

Pastoral Prayer
October 25, 2020

O God of life,

We will soon read many names. As the tides rise and fall, as the sun sweeps across the heavens, and as the years pass, new people come into the world, and other people leave it.

We give thanks today for the gift of human life, all the way from the joyful messiness of birth to the stillness of life's ending. We take so many forms, O God, so many hues and shapes of jaw and hand. We have different twinkles in our eyes, different curves of smiles. One touch is light and delicate, while another is firm and assuring. May we cherish our human life in all its richness as well as in its sorrows and losses. May we cherish the human life of all around us and of those far, far away.

History and the newspapers tell us, O God, that all too often human life is cheap, so little valued it is thrown away. We face the risk in this time of pandemic that we will turn to such thinking so that we do not feel the pain. Embrace us in the loss, O God, that we may be bruised souls but whole. Embrace us in the loss, O God, that we might not be hardened souls that refuse to care.

We pray for those who mourn today, and for those who fear that someone they love is drawing close to the end of life. We pray for those who are sick or injured, and for those who tend them in their distress. May doctors and nurses, technicians and cleaners, administrators and other medical workers be safe as they care for those in their charge. May the researchers find effective vaccines and treatments and find the ways to produce and distribute them soon.

Amid separation and anxiety, O God, move with us through this world that looks so much like what we have known and yet is so changed. Grant us courage for the things we must do amidst risk. Grant us wisdom to know necessary risk from bravado. Grant us a discerning eye for truth. Grant us our yearnings for peace.

We pray in Jesus' name, who taught us when we pray to say...

Amen.