

Prayers for God's Work, Our Hands Sunday

The human family

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son. Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred that infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and, through our struggle and confusion, work to accomplish your purposes on earth; so that, in your good time, every people and nation may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The care of children

Holy God, loving parent of the child Jesus, we pray for children around the world. Alert us to the struggles that many children endure. With your generous and tender care, grant to all children compassionate adults who will shield them, feed them, and help them to grow strong and skilled, joyful and free. Empower family members and all caregivers with adequate resources and a daily renewal of wisdom and patience, and assure them of their holy vocation as guardians of your dear ones, for the sake of our protector, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The neglected

Almighty and most merciful God, we call to mind before you all whom it is easy to forget: those who are homeless, destitute, sick, isolated, and all who have no one to care for them. May we bring help and healing to those who are broken in body or spirit, that they may have comfort in sorrow, company in loneliness, and a place of safety and warmth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The oppressed

Look with mercy, gracious God, upon people everywhere who live with injustice, terror, disease, and death as their constant companions. Rouse us from our complacency and help us to eliminate cruelty wherever it is found. Strengthen those who seek equality for all. Grant that everyone may enjoy a fair portion of the abundance of the earth; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The poor

God of compassion, whose Son became poor for our sake: Help us to see the face of Christ in those who are poor, and in serving them to serve you. Give us generous hearts so that those living in poverty may have adequate food, clothing, and shelter. By your Spirit move us to affirm the dignity of all people and to work for just laws that protect the most vulnerable in society, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The elderly

O Lord God, look with mercy on all whose increasing years bring them isolation, distress, or weakness. Provide for them homes of dignity and peace; give them understanding helpers and the willingness to accept help; and, as their strength diminishes, increase their faith and their assurance of your love. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Refugees, migrants, immigrants

O God, as you guided the Israelites to a new land by pillars of cloud and fire, now travel alongside all people who seek safety from persecution and a better life. Provide them with what they need as they travel, and guide them to places of welcome and sanctuary. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Holy God, as you have accompanied your people through times of captivity, wilderness, and exile, shelter and sustain all those who flee persecution, oppression, warfare, violence, hunger, and poverty. Open our hearts and homes, our gates and doors, so that they find safety, peace, and welcome—a place to live in freedom and without fear; through Jesus Christ, our refuge and our hope. **Amen.**

Those who are incarcerated

O God, who creates us, redeems us, and calls us by name, we pray for all who are incarcerated, those rightly convicted and those falsely accused. Help those in prison to sense your presence with them. Heal brokenness, cure addictions, and provide for their needs. Comfort them in despair, restore their hope, and protect them from violence and abuse. We pray through Jesus Christ, in whom we are claimed and freed for new life. **Amen.**

Mighty God, merciful and just: we pray for our jails, prisons, and detention centers, that they be places of fair and humane treatment for all. Lead us to end solitary confinement and other cruel and demeaning practices. Guide police and corrections officers, attorneys and judges to use wisely the power entrusted to them. Inspire prison worshiping communities and chaplains. Rouse us to eradicate racism, corruption, and greed in the criminal justice system. By your Spirit, transform our society, that the dignity and worth of every incarcerated person be honored. We ask this through your resurrected Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Those who suffer abuse and violence

Mighty Jesus, living Word, soothe the bodies, souls, and minds of the victims of sexual violence or domestic violence. Bring them peace, hope, comfort, and strength. Bring abusers to justice and prevent them from causing further harm. Stir up the heart of your church, that we value justice and healing over silence and shame. Show us the way to your righteousness, led by the voices of those who suffer. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Healing and wholeness

God of compassion, your Son Jesus Christ, the great physician, made the broken whole and healed the sick. Touch our wounds, relieve our hurts, and restore to us wholeness of life, through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Disability

Creator God, you made us all in your image. Help us to embrace one another as you do: beloved and blessed, not in need of fixing, but in need of authentic welcome. Bring healing where it is desired, affirmation where it is lacking, and awareness to all. Open our hearts to receive the gifts and needs of all people, and to become communities where everyone can find a place. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Living with mental illness

Mighty God, in Jesus Christ you know the spirits that cloud our minds and set us against ourselves. Comfort those who are torn by conflict, cast down, or lost in worlds of illusion. By your power, drive from us the powers that shake confidence and shatter love. Tame unruly forces within us, and bring us to your truth, so that we may know peace and accept ourselves as your beloved children in Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Despair, desperation

Loving God, inspire by your Holy Spirit those who are afraid of losing hope, for whom we now pray. Give them a fresh vision of your love, that they may find again what they fear has been lost. Grant them your powerful deliverance; through the one who makes all things new, Jesus Christ our Redeemer. **Amen.**

Addiction, recovery

God our source, our hearts are restless until we find our rest in you. As Jesus once offered living water to a Samaritan woman at the well, so we ask you to meet our deepest needs with your eternal life. Help us to honestly name the desires that have power over us. Forgive us our injuries to self and others. Give us the strength we need to face each day. Direct our thoughts and actions toward the life that truly is life. This we ask through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Those who are terminally ill

Loving God, your heart overflows with compassion for your whole creation. Pour out your Spirit on all people living with illness for which there is no cure, as well as their families and loved ones. Help them to know that you claim them as your own; deliver them from fear and pain; and assist us in ministering to their needs; for the sake of Jesus Christ, our healer and Lord. **Amen.**

Loss and Death

God of all grace, we give you thanks because by his death our Savior Jesus Christ destroyed the power of death and by his resurrection he opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Make us certain that because he lives we shall live also, and that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, will be able to separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

O Lord, support us all the day long of this troubled life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes and the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then, in your mercy, grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Caregivers

God, our refuge and strength, we thank you for the compassion you infuse in your people, especially those who care for the physical and emotional needs of friends, family, and strangers. Strengthen all caregivers in body and spirit. Refresh them when weary; console them when anxious; comfort them in grief; and hearten them in discouragement. Giver of peace, enlarge our patience and enable us to embrace all those who live with difficulties we may one day share; in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Health care providers

Merciful God, your healing power is everywhere about us. Strengthen those who work among the sick; give them courage and confidence in all they do. Encourage them when they are overwhelmed with many pressing needs or when their efforts seem futile. Increase their trust in your power to bring life and wholeness even in the midst of death and pain and crying. May they be thankful for every sign of health you give, and humble before the mystery of your healing grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Emergency workers

God of earth and air, water and fire, height and depth, we pray for those who work in danger, who rush in to bring hope and help and comfort when others flee to safety, whose mission is to seek and save, serve and protect, and whose presence embodies the protection of the Good Shepherd. Give them caution and concern for one another, so that in safety they may do what must be done, under your watchful eye. Support them in their courage and dedication that they may continue to save lives, ease pain, and mend the torn fabric of lives and social order; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Peace

Gracious God, grant peace among nations. Cleanse from our own hearts the seeds of strife: greed and envy, harsh misunderstandings and ill will, fear and desire for revenge. Make us quick to welcome ventures in cooperation among the peoples of the world, so that there may be woven the fabric of a common good too strong to be torn by the evil hands of war. In the time of opportunity, make us be diligent; and in the time of peril, let not our courage fail; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Holy God, out of your great love for the world, your Word became flesh to live among us and to reconcile us to you and to one another. Rekindle among us the gift of your Spirit so that we seek to live in unity with all people, breaking down the walls that divide, ending the hostility among us, and proclaiming peace to those who are near and to those who are far away; through Christ Jesus, in whom we all have access in the one Spirit to you, both now and forever. **Amen.**

Time of war

Eternal God, whose steadfast love never ends, we ask that you look upon the nations now engaged in war and hasten the day of peace. Look in mercy on those exposed to peril, conflict, sickness, and death; and show compassion to the dying. In your good providence, remove all causes and occasions of war. Incline the hearts of all people to follow the path to peace and concord, that war may cease and the day of reconciliation may come quickly, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Those who suffer from war

Merciful God, you grieve amid the pain, fear, and suffering of your children. Look with compassion on all who endure the miseries of war. Eternal Protector of the helpless, hear the cry of the distressed and grant speedy deliverance in a new day of peace and concord. **Amen.**

Time of conflict, crisis, disaster

O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope. Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance. Where impossibilities close every door and window, grant imagination and resistance. Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination. Where spirits are daunted and weakened, grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams; in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

God, our healer and our refuge, we pray for all who suffer from gun violence. With your mercy, bind up their wounds, restore their bodies, and heal their hearts. Comfort the mourners and embrace the lonely. With your might, empower us to change this broken world. Make us advocates for a stable society, alive with hope in you. We ask this through the one once wounded for our transgressions and now standing with us in our sorrows, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

God most mighty, God most merciful, our sacred stories tell us that you help and save your people. You are the fortress: may there be no more war. You are the harvest: may there be no more hunger. You are the light: may no one die alone or in despair. God most majestic, God most motherly, grant us your life, the life that flows from your Son and the Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Times of financial stress

O God, we pray for daily bread. We are overwhelmed by debt and seek your wisdom. Help us to be good stewards of the resources that you have already placed in our care. Send the resources and support we need to turn this situation around. Allow your justice and mercy to prevail. Generous God, hear our prayer. **Amen.**

Preservation of creation

God, creator of all living things, you fashioned a world in which lands and waterways, plants and animals, together meet the needs of all that you made. We pray that such vitality may flourish around the globe. Bless those who work the soil and who manage animals. Uphold their towns and villages. Nurture bees and other pollinators. Protect farmlands and ranches from drought and flood. Free children from forced labor in the fields. Grant an economy that can sustain those families who treasure a rural life. Teach us how to share with everyone the benefits of each harvest, and accept our gratitude for all sustenance you provide, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Flood, hurricane, storm

Loving God, we come to you trusting in your mercy and knowing that your steadfast love endures forever. Look with mercy on those who are harmed or displaced by floodwaters/wind and water/hurricanes/tornados. Give them your strength to meet the days ahead; your peace, which surpasses all understanding; and renewed hope for restoration and rebuilding. Move in those who are able to give aid, that we may be your hands and heart on earth. Be with all who offer assistance; may your Spirit uphold them. Grant your people vision to see new life on the other side of disaster. To you be given all honor and praise, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Prejudice, racism

O God, you form all humanity to bear your divine image, and you intend for everyone to live together in harmonious dignity. We pray for all people, whether ourselves or others, who suffer the cruelties of racial or ethnic prejudice. Grant your Spirit of power to all who are oppressed. Give healing to victims of violence, protection to the vulnerable and abused, better housing and worthy employment to the mistreated, courage to the fearful, a remedy for rage, strength to parents and caregivers, and hope to children and youth. Purge the privileged of their sense of superiority, and lead church and society to foster communities of equity and diversity; through Jesus Christ, our loving Savior. **Amen.**

O God, your divinity transcends distinctions of gender, and through the generations you widen our awareness of human diversity. We gather here before you in our various expressions of gender identity, all of us one in Christ Jesus. Bring our society to peacefulness concerning a wider understanding of gender. Give courage and healing to those who express outwardly the gender they testify as gift from you. Open the church to their witness. We ask that with your creative Spirit you cultivate new relationships, mend old wounds, and nurture communities of respect, for the sake of the one who embraces all persons in love, Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

Current Events: COVID-19

God, our peace and our strength, we pray for our nation and the world as we face new uncertainties around coronavirus. Protect the most vulnerable among us, especially all who are currently sick or in isolation. Grant wisdom, patience, and clarity to health care workers, especially as their work caring for others puts them at great risk. Guide us as we consider how best to prepare and respond in our families, congregations, workplaces, and communities. Give us courage to face these days not with fear but with compassion, concern, and acts of service, trusting that you abide with us always; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Current Events: Afghanistan

O God, the strength of all who trust in you, we plead this day for your courage and care for those who struggle in war. Protect those in danger; give help to the wounded, liberty to the captives, recovery to the sick, and rest to the dead; and comfort those who mourn. In your mercy, restore to us and all people the blessings of peace, for you live and rule eternally. **Amen.**