

PRAYERS FOR SEPTEMBER WORSHIP

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11TH

God of heaven and earth,
You know the sound a sparrow makes
when it falls to the ground.
Hear our prayer, for our sorrow outlasts the year;
time has not stopped the pain
of last September's sacrilege.
Send your Spirit to speak for us, O God,
to plead our case before you
and release the anguish of our hearts.

God of all consolation,
we cry for peace, and there is none in our hearts.
Send your river of life flowing through us
to cleanse the wounds of our sorrow
and still the turmoil of our minds.

We cry against the flagrant waste of lives,
promises that will not be kept,
friendships lost, the love of family left ungratified.
Our cries protest the deaths
that rob the living and the dead of precious time
and plunge us into depths of grief and pain.
Because we cannot understand,
show us your peace that surpasses understanding.

God of life,
your anger sears the mountains
and strikes terror in those who spurn your will:
Open our eyes to your presence and let us see
that death is always counter to your word.
Show us your streams that rush with living water,
your mindful watch in every struggle against death.
Give us grace to know your gift of Jesus,
our companion through death's night,
and our guide to your new day's glory.
Fill us with your Spirit's breath of life
and lift us to you in our need
that we may know your sorrow, deep as our own,
and hear your word of hope.
In Jesus' name. Amen.

—Blair Meeks

From *Standing in the Circle of Grief: Prayers and Liturgies for Death and Dying*, Blair Gilmer Meeks. (Abingdon Press, 2002.) Adapted by the author for this occasion. Used by permission of the publisher. This book includes a special section, "Prayer in the Time of Trial," written in response to September 11.

FOR SEPTEMBER 8TH

God of Love, who calls the church into being as a community of love, enfold us in your everlasting arms. Come among us and renew our spirits. Lift us up and hold us tight. You sent your Spirit among God's enemies to deliver your people. Send us among the downtrodden to speak a word of hope. You gave the apostles the power to forgive sin and the duty to confront sinners. Give us a spirit of discernment to name the sins of our day and reform your church into an instrument of your love. Help us confront any who cloak their hubris in piety and any who horde the gifts you have sent to them for the benefit of all. Come among us at last to reign over the new age when all shall sit together at the welcome table and there shall be no more weeping and no more dying. In the name of One who loved perfectly. Amen.

—Scott Haldeman

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FOR SEPTEMBER 15

Spirit of Mercy, you wash away all we have done that offends and all we have left undone that might testify to your grace. You turn us upside down and inside out and around and around 'til we turn 'round right. Teach us your generosity that we might forgive others seventy times seven times. Teach us gratitude that we might not seek so much to be consoled as to console, not so much to be understood as to understand, not so much to speak as to listen, be comforted as to comfort. Teach us of your love so that we may love rather than judge, celebrate rather than accuse, embrace rather than exclude. Spirit of Mercy, you hover gently enough to cool our face with the breeze of your wings and you blast with strength enough to divide the sea; sweep over us now to cleanse us this day. Amen.

—Scott Haldeman

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