reassures, affirms, prompts, challenges, and overwhelms us with the
 completeness of its response.
 Help us, your people, held within the security of your love, to risk showing that
 same love to others.
 May our love, too, be known for its abundance, its readiness to speak out, and its
 healing power.

October 30 Julian of Norwich
 And God showed me a little thing,
 in the palm of my hand,
 round like a ball,
 no bigger than a hazelnut.
 I gazed at it, puzzling at what it might be.
 And God said to me,
 "It is all of creation."
 I was amazed that it could last
 and not suddenly disintegrate

<p>"Work as if everything depends on you. Pray as if everything depends on God." <i>St. Ignatius Loyola</i></p>

and fall into nothingness
 for it was so tiny.
 And again God spoke to me,
 "It lasts, both now and forever,
 because I cherish it."
 And I understood that everything has its being
 owing to God's care and love.

October 31 Narrative theology # 1 Pádraig Ó Tuama

And I said to him
 Are there answers to all of this?
 And he said
 The answer is in a story
 and the story is being told.
 And I said
 But there is so much pain
 And she answered, plainly,
 Pain will happen.
 Then I said
 Will I ever find meaning?
 And they said
 You will find meaning
 Where you give meaning.
 The answer is in the story
 And the story isn't finished.

"In prayer the stilled voice learns to hold its peace, to listen with the heart to silence that is joy, is adoration. The self is shattered, all words torn apart in this strange patterned time of contemplation that, in time, breaks time, breaks words, breaks me, and then, in silence, leaves me healed and mended".

Madeleine L'Engle

November 1 Prayer for Conscience and Courage Joan Chittister

Loving God,
 lead us beyond ourselves
 to care and protect,
 to nourish and shape,
 to challenge and energize

"We should seek not so much to pray but to become prayer."
St. Francis of Assisi

both the life and the world
 You have given us.
 God of light and God of darkness,
 God of conscience and God of courage
 lead us through this time
 of spiritual confusion and public uncertainty.
 Lead us beyond fear, apathy and defensiveness
 to new hope in You and to hearts full of faith.
 Give us the conscience it takes
 to comprehend what we're facing,
 to see what we're looking at
 and to say what we see
 so that others, hearing us,
 may also brave the pressure that comes
 with being out of public step.
 Give us the courage we need
 to confront those things
 that compromise our consciences
 or threaten our integrity.
 Give us, most of all,
 the courage to follow those before us
 who challenged wrong and changed it,
 whatever the cost to themselves.

November 2 Prayer for a World Where Hope Seems Dim Larry Kehler,
 Mennonite Central Committee, Canada, 2009

Dear God, the world seems so dark and foreboding.

Where are the signs of hope?

What are you calling us to do?

Wars, uprisings, displacements, hunger, poverty, and disease continue to claim victims by the millions around the world each year.

Our ears do not want to hear their stories and our eyes do not want to see their plight because the suffering and destruction is so massive and cruel.

In our hearts and minds there is a desire to help somehow, but the crisis seem so

overwhelming that we shake our heads in dismay and we wonder what the point is for us even to attempt to be witnesses for healing and hope in this hellish morass. We beg with the song writer to open our eyes that we may see glimpses of truth you have for us.

Help us to follow the path of Jesus, the Suffering Servant. Give us the courage to be willing to walk the path of depression and pain with the victims of injustice here at home as well as abroad.

Help us to seek ways to light candles of hope, however small, through our words, our deeds, and our prayers, to encourage our sisters and brothers to hold onto the faith in spite of the pain and suffering they are facing.

And help those of us who are among the fortunate ones, who have enough bread to eat, good health, and who live in relative peace, to open our heart to learn from our sisters and brothers who are living lives of grace and forgiveness in the horrid circumstances which surround them. O God, help us to light one candle rather than to curse the darkness.

We pray this in the name of Jesus, who knows what being a light in this dark world is all about.

Tuesday November 3 Election Day I Dream A World Langston Hughes

I dream a world where man
 No other man will scorn,
 Where love will bless the earth
 And peace its paths adorn
 I dream a world where all
 Will know sweet freedom's way,
 Where greed no longer saps the soul
 Nor avarice blights our day.
 A world I dream where black or white,
 Whatever race you be,
 Will share the bounties of the earth
 And every man is free,
 Where wretchedness will hang its head
 And joy, like a pearl,
 Attends the needs of all mankind-
 Of such I dream, my world!

"Pray to catch the
 bus, then run as
 fast as you can."
Julia Cameron

Wednesday November 4- the Day after Election Day Rev. Jane Vennard, UCC
pastor, educator, and spiritual director

Gracious God, Spirit of life.....

We pause in your presence..... We breathe deeply.....

The day we have been waiting for has come and gone.

Some of us are celebrating, grace us with humility in our victory. Some of us are mourning, grace us with compassion in our loss.

Grant all of us the courage to go forward into the unknown future With hands out stretched in kindness,

With hearts overflowing with empathy,

With our minds set on justice and peace.

Help us be patient.

Help us stand strong in the midst of chaos.

Help us see to all of creation through your eyes of love.

Be with us as we work to create harmony in this divided world. Be with us as we struggle and fall and rise again.

Shower us with your mercy opening our hearts to receive your blessing We ask this in the name of all that is Holy. Amen















