

## An Ecumenical Prayer Service in Time of Crisis

This service was prepared in 2019 by United Methodist and Roman Catholic members of the dialogue committee appointed by the United Methodist Council of Bishops and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The text is part of a broader collection of Shared Prayers and Resources for Catholics and United Methodists that is awaiting publication. This version, an adaptation of the original text, is for worship in the home.

*When possible, divide reading parts among the participants.*

*Gathering: Set the context by playing music that is especially meaningful for those in attendance.*

*Leader:*

Let us pray.

God, Giver of all gifts,  
we praise you, the source of all we have and are.  
Teach us to acknowledge always the many good things your infinite love has given us.  
Help us to love you with all our heart and all our strength.

In times of trouble may we always turn to you and not away from you.  
Remind us of your Son's victory over the sea, and every evil and illness or disorder.  
Give us the comfort of trusting in his power to heal our suffering and difficulty, no matter how fearsome.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

*All: Amen.*

First Reading

*Reading(s) may be chosen that affirm God's presence in crisis and suffering. One possible reading is Colossians 1:24-28.*

Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16 (CEB)

*Response:* Be with me Lord, when I am in trouble. Be with me Lord, I pray.

Living in the Most High's shelter, camping in the Almighty's shade,  
I say to the LORD, "You are my refuge, my stronghold!  
You are my God—the one I trust!"

*Response:* Be with me Lord, when I am in trouble. Be with me Lord, I pray.

God will save you from the hunter's trap and from deadly sickness.  
God will protect you with his pinions; you'll find refuge under his wings.  
His faithfulness is a protective shield.  
Don't be afraid of terrors at night, arrows that fly in daylight,  
or sickness that prowls in the dark, destruction that ravages at noontime.

*Response:* Be with me Lord, when I am in trouble. Be with me Lord, I pray.

God says, "Because you are devoted to me, I'll rescue you.  
I'll protect you because you know my name.  
Whenever you cry out to me, I'll answer.  
I'll be with you in troubling times.  
I'll save you and glorify you.  
I'll fill you full with old age.  
I'll show you my salvation."

*Response:* Be with me Lord, when I am in trouble. Be with me Lord, I pray.

*Here participants may sing a familiar hymn or song.*

Gospel

*Choose a text of consolation and/or hope from one of the Gospels. One possible reading is Matthew 11:25-30.*

*After the Gospel, participants may offer reflections on the readings heard. At the conclusion of this time, participants may listen to recorded music, sing a hymn or song the group chooses, or sing/speak the hymn "It is Well with My Soul" (UMH #377)*

*Refrain:* It is well with my soul, It is well, it is well with my soul.

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,  
When sorrows like sea billows roll;  
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,  
It is well, it is well with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,  
Let this blest assurance control,  
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,  
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.

My sin—oh, the bliss of this glorious thought! —  
My sin, not in part but the whole,  
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

For me, be it Christ, be it Christ hence to live:  
If Jordan above me shall roll,  
No pang shall be mine, for in death as in life  
Thou wilt whisper Thy peace to my soul.

But, Lord, 'tis for Thee, for Thy coming we wait,  
The sky, not the grave, is our goal;  
Oh, trump of the angel! Oh, voice of the Lord!  
Blessed hope, blessed rest of my soul!

And Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sight,  
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;  
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,  
Even so, it is well with my soul.

### Confession

*For any involvement we may have in contributing to the crisis, with opening phrases such as:*

Lord, we repent for...

*Leader:* We pray. *All:* Lord, have mercy on your people.

We have ignored...

*Leader:* We pray. *All:* Lord, have mercy on your people.

We have allowed...

*Leader:* We pray. *All:* Lord, have mercy on your people.

We have tuned out the cries of the suffering...

*Leader:* We pray. *All:* Lord, have mercy on your people.

Words of Pardon

*Leader:* May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

*All:* Amen.

Universal Prayers

*Participants may offer spontaneous prayers for comfort, for deeper trust in God and our growth as healers in Christ, for real change. A prolonged silence is appropriate between prayers both for ourselves and for others, as needs are called to mind in appropriate detail.*

*At the end of each prayer:*

*Leader:* We pray. *All:* Lord, hear our prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

Words of Peace

*Here each person may offer others words and/or gestures of peace. If someone in the house has tested positive for the virus, touch should be avoided.*