

All sing:

Hear Our Prayer, O Lord **Blue Hymnal, #306**

Pastor:

Guide those who anxiously search or wait for loved ones. Be near those who are grieving and bless them with your peace. In the midst of disaster we give thanks for moments of generosity and human-kindness. Grant tenderness, strength, and wisdom to the doctors and nurses, police and military, firefighters and emergency responders; to all who minister to human need in this time of distress.

All sing:

Hear Our Prayer, O Lord **Blue Hymnal, #306**

Pastor:

May we, your people, continue to be moved by compassion, to share willingly and generously for the sake of your ministry in this world. We ask your blessing upon these items placed before your altar. May these serve as a reminder of your promised steadfast presence and the assurance that your children are not alone in this time of great need. Grant safety to those who will deliver them. In this time of sorrow we seek your divine favor and providence. In this time of lament, we cry out to you on behalf of all who hurting and sorrowful. In moments where there is joy and peace, we will remember to praise you. At all times, we will give you thanks.

All sing:

Hear Our Prayer, O Lord **Blue Hymnal, #306**

Pastor:

We gather these prayers by saying together the prayer that you taught us:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

All people:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

HYMN

O God, our Help in Ages Past **Blue Hymnal, #67**

BENEDICTION

Pastor:

May the Christ who walks on wounded feet
walk with you on the road.
May the Christ who serves with wounded hands
stretch out your hands to serve.
May the Christ who loves with a wounded heart
open your hearts to love.
May you see the face of Christ in everyone you meet,
and may everyone you meet see the face of Christ in you.

All people:

Amen.

POSTLUDE

We Shall Overcome

October 20, 2024

Prayer Service for Those Impacted by
Hurricanes Helene and Milton

PRELUDE & CANDLELIGHTING *Nearer My God to Thee*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor:

In our day of trouble, when we are weary
and our souls refuse to be comforted,

Congregation:

we will call to mind your promise of hope.

Pastor:

In our day of trouble, when the clouds pour out water,
the skies thunder, and we tremble with fearful disbelief,

Congregation:

we will remind each other of your power to save.

Pastor:

In our day of trouble, when chaos and destruction surround us,

Congregation:

we will tell stories of the saints who took refuge in you.

Pastor:

In our day of trouble, when we seek rest and healing,

Congregation:

we will meditate on your mighty deeds in worship and praise.

HYMN

May Hope Rise Out of Tragedy

(Tune: Melita 88.88.88 or *Eternal Father, Strong to Save*)

*Eternal Father, strong to save - hurricanes fury have been grave.
We've seen the pictures, felt the pain, of all those caught in flood and rain.
O hear us as we cry to Thee, for those engulfed in tragedy.*

*O Savior, whose almighty hand, protects all those in every land,
send help and aid of every kind. Grant, we a way, to serve may find.
O hear us as we cry to Thee; may hope rise out of tragedy.*

*O Holy Spirit, work your art in every place and every heart.
Stir great compassion, healing, love. Pour down your blessings from above.
O hear us as we cry to Thee; may hope rise out of tragedy.*

*O Creator, of love and power, bless all your servants in this hour,
to bring relief, to find a way, to rebuild, and to heal today.
O hear us as we cry to Thee; may hope rise out of tragedy!*

CALL TO CONFESSION

Pastor:

Friends in Christ, God knows our needs before we ask, and in our asking,
prepares us to receive the gift of grace. So let us pray ...

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: *Creator God, storming waters have intruded on our nation, leaving the people of North Carolina, Florida, Georgia, and Tennessee vulnerable, exposed, open. We come to you, naming the brokenness and seeking wholeness. In this time of need, forgive us for those things that we have done, those things that we have left undone, and those things that weigh heavily on our hearts. (time of silence) In this time of need, provide for and through us, things that will help bring about your saving kingdom; work through us, that we might share the gift of your Holy Spirit, by way of the gifts placed before your altar this night. Above all, remind us always of your steadfast and abiding love. Amen.*

HYMN *Healer of our Ev'ry Ill* (Verses 1 and 4, only) **Blue Hymnal, #506**

PRAYING TOGETHER: A COMMUNITY PRAYER RITUAL

Pastor: We recognize that water can be both a healing and a destructive force. The same water that gently welcomes us into community through baptism can harshly remove us from our homes and communities through storms. Water never disappears; it just takes on different shapes and form: some forms that we can touch: ice, snow, water ... some forms that we can see: blue skies and clouds ... some forms that we can feel: mist, steam, and fog ... and some forms that we experience like falling tears.

Congregation: **The tears that we cry for ourselves and for others are a form of water.**

Pastor: Like the water you are holding, our tears are a little salty and bitter,

(All are invited to smell or taste the water)

Sometimes life feels bitter and when it does, we often seek comfort in God through community and through prayer. With our bottles of water, and with our tears - tears for ourselves and tears for others, let us come forward and share our prayers by pouring the bitter, salty water, which represents our tears, into the bowl. In so doing, we symbolically gather our prayers together, reminding each other that we are one in joy, and we are one in sorrow with those affected by Hurricanes Helene and Milton - for we are all one in Christ.

(Please come forward and offer your prayer, aloud or silently, as you pour your bitter, salty water into the bowl. Please place the empty cup in the container beside the table.)

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

Pastor: In scripture we are told that God has seen and knows our suffering and longs to wipe away every tear from our eyes. We are told that God will lead us beside still waters and restore our souls. As we pray with our tears, may we also find the courage to give thanks and affirm the faith that we

share together, remembering that we are never alone, offering the words of "A New Creed."

A NEW CREED

All people:

We are not alone,

we live in God's world.

We believe in God:

who has created and is creating,

who has come in Jesus,

the Word made flesh,

to reconcile and make new,

who works in us and others

by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God's presence,

to live with respect in Creation,

to love and serve others,

to seek justice and resist evil,

to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,

our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,

God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

SCRIPTURE READING HOMILY

Rev. Laura C. Baker

PRAYER of the PEOPLE with SUNG RESPONSE

Blue Hymnal, #305

Pastor: God of Creation, we live in a world where both beauty and danger are found. Hear our prayers for those who have been overcome by disastrous winds, water and floods in Florida, North Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee.

All sing:

Hear Our Prayer, O Lord

Blue Hymnal, #306

Pastor:

For all who are in need of healing ...

for all who are disabled by injury or illness ...

for all who are troubled with confusion or pain ...

for all who are in pain ...

for all who cannot find adequate food or shelter ...

for all who have lost their home, churches, communities, and workplaces,

we pray and ask that you help heal the pain of all who are affected.