

9/11 Anniversary Resources

Prayers of the People for September 11th, based on the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the Terrorist Attacks on September 11, 2001 and the lessons from Proper 19-A of the Revised Common Lectionary.

Officiant: Lord, as the world pauses today to look back and to look forward, we pause to pray to you, our only defender and the author of peace.

Intercessor: O God, in a pillar of fire you visited the Israelites and you lit up the night; so empower your Church to light up the darkness of our world and drive terror and hate from the earth. Lord, in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

As Moses stretched out his hand to divide the waters, and brought the Israelites into a land of freedom; we pray for our nation, O God, that you might always bless us, and all, with freedom from oppression and fear. Lord, in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

When you bring freedom O God, the mountains skip like rams and the little hills like young sheep; so spread your mercy over all the earth that all your children can dance without fear. Lord, in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

We pray for our brothers and sisters in this community, and especially those who celebrate this week: those celebrating birthday _____, and those celebrating anniversaries _____. Lord, in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

We pray for the sick, the suffering, the fearful, and all who live in the wake of terror, especially _____. Lord, in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

Officiant: Gracious God, we pray today for all those who grieve _____, for those who witnessed and survived the attacks _____, those who came to rescue, save, and protect, _____, and for all the souls who were lost, especially those we remember now _____. We pray for the men and women who have been called to defend our country and the ways of freedom, those serving at home and abroad _____. We pray that your healing balm would run down like rain upon us all, and we pray that all who were lost will be found by you. **Amen.**

-Prepared by The Rev. Rick Morley

Other Prayers

God the compassionate one, whose loving care extends to all the world, we remember this day the children of many nations and many faiths whose lives were cut short by the fierce flames of anger and hatred. Console those who continue to suffer and grieve, and give them comfort and hope as they look to the future. Out of what we have endured, give us the grace to examine our relationships with those who perceive us as the enemy, and show our leaders the way to use our power to serve the good of all for the healing of the nations. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord who, in reconciling love, was lifted up from the earth that he might draw all things to himself. **Amen.**

--Prepared by The Most Rev. Frank T. Griswold for September 11 anniversary observations.

A Prayer for Victims and Those Who Miss Them

Merciful God, be with us and all the people of the world as we remember those who died because of the attacks. We remember their lives and give thanks for the time that they lived among us, and we pray that you will comfort their families and friends who miss them so much. **Amen.**

A Prayer for Those Who Have Hurt Us

O God, it is hard to pray for people who have hurt us. Open our hearts and spirits so that we can see that people who hurt us are people who are hurting in their own way. We pray that you will send your healing power to them and to us, and keep us all from hatred and cruelty so that we may learn to live together. **Amen.**

A Prayer for Peace

Almighty God, we pray for peace in the world. Help the leaders of all the countries to make good decisions. Help us all to learn to live together and to try to understand each other even though we may seem very different from each other. Remind us when we forget that we are all your children who share this earthly home. Help us to live in peace and harmony. **Amen.**

--Prayers written by The Rev. Patrician Mitchell and provided by St. Bartholomew's Church in New York City.

Other resources may be found on-line under: *Commemorating September 11*

A New Hymn for the Tenth Anniversary of September 11th

O God, Our Hearts Were Shattered

LLANGLOFFAN 7.6.7.6 D (Lead On, O King Eternal; Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers)

O God, our hearts were shattered On that horrendous day;
We heard the news and gathered To grieve and then to pray.
We cried to you and wondered, "Where did the violence start?"
The world as we had known it had just been torn apart.

We heard of those who perished — Of heroes' sacrifice.
We paused again to cherish The gifts of love and life.
We worried for the future; We hugged our loved ones then.
We cried, "Can peace be found here?" "We can't let terror win!"

Some sought to answer terror The only way they knew —
With anger toward the stranger And calls for vengeance, too.
Yet this is not your answer, Nor what you would create.
May we live toward a future Where love will conquer hate.

God, give us faith and wisdom To be your healing hands;
Give open minds that listen To truth from all your lands.
Give strength to work for justice; Grant love that casts out fear.
Then peace and not destruction Will be the victor here.

Tune: Welsh Folk Melody, Evans' Hymnau a Thonau, 1865 as in English Hymnal, 1906.

Alternative Tune: PASSION CHORALE 7.6.7.6 D Hans Leo Hassler, 1601, Harmony by Johann Sebastian Bach, 1729

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Carolyn Winfrey Gillette wrote "[O God, Our Words Cannot](#)

Tenth Anniversary Version of a Hymn Written in 2001

O God, Our Words Cannot Express (revised for 2011*)

(Tune: ST. ANNE CM "O God, Our Help in Ages Past")

O God, our words cannot express
The pain we felt that day.
Enraged, uncertain, we confessed
Our need to bow and pray.

We grieved for all who lost their lives...
And for each injured one.
We prayed for children, husbands, wives
Whose grief has just begun.

O Lord, we're called to offer prayer
For all our leaders, too.
May they, in times of great despair,
Be wise in all they do.

We trust your mercy and your grace;
In you we will not fear!
May peace and justice now embrace!
Be with your people here!

Tune: Attr. William Croft, 1708. Tune is in public domain.

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* I am grateful to Pastor Janice Marie E. Lowden of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Landisville, PA for her revisions of my hymn for 2111.

We light a candle in remembrance for all those who suffered and died on September 11, 2001, in New York, Pennsylvania and at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia.

We light a candle to remember those who still live and who suffer because of the events of that day.

One: When we remember the stockbrokers, office workers, maintenance workers, bystanders, window-washers and all the others who worked together so valiantly to help each other, we can say together,

All: We remember great courage.

One: When we recall the firefighters who rushed upstairs as most everyone else was racing out, we can say together,

All: We remember selfless service.

One: When we recall the police officers who stood to protect and defend the people and performed their duties until the towers came crashing down on top of them, we can say together,

All: We remember selfless sacrifice for the safety of others.

One: When we recall the thousands of workers, women and men and, old and young, single and married, American-born and those born in countries around the world who did not escape the buildings, we can say together,

All: We remember the loss of human life.

One: When we recall those citizens who rushed to help, did all they could to help, we can say together,

All: We remember and give thanks for dutiful commitment to those in distress.

One: When we recall the people who stood in line at the nation's blood banks to make living donations from their very bodies, we can say together,

All: We give thanks for those who live on to pass on life and love.

One: When we remember the millions of Americans who gave so generously of their life and labor to endow funds to help the survivors and their families recover from their losses, we can say together,

All: We are grateful for generosity.

Remembrance begins with deep, personal identification. It begins with remembering the affliction of our brothers and sisters, and marking their pain as our own. Remembrance is a sacred moment when we raise up and hold to the light of the eternal moment, the good who have passed.

We light a candle, in penitence, recognizing that we have not done enough to address the sources of anger, hate, dehumanization, rage and indignation that lead to acts of violence

One: In our sadness, horror and shock we acknowledge that our own fears turned murderous and we have sought revenge, sometimes against even the innocent.

All: We confess and regret our own anger and recognize its dangers to our spirits, our health, our community, and others.

One: In the midst of the aftermath of the events of September 11th, 2001 we have been tempted to seek only our own good, hear only our own truth, acknowledge only our own suffering

All: We know that peace will come to us and to our children only when the concerns of justice anywhere become the subject of political and social will everywhere, and that no justice leads to no peace

One: In striving for national security and domestic peace we run the risk of confusing might for right and participating in the very behaviors we condemn

All: Guard and guide our country that in our search for security we may not trample the rights of the innocent nor disregard the rule of law. Let us not confuse leadership within the global community as the voice for the whole community.

Repentance means to turn away from wrong deeds. Repentance means choosing instead deeds which require moral restraint, and are more beneficial to all persons who suffer.

We light a candle to light the way to a better world for our children and our children's children, and all the children of God.

One: We recall with joy the unity we felt in the outpouring of help, kindness, thoughtful words and deeds from at home and around the world.

All: We must hold firmly to our unity, borne forward now not of tragedy but of loving kindness.

One: We place fresh confidence in international organizations and conversations that bring the diverse gifts of the world to the problems of poverty, injustice, terror and strife

All: We long for wise policies that forego short term gain for long term stability, justice and peace.

One: In a year filled with tragedy we dare to hope for an era yet to come in which the slaughter of innocents, greed, the ambitions of power, and cultural, racial and religious bigotries are but memories of a dim and unenlightened past.

Unison Prayer:

God of the ages, before your eyes all empires rise and fall yet you are changeless. Be near us in this age of terror and in these moments of remembrance. Uphold those who work and watch and wait and weep and love. By your Spirit give rise in us to broad sympathy for all the peoples of your earth. Strengthen us to comfort those who mourn and work in large ways and small for those things that make for peace. Bless the people and leaders of this nation and all nations so that warfare, like slavery before it, may become only a historic memory. We pray in the strong name of the Prince of Peace. Amen.

Liturgy by Rev. Eileen W. Lindner and Rev. Marcel A. Welty, National Council of Churches