

Prayers for Sunday March 22nd, 2020 Lent 4A

NEW TESTAMENT READING – Ephesians 5:8-14

GOSPEL READING PART 1 – John 9:1-41

CALL TO WORSHIP:

We gather to worship the One who is often called, “the great I am.”

We are followers of the God in whom we live and move and have our being.

We come together to recognize the life, movement, and worth of the God who is with and for each and all of us.

Come let us worship God.

OPENING PRAYER

Loving God, we have come here today to hear your word and let it change us.

We have come to be refreshed by your presence
and reminded that we are never far from you.

Open our hearts to receive you, and to reach out to others in love.

We pray in Christ’s name. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

For those times when we have been too blind to see what is going on around us, **forgive us.**

For those times when we have turned away, preferring not to see realities that we are uncertain about, **forgive us.**

For those times when we have wrung our hands, wishing things would change, without taking the steps we could have to help them change, **forgive us.**

For those times when we discounted others’ stories rather than confront truths that made us uncomfortable, **forgive us.**

Open our eyes and our hearts, loving God, and enable us to see the realities you place before us. **Amen.**

WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

Hear these words from scripture:

“God doesn’t look at things like humans do. Humans see only what is visible to the eyes, but [God] sees into the heart.” So know, friends, that God sees into your heart, and knows that it is good. God forgives you all that weighs upon you, and sets you free to new and everlasting life.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

Prayers of the people

We bring to the light of God’s love some of the many shadows in today’s world.

We pray for the leaders of our local and global communities, as they struggle to find their way through this pandemic. We ask God that decisions that are made are made out of love for those in need. We pray that people around the planet will listen graciously to the advice given to us and do all they can to play their part in this time.

We pray for religious leaders and people, that they and we may recognize and work with the Spirit of God among us.

We pray for those who face life with different abilities living in a society designed for success and achievement, that all people may know themselves loved and accepted. We pray for those who experience the darkness of depression and inner despair, naming in silence any known to us; we ask that they may know peace and restoration of mind and soul. **(Silence.)**

In silence, we think of the shadows in our own lives that need the healing touch of God. **(Silence.)**

In silence we offer now our own particular concerns. **(Silence)**

O God, you understand the heart of the world that bewilders and perplexes us; you continue to extend your love to people when we run out of good will; the brightness of your love reaches the deepest places. May this never be more true than at this dark find our world finds itself in.

Hear our prayers, silent and spoken, and help us to be part of the answer to these requests. We offer them in the name of the one who gave us His prayer:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
and forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

BLESSING

You don't need to seek the light.

You are light,
light of God's Word,
light of God's love,
shining in your being.

Meditate on this light,
glowing from within.

Trust this light,
given, not made.

Don't worry to shine the light;
it already shines.

Simply be mindful.

Open the shutters of your heart,
and let the divine light radiate.

You are light.

Get up, and do not be afraid,
You are Loved and blessed,
Each day and all days. Amen.