

Prayer - OSJ Offering Sunday 2017

God our Creator, we confess that sometimes when we look at the world around us--chemical weapons attacks in Syria, empty stomachs in Somalia, lack of access to clean water in Flint and in many Indigenous communities, families divided by politics, a rising culture of fear and distrust between neighbors--we strain to see your sustaining hand at work in this world you love so dearly.

We confess our cynicism. We confess that sometimes the darkness seems too much for our feeble faith to hold on to the light. We confess that our minds cling to the negative, to the simple headline, and often fail to see the nuanced truth, the sparks of light, the unexpected acts of sacrificial love. Oh God our help in ages past, give us **faith** to see your hand at work. Give us faith that sees the darkness for what it is and knows that your light is stronger.

Victorious Jesus, you have shown us the way! In your life, death, and resurrection, you modelled a different kind of Kingdom--where there is good news for the poor, sight for the blind, mercy and healing for the rich, where the last are first and the first are last. We pray for refugees integrating into our communities and the people who support them. We pray for undocumented immigrants who are facing unknown futures and narratives that treat them like burdens. We pray for those taking steps to care for your good creation, from switching lightbulbs to speaking with their representatives to supporting farmers in the Global South who are working to adapt to climate change. We pray for families facing unexpected pregnancies and ask that you would use us to support them. For these people and many more, we pray: may your Kingdom come.

We look forward to the day when your glory will be fully revealed--to the great gathering before the throne where every one of us will be able to bring the best of our cultures and ethnicities and lay it before you in worship. You broke down the dividing walls of hostility. You conquered the grave. You rose again.

Oh bright Morning Star who draws us onward to your glorious Kingdom, grant us **hope**.

Mysterious Spirit, fall again upon your people. May our sons and daughters prophesy. May our young men and women see visions, and our old people dream dreams. Revive your people as only you can. Every day, you are moving among your people. Awake **love** in our hearts, the kind of love that we see in Jesus--self-sacrificing, flesh-and-blood, break-down-walls-that-divide-us love. You are able.

Amen.

