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## SUGGESTED PRAYERS



### **PRAYER 1**

*(St. Ethelburg's Center for Reconciliation and Peace, 2005)*

God of life,

Every act of violence in our world, in our communities, between myself and others, destroys a part of your creation.

Stir in my heart a renewed sense of reverence for all life.

Give me the vision to recognize your spirit in every human being, however they behave towards me.

Make possible the impossible by cultivating in me the fertile seed of healing love. May I play my part in breaking the cycle of violence by realizing that peace begins with me.

## **PRAYER 2**

*(Contributed by Rev. Rachel R. Smith)*

O God of all people,

We know that you are as near as our next breath  
wherever we go, you are already there.  
Thank you for creating us in your image,  
and claiming us as your children.

O Lord, we confess that we have forgotten who we are;  
that each of us belongs to you.  
We confess that we have forsaken your peaceable kingdom,  
and allowed gun violence to shatter our communities.

Forgive us O God.  
Remind us that your love is more powerful than any gun  
and that your spirit will sustain us as nothing else can.  
Let us desire, as you desire, forgiveness rather than revenge,  
reconciliation rather than retribution.

Give us the courage to live not by the gun but by your spirit.  
Open our hearts to you so that we also may open them to each other.  
Guide us on the path of peace.  
In the name of all who love you, we pray. Amen

## **PRAYER 4**

*(Adapted from National Council of Churches of Christ, "An Ecumenical Celebration of the Word")*

Gracious God,

We confess that in our lives we do always choose the way of peace. We spread gossip, which fans the flames of hatred. We are ready to make any sacrifice when the world demands, but few when God invites. We worship the false God of security. We are tempted to trust in locks, security systems, and guns for our protection. We hold out one hand in friendship, but keep a weapon in the other behind our back. We have divided our communities into those we trust and those we do not. Huge problems challenge us in the world and in our own communities, but our greed, fear and selfishness prevent us from united to solve them. Lord, we need your help and forgiveness, your healing and reconciling power. Help us all to lay down our weapons and trust in you.

Amen

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## **PRAYER 5**

*(Adapted from Episcopal Peace Fellowship, "Gift of Shalom,")*

Gracious God,

Inspire us with the hope in the gift of shalom the gift of wholeness and the promise of your presence. Give us wisdom to seek nonviolence as an answer to the violence of our lives and world. Give us courage to seek wholeness in a fractured and divided world, to find reconciliation rather than revenge, to abandon the instruments of violence and death and entrust our lives, our homes and our families to you. May your presence fill us and others with the thirst for unity, wholeness, and the desire to see all people valued as created in your image. May we and other receive your shalom, that we might be faithful instruments of your love. Blessed be your name forever.

Amen.

## **PRAYER 6**

*(Adapted from Pullen Memorial Baptist Church, worship on Martin Luther King Day, 2007)*

God of justice, whenever we settle for the way things are instead of the way love would have them to be, forgive us. Whenever we are paralyzed by fear or limited in vision, increase our trust in you. Whenever we offer charity, but fail to work for justice, show us the more excellent way that love requires. Whenever we tire of the struggle and tomorrow feels overwhelming, restore our hope. Whenever we forget those who have gone before us or act as if we are the only ones who are trying, allow us to recognize our arrogance. May the witness of our brother Martin encourage us to be dreamers for all the world's sake.

Amen.