

Service of Prayer for victims of tragedy and disaster

Florida-Bahamas Synod

October 4, 2017

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

Gathering song: I Want Jesus to Walk with Me (ELW #325)

God our comforter, you are a refuge and a strength for us, a helper close at hand in times of distress. Enable us so to hear the words of faith that our fear is dispelled, our loneliness eased, our anxiety calmed, and our hope reawakened. May your Holy Spirit lift us above our sorrow to the peace and light of your constant love; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Readings from scripture:

Psalm 4:1 “Answer me when I call, O God of my right! You gave me room when I was in distress. Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.”

Psalm 13 “How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I bear pain my soul, and have sorrow in my heart all day long? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me? Consider and answer me, O Lord my God! Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death, and my enemy will say, “I have prevailed”; my foes will rejoice because I am shaken. But I trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me.”

Isaiah 49:13b

“For the Lord has comforted his people, and will have compassion on his suffering ones.”

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Blessed be the God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ. If we are being afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation; if we are being consoled, it is for your consolation, which you experience when you have patiently endured the same sufferings that we are also suffering. Our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our consolation.

Matthew 5:1-12

Reflection

Prayers and song

Sing “Oh Lord hear my prayer” (ELW 751) in between petitions

Prayers

Lord Jesus Christ, whose love for us and for all creation led you to a cross and to the cry of abandonment, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me,” hear our prayers for all who know that cry of despair and who weep the tears of bitterness. Enable us to wait with them in their sorrow while trusting in the consolation of your Spirit. Trusting in your eternal love, we cry...

Sing: “O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer, when I call, answer me. O Lord, hear my prayer, o Lord hear my prayer, come and listen to me.”

We pray to you, almighty God, in the aftermath of devastation and tragedy. You are our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. We lift up to you those affected by earthquakes, hurricanes, wild fires, drought and other natural disasters. These devastations leave us feeling overwhelmed, exhausted, and unsure how to respond and help. Do not let us fail in the face of these events. Uphold your people with your love, and give all the strength they need. As we think of the communities in Puerto Rico, Mexico, and elsewhere, our emotions are conflicted. Help us in our confusion, and guide our actions. Heal the hurt, console the bereaved and afflicted, protect the innocent and helpless, and deliver any who are still in peril; for the sake of your great mercy in Jesus Christ our Lord. Trusting in your eternal love, we cry...

Sing: “O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer, when I call, answer me. O Lord, hear my prayer, o Lord hear my prayer, come and listen to me.”

Loving God, we come to you trusting in your mercy and knowing that your steadfast love endures forever. Look with mercy on those who were harmed by the tragic shooting in Las Vegas. Give them your strength in the days ahead, your peace which surpasses all understanding, and renewed hope for restoration and rebuilding. Strengthen those who are providing aid and care for the wounded. Comfort those who are grieving. As you weep with those who mourn and strengthen those who are weak, raise up your church to be communities of hope, of comfort, and of strength. Trusting in your eternal love, we cry...

Sing: “O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer, when I call, answer me. O Lord, hear my prayer, o Lord hear my prayer, come and listen to me.”

Gracious God, the prophet encourages your people of every time, “Turn to the Lord your God; God is gracious and merciful slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.” Trusting that word of invitation, we dare to acknowledge our contribution to this world’s sorrow—our unwillingness to recognize the pain of others to which we have contributed by things said or not said, by that which we have done or not done. Open our eyes to those places where we have been blind. Soften our hearts to those places where they have been hardened, that we may know the power of your forgiveness and so be freed to care for the welfare of those around us and for all in your creation. Trusting in your eternal love, we cry...

Sing: “O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer, when I call, answer me. O Lord, hear my prayer, o Lord hear my prayer, come and listen to me.”

Lord Jesus you invite us to see you in the faces of those who suffer. Yet we acknowledge the temptation to withdraw from places of pain and too often do nothing to reduce the suffering or possibility of suffering for others. Through your Holy Spirit, grant us wisdom and courage as those who are claimed and beloved by you, to know how to exercise our faith as we live as citizens of this nation who seek to bear witness to your faithfulness and love for all. We pray for wisdom and courage on the part of those who lead our communities, state and nation—that together we might pursue that course which will attend to justice, contribute to peace, and manifest our care for those who are most at risk. Trusting in your eternal love, we cry...

Sing: “O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer, when I call, answer me. O Lord, hear my prayer, o Lord hear my prayer, come and listen to me.”

O God who has reconciled the world to yourself through the incarnation, life, death and resurrection of your son, our Lord Jesus Christ, grant that in this time of anxiety, anger, fear and sorrow, we may know again the gift of reconciliation and be instruments of your peace in the places where we live and where you send us each day. Particularly we pray for these situations and relationships in our lives... (silence to name them in the quietness of your heart)...

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Hear our prayers, spoken and silent, that we commend to you this day, trusting in your abundant mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:
Our Father, who art in Heaven...

Benediction:

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Song: “My Life Flows On In Endless Song” (ELW 763)

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

Portions of this service are adapted from:

sundaysandseasons.com

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