

Pastoral Prayer
November 22, 2020

Holy One,

We are grateful for the accomplishments of researchers and scientists making such progress in developing a vaccine that will abate this pandemic. We are grateful for their diligence, dedication, and determination, and we are grateful to you for creating them, and endowing them with their talents, and helping them hone their skills. May you continue to guide their efforts and those of the people who will produce vaccines in quantity, distribute them throughout the world, and administer them to your people.

But we also mourn, O God. We mourn for thirty-two who have died on this island, for 229 in this state, for a quarter of a million in this nation for 1.34 million around the world. In this rising wave of grief, O God, be the comforter and the sustainer. Be the One who holds us tight because we have no words to say.

These are not the only losses of our time. We grieve for Kay Kawachika of this congregation and for Yoshiaki Ogawa. We grieve for Kekapa Lee, a retired pastor of this conference. We grieve for so many who have gone from us to you in recent weeks and months, and also for those gone to you long ago. Love and loss endure, O God, and we reach to you to maintain the love and to comfort the loss.

It seems a strange season to proclaim as Thanksgiving, but that is the way of things. In the long nights, in the shadows, and in the times of risk and ruin we find the roots of our faith and the stems of our thanks. You are with us. You have been with us. You promise that you will be with us. Holy One who reigns and cares, for this we give you our thanks.

As human beings demonstrate their folly, their hubris, and their selfishness day by day, we praise you for your wisdom, true glory, and compassion, O God. You are great in majesty but you are also great in love. We affirm with John the letter-writer of old: You are love. For you, for love, we give our thanks and praise.

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

Amen.