



A Service of Repentance and Mourning

+ Gathering +

The assembly gathers in silence.

A Prayer for Forgiveness

Depending on the context in which this prayer is used, a word of God's forgiveness may be added by the leader or expressed later in the service.

Gracious God, we thank you for making one human family of all the peoples of the earth and for creating all the wonderful diversity of cultures.

Enrich our lives by ever-widening circles of fellowship and show us your presence in those who differ most from us.

For the racism which denies dignity to those who are different, Lord, forgive us:

Lord, have mercy.

For the racism which recognizes prejudice in others and never in ourselves, Christ, forgive us:

Christ, have mercy.

For the racism which will not recognize the work of your Spirit in other cultures, Lord, forgive us:

Lord, have mercy.

Forgive those of us who have been silent and apathetic in the face of racial intolerance and bigotry, both overt and subtle, public and private.

And take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts.

Break down the walls that separate us.

And help us to find that unity that is the fruit of righteousness and will enable us to become your beloved community.

Empower us to speak boldly for justice and truth and help us to deal with one another without hatred or bitterness, working together with mutual forbearance and respect.

And work through our struggles and confusion to accomplish your purposes.

O God of unconditional love,
you who show no partiality in respect to people or nations,
we have heard your good news of great joy for all the people,
We hear that good news, and in hearing, believe.
We know that your sanctuary is a house of worship for all people,
with no regard for the color of our skin.
As we worship you, knit us into a people,
a seamless garment of many colors.
May we celebrate our unity, made whole in our diversity.
Forgive us for our inability to let our “old selves” die to the world.
We acknowledge that we participate in structures that are inherently racist,
and yet we do nothing to remedy it.
Show us when we fail when we judge others according to the color of their flesh.
Amen.

*Adapted from the United Church of Christ's "Prayers for Racial Justice Sunday" (www.ucc.org/worship/ways)
and from the United Church of Canada (www.united-church.ca/bfw/resources.shtm)*

Gathering Song

(see list of suggested hymns below)

Greeting and Opening Prayer

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

We pray to you, almighty God, in this time of conflict. You are our refuge and our strength, a very present help in time of trouble. Do not let us fail in the face of these events. Uphold us with your love, and give us the strength we need. Help us in our confusion, and guide our action. 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.

Amen.

+ Word +

One or more readings may be used.

Psalm 30

Psalm 91 (assurance of God's protection)

Isaiah 41:10 (fear not, I am with you)

Lamentations 1:1-3 (the city weeps bitterly)

Matthew 5:1-10

Romans 8:31-35, 37-39 (who will separate us from the love of Christ?)

2 Corinthians 1:3-7 (God comforts us in our sorrows)

1 John 3:1-3; 18-24

Meditation

Silence for reflection.

Song

(see list of suggested hymns below)

Remembering Those Who Have Died

Congregations may find it appropriate to remember those who died. The following rite has been adapted to be included in the Sunday worship of the assembly. The rite may be used at the gathering, after the hymn of the day or after the prayers of intercession. For an extended order of worship to be used as a separate worship service see Occasional Services for the Assembly, p. 344. As each name is read, silence is kept.

The leader begins with these or similar words.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of all mercy and the God of all consolation, who comforts us in all our sorrows so that we can comfort others in their sorrows with the consolation we ourselves have received from God.

On this somber day, we trust in the expectation of the resurrection to eternal life, as we remember this day those who died in the Charleston shooting and who now rest from their labors, especially those family members and friends who are dear to us.

Let us pray. O God, we remember with thanksgiving those who have loved and served you on earth, who now rest from their labors, especially **Cynthia Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethel Lance, the Rev. DePayne Middleton-Doctor, the Hon. Rev. Clementa Pinckney, Tywanza Sanders, the Rev. Daniel Simmons Sr., the Rev. Sharonda Singleton, Myra Thompson.**

Keep us in union with all your saints, and bring us with them to the joyous feast of heaven; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

*These petitions and others (see below) may be offered as the prayers of the people, ending each petition with: Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.***

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.

Holy One, you do not distance yourself from the pain of your people, but in Jesus you bear that pain with all who suffer at others' hands. With your cleansing love bring healing and strength to the people of Mother Emmanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church of Charleston, S.C.; and by your justice, lift them up, that in body, mind and spirit, they may again rejoice.

Out of the darkness we cry to you, O God. Enable us to find in Christ the faith to trust your care even in the midst of pain. Assure us that we do not walk alone through the valley of the shadow, but that your light is leading us into life.

Gracious God, your Son called on you to forgive his enemies while he was suffering shame and death. In these difficult times, lead our enemies and us from prejudice to truth; deliver them and us from hatred, cruelty and revenge; and in your good time enable us all to stand reconciled before you. We pray for Dylann Roof that he may know of your love and find forgiveness in you. We pray for the Roof family and St. Paul Lutheran Church of Columbia, S.C., in their grief.

For the families who grieve loss of loved ones who have been murdered in this senseless tragedy in Charleston, S.C., we pray, grant these saints rest eternal, O God, as they now rest in you. We await the day when this world will know of your great Shalom and all your saints will be gathered with you.

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

+ Sending +

Blessing

Sending Song

(see list of suggested hymns below)

Peace

As the service comes to an end, the assembly is invited to share peace with each other, to stay for conversation if desired or depart from the worship space.

Additional resources

The following prayers from Evangelical Lutheran Worship may be appropriately inserted into the prayers of the people, used in pastoral care situations, or drawn upon at other opportunities for prayer around the devastation of crises.

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. All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Time of civic mourning

God our creator, through whose providing care we enjoy all goodness and life, turn our eyes to your mercy in this time of confusion and loss. Comfort this nation as we mourn; shine your light on those whose only companion is darkness, and teach us all so to number our days that we may apply our hearts to your wisdom; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Social justice

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may move every human heart; that the barriers dividing us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease and that, with our divisions healed, we might live in justice and peace; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For a peaceful night

Dear Jesus, as a hen covers her chicks with her wings to keep them safe, protect us this night under your golden wings; for your mercy's sake. Amen.

Those in emotional distress

Merciful God, you give us the grace that helps in time of need. Surround *name* with your steadfast love and lighten *her/his* burden. By the power of your Spirit, free *her/him* from distress and give *her/him* a new mind and heart made whole in the name of the risen Christ. Amen.

Those who suffer abuse and violence

Holy One, you do not distance yourself from the pain of your people, but in Jesus you bear that pain with all who suffer at others' hands. With your cleansing love bring healing and strength to *name*, and by your justice, lift *her/him* up, that in body, mind and spirit, *she/he* may again rejoice. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Those in trouble or bereavement

Almighty God, your love never fails, and you can turn the shadow of death into daybreak. Help us to receive your word with believing hearts, so that, confident in your promises, we may have hope and be lifted out of sorrow into the joy and peace of your presence; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Anxiety, apprehension, fear

O most loving Father, you want us to give thanks in all circumstances and to lay all our cares on you, knowing that you care for us. Grant that fears and anxieties in this mortal life may not hide from us the light of your immortal love shown to us in your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Bitterness, anger

Lord God, when we are assaulted by the troubles of life, and the deep waters of anger threaten to overwhelm us, do not let us sink. In your great compassion, hear us and help us. Deliver us from anger's power over us. Lead us out of bitter silence and hurtful words so that we may speak the truth in love. Heal every heart set on vengeance, and show us the way to honesty and reconciliation; through the one who has shown us both impassioned zeal and forgiving love, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Discouragement, despair

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.

Guidance, protection

O God, full of compassion, we commit and commend ourselves to you, in whom we live and move and have our being. Be the goal of our pilgrimage, and our rest by the way. Give us refuge from the turmoil of worldly distractions beneath the shadow of your wings. Let our hearts, so often a sea of restless waves, find peace in you, O God; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isolation, loneliness

Merciful God, our Father, in the stillness of our souls we listen for your voice to know again that you are God. Quiet our restless hearts with the knowledge that you stand within the shadows, keeping watch over your own. Rekindle our faith and light the lamp of hope within our hearts. Then deal with us as seems best to you, for where you lead we can confidently go with Jesus Christ our Lord.

O Lord our God, you see and know and feel the pain of the world. Look upon us when we feel alone, and enfold us with your love, that in the midst of pain we may know your presence; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Blessed Lord, in moments of pain we turn to you for strength; in times of loneliness we seek your loving nearness. Grant that your life and love and joy may flow through us for the healing of others in Jesus' name.

Suffering abuse or violence

Holy One, you do not distance yourself from the pain of your people, but in Jesus you bear that pain with all who suffer at others' hands. With your cleansing love bring healing and strength to *name*; and by your justice, lift *her/him* up, that in body, mind and spirit, *she/he* may again rejoice. In Jesus' name we pray.

Time of conflict, crisis, disaster

God, our refuge and strength, you have bound us together in a common life. In all our conflicts, help us to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, to listen for your voice amid competing claims, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We pray to you almighty God, in this time of _____. You are our refuge and our strength, a very present help in time of trouble. Do not let us fail in the face of these events. Uphold us with your love, and give us the strength we need. 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.

A prayer attributed to Francis of Assisi

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.

These hymns are found in the JUSTICE, PEACE; CONFESSION, FORGIVENESS; TRUST, GUIDANCE; HEALING; GRIEF, SORROW; GRACE, FAITH; RECONCILIATION sections of Evangelical Lutheran Worship.

247	Come now, O Prince of peace	636	By gracious powers
358	Great God, your love has called us	646	The peace of the Lord
262	Wait for the Lord	651	Oh, praise the gracious power
266	All earth is hopeful	673	God, whose almighty word
323	God loved the world	684	Creating God, your fingers trace
325	I want Jesus to walk with me	690	We raise our hands to you, O Lord
328	Restore in us, O God	697	Just a closer walk with thee
331	As the deer runs to the river	698	How long, O God
333	Jesus is a rock in a weary land	699	In deepest night
335	Jesus, keep me near the cross	700	Bring Peace to Earth Again
354	Calvary	702	You, dear Lord
439	Soon and very soon	703	O God, why are you silent
479	We come to the hungry feast	704	Where pain of the world surrounds us
482	I come with joy	712	Lord, who love in humble service
502	The King of love my shepherd is	716	Lord of all nations, grant me grace
523	Let us go now to the banquet	726	Light dawns on a weary world
530	Here, O Lord, your servants gather	735	Mothering God, you gave me birth
546	To be your presence	753	Dona nobis pacem
561	Joyous Light of heavenly glory	759	My faith looks up to thee
572	Now it is evening	763	My life flows on in endless song
581	You Are Mine	769	If you but trust in God to guide you
600	Out of the depths I cry to you	770	Give Me Jesus
603	God, when human bonds are broken	773	Precious Lord, take my hand
605	Forgive our sins as we forgive	777	Come to me, all pilgrims thirsty
606	Our Father, we have wandered	784	Grace peace, we pray, in mercy, Lord
607	Come, ye disconsolate	788	If God my Lord be for me
612	Healer of our every ill	790	Day by day
613	Thy holy wings	801	Change my heart, O God
614	There is a balm in Gilead	808	Lord Jesus, you shall be my song
615	In all our grief	841	Lift every voice and sing
622	Neither death nor life	860	I'm so glad Jesus lifted me
624	Jesus, still lead on	871	Sing praise to God, the highest good
626	By gracious powers	882	My soul does magnify the Lord
632	O God, our help in ages past	887	This is my song
633	We've come this far by faith	889	The right hand of God
635	We walk by faith		

If used within the context of a service of Holy Communion, the following Eucharistic Prayer from Evangelical Lutheran Worship is suggested:

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, you have brought us this far along the way.
In times of bitterness you did not abandon us, but guided us into the path of love and light.
In every age you sent prophets to make known your loving will for all humanity.
The cry of the poor has become your own cry; our hunger and thirst for justice is your own desire.

In the fullness of time, you sent your chosen servant to preach good news to the afflicted,
to break bread with the outcast and despised, and to ransom those in bondage to prejudice and sin.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup we proclaim the Lord's death
until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection, we await the day when Jesus shall return to free
all the earth from the bonds of slavery and death. Come, Lord Jesus! And let the church say, Amen.
Amen.

Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection, we await the day when Jesus shall return to free
all the earth from the bonds of slavery and death. Come, Lord Jesus! And let the church say, Amen.
Amen.

Send your Holy Spirit, our advocate, to fill the hearts of all who share this bread and cup with
courage and wisdom to pursue love and justice in all the world. Come, Spirit of freedom!
And let the church say, Amen.
Amen.

Join our prayers and praise with your prophets and martyrs of every age, that, rejoicing in the hope
of the resurrection, we might live in the freedom and hope of your Son.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours,
almighty Father, now and forever.
Amen.

The form of Corporate Confession and Forgiveness from Evangelical Lutheran Worship may be used at the beginning of the service.

Gathering

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Prayer of Preparation

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Confession

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us. For self-centered living, and for failing to walk with humility and gentleness:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

For longing to have what is not ours, and for hearts that are not at rest with ourselves:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

For misuse of human relationships, and for unwillingness to see the image of God in others:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

For jealousies that divide families and nations, and for rivalries that create strife and warfare:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

For reluctance in sharing the gifts of God, and for carelessness with the fruits of creation:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

For hurtful words that condemn, and for angry deeds that harm:\

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

For idleness in witnessing to Jesus Christ, and for squandering the gifts of love and grace:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

Forgiveness

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. Through the Holy Spirit God cleanses us and gives us the power to proclaim the mighty acts of the one who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Litany in the Time of Violence

This litany may be used to begin a time of prayer among those who are directly affected by violence. It may also be used in the gathering time of worship.

O Lord, when we cry out in fear and desperation,
Raise us up from the ashes and hear us.

When fire swallows up our hopes and dreams,
Raise us up from the ashes and help us.

When our lives and livelihoods are consumed by flame,
Raise us up from the ashes and save us.

When smoke clouds our hope and shrouds our joy,
Raise us up from the ashes and give us peace.

In Christ, life springs forth from the dust and ashes.
In Christ, our lives will be raised from the ashes.

In Christ, all things will be made new.
Amen.