

# Church of the Covenant

## Boston Massachusetts



### **ELECTION DAY PRAYER VIGIL**

**Tuesday, November 5, 2024**

1:00-2:00pm

*Be Still and Know that God is God. ~Psalm 46*

#### **Welcome to Church of the Covenant on this Election Tuesday.**

*On this Election Day, welcome into this sacred space. For many, today brings anxiety. Worries about the unknown. Worries about the division in our nation and families. Fears about lies and violent rhetoric. In this place, may there be peace. In this place, we will gather, and pray.*

*Please enter in silence, find a seat and allow your mind and heart to be still.*

#### **Statement of Purpose**

We gather together in this place, in the presence of God, to remember that our identity is not rooted in political affiliations, but in our covenant with God who created us in God's own image; that we are one through Jesus Christ and members of the one body; and that the Holy Spirit binds us together into one family.

Today, we pray. While the world moves in great uncertainty around us, here, in this place and in this time, we settle ourselves, we still ourselves, we wait, and we pray. We try our

best *to simply be*. To be with the reality that sometimes we don't have answers in life. To be in solidarity with all those whose voices are silenced by injustice, oppression, disinterest or neglect. Sometimes the most faithful thing we can do is fall silent, and simply *be*. We must simply be even in the face of the crosses that we and those we love still face, even in the face of a planet in peril, even in the face of social injustices, inequality and structural sin. This is an hour to be still and know that God is God. So tonight, as we gather, as we sit, we meditate, we pray. For our nation, for our church, and for ourselves. And in hope, we long for the dawning of peace.

## Welcome

One: Peace be with you.

**Many: And also with you.**

## Call to Prayer

One: If this election season has left you feeling anxious,

**Many: Come, hear God's word of peace, hope and unity.**

One: If you feel like your voice is lost in the public square

**Many: Come, and remember the covenant God has made with you, to never leave you.**

One: If political views and rhetoric have damaged your relationships

**Many: Come, to the place where all are forgiven and welcomed.**

One: If the brokenness of the world, the nation, and the city seem beyond repair,

**Many: Come, to pray for the coming of God's realm here and now.**

## Gathering Song

*Down By The Riverside*

I'm gonna lay down my burdens, down by the riverside. (x3)

I'm gonna lay down my burdens, down by the riverside, study war no more.

I ain't gonna study war no more. (x6)

2. Fear and shame / 3. Sword and Shield

## Opening Prayer

*Karen Henry*

Dear God,

Search our hearts and find our best intentions,  
the well of love in each of us.

Help us feel strong love for you

and for all our fellow creatures and the earth, our home.

Help us find peace in the turmoil as we move through today and the days ahead  
and energy for the work we are called to do. Amen.

JESUS CHRIST: PASSION AND DEATH

## Stay with Me

204

Stay with me; re - main here with me; watch and  
pray. Watch and pray.

This chant from Taizé intended for repeated singing is based on Jesus' request to the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:38/Mark14:34), a simple request they did not fulfill. When singing these words we need to hear in them an ongoing call to be alert and faithful.

TEXT: Taizé Community, 1982

MUSIC: Jacques Berthier, 1982

Text and Music © 1984 Les Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

STAY WITH ME

Irregular

## Chant

## Veni Sancte Spiritus (Come, Holy Spirit)

Taizé

Ve - ni San - cte Spi - ri - tus.  
Ho - ly Spir - it, come to us.

## Invocation

God of all peoples and nations, we have gathered in this place at your invitation to pray for our country. We come from varied backgrounds and political beliefs that often put us at odds with our friends, our family and our neighbors. In this time of prayer inspire us through your Spirit to a renewed sense of unity in Christ. Move us beyond the things that would divide to a deep awareness of all that we share, through Jesus, the One of Peace.

## Moment of Grounding

One: Because you made the world, and intended it to be a good place, and called its people your children; because, when things seemed at their worst, you came in Christ to bring out the best in us; so, gracious God, we gladly say:

**MANY: Goodness is stronger than evil, love is stronger than hate, light is stronger than darkness, truth is stronger than lies.**

One: Because confusion can reign inside us, despite our faith; because anger, tension, bitterness and envy distort our vision; because our minds sometimes worry small things out of all proportion; because we do not always get it right, we want to believe:

**MANY: Goodness is stronger than evil, love is stronger than hate, light is stronger than darkness, truth is stronger than lies.**

One: Because you have promised to hear us, and are able to change us, and are willing to make our hearts your home, we ask you to confront, control, forgive and encourage us, as you know best. Then let us cherish in our hearts that which we proclaim with our lips:

**MANY: Goodness is stronger than evil, love is stronger than hate, light is stronger than darkness, truth is stronger than lies.**

## Scripture Readings

### Hebrew Bible Reading: Isaiah 58:6-10

Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of injustice,  
to undo the thongs of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover them,  
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall spring up quickly;  
your vindicator shall go before you,

the glory of the Holy One shall be your rearguard.

Then you shall call, and the Holy One will answer;

you shall cry for help, and God will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,  
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,  
if you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday.

### **Responsive Reading of Psalm 146**

One: Praise God! Praise God, O my soul!

**Many: We will praise God as long as we live;  
We will sing praises to our God all our life long.**

Rob: Do not put your trust in rulers,  
in mortals, in whom there is no help.

**Many: When their breath departs, they return to the earth;  
on that very day their plans perish.**

One: Happy are those whose help is the God of the ancestors,  
whose hope is in the Holy One their God,  
who made heaven and earth,  
the sea, and all that is in them;  
who keeps faith for ever;  
who executes justice for the oppressed;  
who gives food to the hungry.

**Many: Who sets the prisoners free;  
who opens the eyes of the blind.  
Who lifts up those who are bowed down;  
who loves the righteous.  
God watches over the strangers;  
upholds the orphan and the widow,  
but the way of the wicked, brings to ruin.**

One: God will reign for ever, your God, O Zion, for all generations.

**Many: Praise the Holy One!**

## **New Testament Reading: Ephesians 4: 1-6**

I therefore, the prisoner in God, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one God, one faith, one baptism, one God, Creator of all, who is above all, through all, and in all.

## **Gospel of Matthew – The Casa del Sol Blessings of Jesus**

*(John Phillip Newell, adapted from the Beatitudes, Matthew 5:1-14)*

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

**Blessed are those who know their need  
for theirs is the grace of heaven.**

**Blessed are those who weep  
for their tears will be wiped away.**

**Blessed are the humble  
for they are close to the sacred earth.**

**Blessed are those who hunger for earth's oneness  
for they will be satisfied.**

**Blessed are the forgiving  
for they are free.**

**Blessed are the clear in heart  
for they see the Living Presence.**

**Blessed are the peacemakers  
for they are born of God.**

You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid.

## **Hymn**

*Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying*

## Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying 469

Lord, lis - ten to your chil - dren pray - ing. Lord, send your

Spir - it in this place. Lord, lis - ten to your chil - dren

pray - ing. Send us love; send us power; send us grace.

This chorus from a longer song has become a popular sung prayer for the presence of the Holy Spirit. Easily memorized, it makes a very suitable sung response at appropriate points during a series of prayer concerns or with repeated singing can open or close a time of prayer.

TEXT and MUSIC: Ken Medema, 1970  
Text and Music © 1973 Hope Publishing Company

CHILDREN PRAYING  
Irregular

## Celebrations & Concerns

### Prayers for this Land: Election Day Litany

a. As we come to this national election, we pause together...

b. In a spirit of solidarity, we turn to each other, and we face the Divine.

We focus ourselves on all that is Holy, in hopes of receiving Intimations of Love; Echoes of the eternal; Soundings of the Sacred.

For the gift of these shared minutes, we still our minds, and open our hearts. And we pray, may it be on earth as it is in heaven.

b. Loving God Beyond all Names, Crafter of the Cosmos, Eternal Here and Now, hear and receive our prayers. We lift into your light this planet, our one common,

blue-green home. We ask your blessing on oceans deep, sequoias tall, chickadees swift, and pollinators abuzz. As we pray for a calming balm for earth's climate – we pray for a healing across all landscapes. For humans diverse, whose bodies call lands home, we pray. Linked across time and place, we ask for wholeness for communities, and healing of divisions.

c. We turn our gaze upon Turtle Island and all first peoples who first imprinted upon this so-called “North American” continental plate. For their sovereignty and dignity, we pray. For their voices to be heard as decisions are made, we pray. For their health and the sanctity of the Sacred Waters that are life that they protect, we pray. For native seeds to grow, especially now, we pray.

d. And for the patchwork diversity that has emerged, now connected to the imperfect name “United States”, we pray. For forgiveness for the original sins of genocides, broken treaties, displacements, slavery's forced middle passage and atrocities – we lament, repent, and pray. And for its long-unrealized confession that all are to be treated as if created equal – we lament, repent, and pray. For the ongoing violence against black and brown bodies at the hands of police brutality and nationally sanctioned white supremacy – we lament, repent, and pray. To all of these things – a big prayer, O God – bring reckoning, bring truth, bring conversion, bring reparations, and some day, bring reconciliation.

e. For the election before us, we pray. May it be free. May it be fair. May all voices be heard. May every vote count and be counted. May the results bring deeper healing, love, justice, equality and peace across this land.

f. For every polling place, we pray for safety. May there be no intimidation – no exclusion. For every poll watcher, poll worker, poll protector and for every vote carrier, deliverer and vote counter, we pray for clarity, poise, and protection.

g. For post offices to deliver. For technology to work. For machines to accurately count. And for each voter, we pray for nothing short of the shielding of Christ. For patience waiting in lines, for easy access to the polls. May all forms of suppression be defeated. And may all voices be heard.

h. And for those who ponder not voting – their voices too long painfully ignored – bring the blessing of new solidarity, new accompaniment, new amplification. Bring to all who feel despair, hope. To all who feel despondent, encouragement.



All who feel lost, a loving hand. May unexpected encouragement arrive in the form of postcard, email, text, phone call or knock on the door – so that empowerment may rise, and disenfranchisement die.

i. For any who plan to upset this election through lies, disinformation, conspiracy theories, intimidation, riches, or violence – we pray their plans utterly crumble and fail.

j. For those who harbor violence in their minds, for those who plan to respond to disappointing results with a turning toward the cowardice of guns – we pray for radical conversions to the ways of peace. Distract, confuse, scatter, and confound all plans born with violence in mind. May white terrorism, white supremacy, Christian white nationalism, and white rage find their swift and sure downfall. May the plans of all who wish to interfere in this election – homegrown, foreign, or from those currently on judge benches or places of power – utterly fail. And instead, may justice and peace rise up across this land.

k. We pray that the results in all races in this election will lead us to leadership committed to truth, empathy and solidarity. May those who win, be filled with compassion. May those who lose, accept the choice of the people.

l. Should the results of the election be unclear or contested unjustly – we pray for extra patience and extra resolve. We pray that power, truth and justice will rise up in people. May clarity of information counter the cacophony of intentional lies and distraction. And may leaders, politicians and judges speak and act with moral courage and clarity for the collective good of the commons. In the face of uncertainty, may resilience, patience, and collective strength be felt across this land. Keep us from chaos – and lead us to into a new tomorrow of clarity and peace.

m. Should the need arise, for those preparing to put their bodies on the line in hopes of preserving and improving upon the ideal of democracy (too often not realized), we pray courage, resolve, and clarity. May the spirit of fierce non-violence spread more powerfully than the fires of hatred. May that spirit be rooted and grounded in love of neighbor, love of enemy, love of stranger.

n. For clergy and people of faith gathering at polls as witnesses;

o. For organizers poised to march in solidarity;

- p. For faith communities praying and protecting the disenfranchised;
- q. For children whose future we hold in our hearts;
- r. For all who can't vote, but who call this nation home;
- s. For so-called migrants, refugees, those without homes, and those imprisoned by poverty's grip;
- t. For those currently or previously incarcerated who may be without hope;
- u. For all given the great responsibility to serve people in positions of elected office;
- v. And, for those who vote differently than us;
  
- w. For all these your beloved children, and all who we have forgotten to name – we pray that your blessings would abound – the blessings of heaven, the blessings of earth, the blessings of sea and of sky – upon all in this season.
- x. May your love sustain us in these days, and may peace abound.
- y. In the name of the Great I Am, in the name of universal Christ, in the name of the Sweet Great Spirit, prayers are lifted.
- z. May it be so. AMEN.

## Chant

*Be Still and Know That I Am God*

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Out of gratitude for your many gifts, O God, and trusting in your abiding faithfulness...

We pray for our president elect, that they will lead our country with strength and compassion; that they may represent the very best of the United States around the globe; that they may be committed to justice and peace, and bringing our nation together to address our challenges.

One: God in your grace,

**Many: RECEIVE OUR PRAYER.**

We pray for our governors and legislators, that they will be responsive to their whole constituency and enact laws that ensure the wellbeing of all the people they represent.

One: God in your grace,

**Many: RECEIVE OUR PRAYER.**

We pray for all others elected to public office, that their service to their people would be just and beyond reproach; that where ever they serve in local government, schools, or law enforcement, they would treat all people with dignity and serve the common good.

One: God in your grace,

**Many: RECEIVE OUR PRAYER.**

We pray for our nation, our cities, and our neighborhoods, that together we can create a place where all people are respected and safe, where difference of opinion does not lead to violence, and where our combined creativity heals brokenness of all kinds.

One: God in your grace,

**Many: RECEIVE OUR PRAYER.**

We pray also that regardless of the outcome of this Election Day, we would remember that we are called by Christ to care for our neighbor, pursue peace and work for justice in our communities. Inspire us to work together, across divisions and difference, to create beloved community where ever we can.

One: God in your grace,

**Many: RECEIVE OUR PRAYER.**

We pray all of these things in the name of Jesus, who also taught us to pray...

**Lord's Prayer** (*Translation: Hattie Enos- Nez Perce*)

**O Great Spirit, Creator of the universe, You are our Shepherd Chief in the most high place. Whose home is everywhere, even beyond the stars and the moon. Whatever you want done, let it, also be done everywhere. Give us your gift of bread day by day. Forgive us our wrongs as we forgive those who wrong us. Take us away from wrong doings. Free us from all evil. For everything belongs to you. Let your power and glory shine forever. Amen.**

**Shared Silence**

Gm Dm Gm A Dm Bb Bb/A Gm

Which ev-er way— you turn, which ev-er way— you turn, which ev-er way— you

A Dm Gm/D A7 Dm Gm A Dm

turn, there is the face of God. Which ev-er way— you— turn, which ev-er way— you—

Bb Bb/A Gm A Dm

turn, which ev-er way— you— turn, there is the face— of God. Which ev-er

## Charge and Benediction

### Closing Prayer:

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this day, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, O Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. Amen.

Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping; that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace.

### Blessing

Go from this time of prayer into the world to be people of love, justice, peace and hope, and may God—Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer— guide and support you in all you do. Amen.



**Church of the Covenant**  
Boston Massachusetts