

SOUL OF THE NATION PRAYER VIGIL

WELCOME

The Antiracist Workgroup recognizes that the "Soul of the Nation" is under attack, divided by disparate and desperate fractures in ideas of how government should work in building God's beloved community on earth. We believe in the power of prayer and invite you to spend time in prayer focused on healing for the nation's soul, collaboration by governmental leadership to develop solutions to national problems, and bringing new life to the words of the Constitution.

This guide uses poetry, scripture, and prayers from the National Council of Churches, "A Liturgy of Hope and Release," and others from a variety of published works to provide inspiration for your personal prayers. Consider using the process of Lectio Divina.

The vigil will last 24 hours, from noon Tuesday, January 19th through noon Wednesday, January 20, when the new president will have officially taken office. You are encouraged to pray any time during the 24 hours. Those who wake in the darkest hours are most appreciated. Using that unexpected time in prayer may just help one soothe back to sleep and just think - the traffic to God's ear may not be so crowded at that time. We will prepare an opportunity to provide feedback about your experience in the near future.

ONE NATION UNDER GOD,INDIVISIBLE

God of Love and God of Power by Gerald Kennedy

God of love and God of power, grant us in this burning hour grace to ask these gifts of thee, daring hearts and spirits free.

God of love and God of power, thou hast called us for this hour.

God of love and God of power, make us worthy of this hour, offering lives if it's thy will, keeping free our spirits still.

God of love and God of power. thou hast called us for this hour.

Isaiah 42: 16b

"I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground. These are the things I will do and I will not forsake them."

Prayer

God of hope and light,
You call us to be love, to manifest your presence within us, and to walk humbly with you. But it's not always easy to love; it's not always easy to remember your presence; and humility sometimes requires more courage, grace, and strength than we can muster. Still, you promise to be with us. So through these hours of prayer, may we be ever more intentional to this covenant relationship, so that our lives may truly be an offering filled with the Holy Spirit to bring God's newness into individual lives, faith communities, the soul of our nation, and indeed the whole world..

PROMOTE THE GENERAL WELFARE AND SECURE THE BLESSINGS
OF LIBERTY

Breathe On Me Breath of God by Edwin Hatch

Breathe on me breath of God, fill me with life anew, that I may love what thou dost love and do what thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me breath of God, until my heart is pure, until with thee I will one will, to do and to endure.

Matthew. 3:13-17

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

Breathe Into Me by Ted Loder

O God, empty me of angry judgements, and aching disappointments, and anxious trying, and breathe into me something like quietness and confidence, that the lion and the lamb in me may lie down together and be led by a trust as straightforward as a little child.

Catch my pride and doubt off guard that, at least for the moment, I may sense your presence and your caring, and be surprised by a sudden joy rising in me now to sustain me in the coming then.

WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

Be Thou My Vision by Elenor Hull

Be Thou My Vision O Lord of my Heart, naught be all else to me, save that thou art, thou my best thought by day or by night, waking or sleeping thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom and thou my true word, I ever with thee and thou with me Lord, thou and though only, first in my heart, great God of Heaven my treasure thou art.

Micah 6:6-8

What does the Lord require of you?

To do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God.

Prayer from "A Liturgy of Hope and Release"

Holy God,

We come to you in prayer, full of emotions.

Election seasons always seem to bring that out in us

- worry and hope, fear and frustration.

The list could go on. So we bow our heads and ask for guidance.

Open our ears to hear the groans of creation.

Open our eyes to see the needs of others .

Open our hearts to make room for empathy.

Give us the wisdom to navigate challenging conversations.

Give us the patience to disagree with grace.

Give us the compassion to make decisions for the greater good.

And when all else fails, bring us back to love.

Bring our hearts and our hands, our dreams and our hopes, our anger and frustration, our hurt and our fear, ALL back to love.

With hope we we pray, with hope we are sustained.

E PLURIBUS UNUM IN GOD WE TRUST

God Be the Love to Search and Keep Me by Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

God, be the love to search and keep me,
God be the prayer to move my voice.
God be the strength to now up hold me.
O Christ surround me, O Christ surround me.

Brightness of sun, and glow of moonlight,
flashing of lightning, strength of wind,
depth of sea to soil of planet
O Christ surround me, O Christ surround me.

Walking behind to hem my journey,
walking ahead to light my way
And from beneath, above, and all ways
O Christ surround me, O Christ surround me.

Romans 8:22-27 (The Message)

All around us we observe a pregnant creation. The difficult times of pain throughout the world are simply birth pangs. But it's not only around us , it's within us. The spirit of God is arousing us within. We're also feeling the birth pangs. These sterile and barren bodies of ours are yearning for full deliverance. That is why waiting does not diminish us, any more than waiting diminishes a pregnant mother. We are enlarged in the waiting and of course don't see what is enlarging us. But the longer we wait, the larger we become and the more joyful our expectancy.

Meanwhile, the moment we get tired in the waiting, God's Spirit is right alongside helping us.. If we don't know how or what to pray, it doesn't matter. He does our praying in and for us, making prayer out of our wordless sighs, our aching groans. He knows us far better than we know ourselves, and keeps us present before God. That's why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good.

Prayer

"I Need To Breathe Deeply" by Ted Loder (excerpt)

Eternal Friend,
Grant me an ease to breathe of this moment,
this light, this miracle of now.
Beneath the din and fury of great movements and harsh news and urgent
crises,
make me attentive still to good news, to small occasions, and the grace of
what is possible for me to be,
to do, to give, to receive,
that I may miss neither my neighbors gift nor my enemy's need.

AMEN

Thank you for joining us in prayer during this is time of peril.

The FUMC Racial Justice Workgroup, with special thank for guidance from
Pastor Lori Sawdon