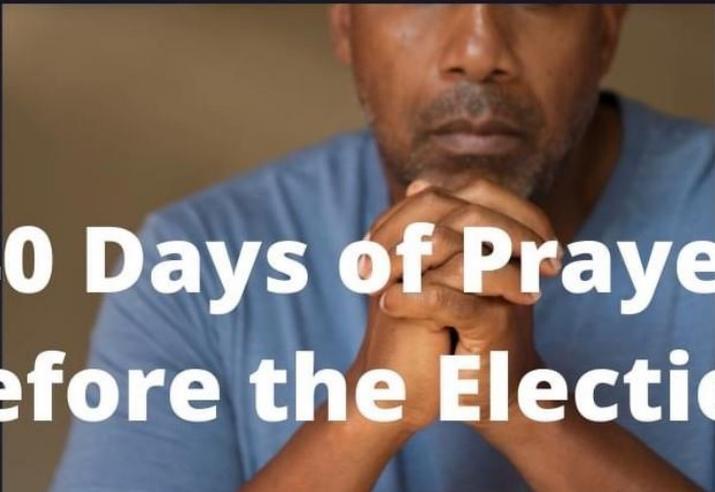


**For People Who Hunger for a
World that is
Open, Inclusive, Just, and
Compassionate**



**40 Days of Prayer
Before the Election**

**Park Hill Congregational United Church of Christ
Denver, Colorado**



parkhillucc.org

Compiled by Rev. Dr. David Bahr, Pastor

Friends

As we move closer to the most consequential election in our lifetimes, many people of faith and conscience are fearful and anxious, trying to stay positive. Many are consumed with anger, trying not to hate. Many can't understand the motivations of family and neighbors, attempting not to judge. So, I decided to compile this resource with prayers from famous theologians and faithful members.

We are dangerously divided as a nation, and frightened of what may happen, no matter the result of the election. We want peace and reconciliation, but not at the expense of people who are marginalized. We want healing, but not without truth and accountability. What can we do? Turn to God in prayer.

Yes, we who believe Black Lives Matter and Science is Real and that No Human Being is Illegal believe so because of who God is and what God desires for us – a world that is open, inclusive, just and compassionate; in other words, the Kingdom of God, for which Jesus models a life of sacrifice. We rely on the Spirit who lifts us when we are tired and overburdened and unites us in ways we can't imagine.

We can organize and vote and protest. And pray. These prayers are presented with the hope – and belief – that prayer changes things: it changes us, the people for whom we pray, and the world. I also incorporated joyful pictures of service and faith in action, to remind us of our ongoing vocation. Stay strong, my faithful friends.

Rev. David Bahr, Pastor of Park Hill UCC, Denver, Colorado



Day 40 – September 24, 2020

Rev. Karen Winkel, Pastor, Community Spirit UCC, Montrose, Colorado

-- I credit Karen with the spark that ignited my inspiration for this resource – D

“Be still and know that I am God.” Holy One, the words of the psalmist indict me. With an election on the horizon – the most important in my lifetime, perhaps in the history of the United States — my mind races, my heart breaks, my body quakes as I consider all that is at stake, all that could go wrong. Still me, God. Let me find myself in you, not in the latest polls, not in the most astute political commentary. Still me, God; let me find myself enveloped by you.

As I sink into your peaceful presence, as I welcome your gift of stillness, minister to my depths. Shore me up. Restore me. Fill me with whatever you filled Jesus with—confidence in you, hope, a vision of shalom manifest here on earth. Whatever it was that enabled Jesus to meet the world head on and offer love and healing when so many were hard and heartless, whatever that was, bless me with a portion of that. I ask this not simply so that I can step into today and then tomorrow with a surer, steadier faith but so that I might, in some small way, offer a bit of light, love, and life to those around me, people who are right now as uncertain and concerned as I have been.

With Election Day on the horizon, help me be still, O Perfect Stillness. Help me, Gracious One, be of use in this season and in the season to come. Amen

Day 39 – September 25

Rob Socolofsky, former moderator of Park Hill

Dear God – Mother, Father, Creator. I don't know who you are or what you are or even if you ARE. But I pray to you because when I ask for strength, I feel it in my heart and when I ask for comfort, I feel your arms around me.

These are anxious times. I pray for justice, but don't know how to reach it. Give me strength to listen to others, even if what they say scares me. Give

me comfort when I feel hopeless. Give me strength to hold my tongue when I know speaking will drive another away. Give me comfort when I do speak, but I feel like no one listens. Give me strength to back up and stand down when I feel outraged. Give me comfort when others threaten or ridicule something I hold dear. Strengthen my heart to act for justice and comfort me by holding me up.

And one more thing, God. I hope I'm not asking too much all at once, but also give me wisdom to understand that what I want may not be what happens. Give me strength to know that history is long and although its arc bends toward justice, right now that day seems so far off.

Give me strength and comfort, dear God, for these anxious times.

These things I pray, remembering Jesus. Amen

LGBTQ Pride

Day 38 – Sept 26

Rev. Reinhold Niebuhr, UCC
pastor/theologian (1892–1971)

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.



Day 37 – Sept 27

Terri Bowen, Park Hill Minister for Congregational Care

God, of all people, everywhere,
Today, we pray for everyone who is not registered to vote and ask that you stir in them a desire to do so.

We remember our female ancestors who worked so diligently, often being arrested and beaten, and losing their family and friends, so that all women, everywhere, could vote.

We remember Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, and Ella Baker. We remember Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. We hear their voices calling out to us to fulfill their dreams of exercising our right to register and vote.

May we continue the wildest dreams of our ancestors. Amen

Day 36 – Sept 28

Pam Hennessey, moderator-elect of Park Hill

Our God, in this time of overwhelming hatred, murder, confusion and despair, help me to know, as Thomas Merton taught, that "the energy wasted in contempt, criticism and resentment is thus diverted from its true function, *insistence on truth.*" Help me hear and speak the truth as I have not always done before.

Help me relearn every day that a part of each person I accuse of sin, to whom I gladly give my anger and righteous indignation, lives also in me. God, I ask for your healing love to remove the beam from my own eye so that I may connect with and amplify the part of you that lives in them also, for only through your love may we both be redeemed. Amen



Making Family Advent Wreathes

Day 35 – Sept 29

Rev. Elizabeth Pexton, member of Park Hill,
Chaplain, Denver Health

“Gracious and loving God.”

God, you know how many times I have started prayers with these words as I minister to people as a chaplain in the hospital. Right now, we need to remember you are gracious and loving, and you are with us.

God, you remember four years ago after our last presidential election, my colleagues and I added large safety pins to our lanyards. I remember the faces of so many patients, families and staff who were afraid. They were afraid of being reported or deported. But no! We said, “You are supported!”

Gracious and loving God, you know how hard these four years have been. I still wear my safety pin on my lanyard. And the issues have grown. We’ve all needed support.

Now, we are in the forty days before the 2020 election. Forty days. Dear God, you know that’s biblical, too. The great flood. And oh, are we flooded now! The pandemic, the rhetoric, the suffering, the deceit, the violence, the ‘isms. Help us to ride above these flood waters. Help us to remain faithful to you. Send us a dove with an olive branch. An olive branch symbolizing restoration, healing, and peace.



parkhillucc.org



Women’s
Homelessness
Initiative (WHI)

Gracious and loving God. We know the journey ahead will continue to be long and hard. God, remind us that you are always with us, and no one can take away our hope. So, give us symbols of safety pins, of olive branches and from above the face masks we wear, shining eyes that connect and say, “I care,” and “I know love will prevail.” Amen

page 6

Day 34 – Sept 30

Bernadette Farrell

From the song *Longing for Light*, OCP

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.

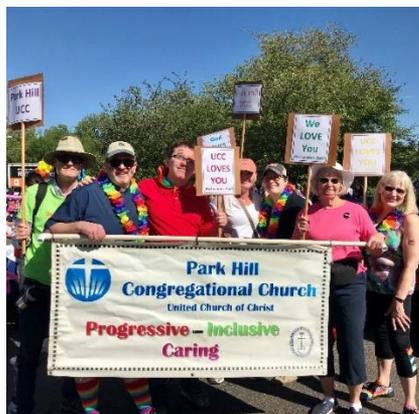
Christ, be our light!

Shine in your church gathered today.

Day 33 – October 1

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Thou Eternal God, out of whose absolute power and infinite intelligence the whole universe has come into being, we humbly confess that we have not loved thee with our hearts, souls and minds, and we have not loved our neighbors as Christ loved us. We have all too often lived by our own selfish impulses rather than by the life of sacrificial love as revealed by Christ. We often give in order to receive. We love our friends and hate our enemies. We go the first mile but dare not travel the second. We forgive but dare not forget. And so, as we look within ourselves, we are confronted with the appalling fact that the history of our lives is the history of an eternal revolt against you. But thou, O God, have mercy upon us. Forgive us for what we could have been but failed to be. Give us the intelligence to know your will. Give us the courage to do your will. Give us the devotion to love your will. In the name and spirit of Jesus, we pray. Amen



Day 32 – Oct 2

Psalm 46: 10

Be still and know that I am God

Be still and know that I am

Be still and know that I

Be still and know that

Be still and know

Be still and

Be still

Be

(reverse and repeat)

Day 31 – Oct 3

St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace;



Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved, as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born to
Eternal Life. Amen

Day 30 – Oct 4

Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu – *Prayer Before the Prayer*

I want to be willing to let go, to forgive.
But dare not ask for the will to forgive,
in case you give it to me. And I am not yet ready.

I am not yet ready for my heart to soften.
I am not yet ready to be vulnerable again.
Not yet ready to see that there is humanity in my tormentor's eyes
Or that the one who hurt me may also have cried
I am not yet ready for the journey.

I am not yet interested in the path
I am at the prayer before the prayer of forgiveness
Grant me the will to want to forgive.
Grant it to me not yet but soon
Can I even form the words? Forgive me? Dare I even look?

Do I dare to see the hurt I have caused:
I can glimpse all the shattered pieces of that fragile thing
That soul trying to rise on the broken wings of hope
But only out of the corner of my eye.
I am afraid of it.
And if I am afraid to see
How can I not be afraid to say: Forgive me?
Is there a place where we can meet?

You and me
The place in the middle where we straddle the lines
Where you are right and I am right too.
And both of us are wrong and wronged. Can we meet there?

And look for the place where the path begins
The path that ends when we forgive.

Day 29 – Oct 5

Father Thomas Keating

Welcome, welcome, welcome. I welcome everything that comes to me today, because I know it's for my healing. I welcome all thoughts, feelings, emotions, persons, situations, and conditions. I let go of my desire for power and control. I let go of my desire for affection, esteem, approval, and pleasure. I let go of my desire for survival and security. I let go of my desire to change any situation, condition, person or myself. I open to the love and presence of God and God's action within. Amen

Day 28 – Oct 6

Sister Mary Lou Kownacki, OSB (Benedictine)

I bow to the one who signs the cross.
I bow to the one who sits with the Buddha.
I bow to the one who wails at the wall.
I bow to the OM flowing in the Ganges.
I bow to the one who faces Mecca,
whose forehead touches holy ground.
I bow to dervishes whirling in mystical wind.
I bow to the north,
to the south
to the east,
to the west.
I bow to the God within each heart
I bow to epiphany,
to God's face revealed.
I bow. I bow. I bow.



Day 27 – Oct 7

Rev. Dick Kozelka, pastor of Park Hill in the 1960s

Almighty God, whose kingdom is our hope and goal,
Illumine those who in days to come will give particular shape to our
vocation as citizens.

Speak a word to those who will speak many words.

Redeem the fanfare and folly.

Judge swiftly the evil and careless.

Hold us above the level of our prides or pettiness.

Thou are the truth

Help us to serve thee,

however we may name thee.

Day 26 – Oct 8

Lakota Prayer, submitted by Larry Ricketts

Wakan Tanka, Great Mystery,
teach me how to trust
my heart,
my mind,
my intuition,
my inner knowing,
the senses of my body,
the blessings of my spirit.
Teach me to trust these things
so that I may enter my Sacred
Space
and love beyond my fear,
and thus Walk in Balance
with the passing of each glorious
Sun.

Mission trip to
the Pine Ridge
Reservation





Overnight guests every Tuesday

Day 25 – Oct 9

Sister Ruth Fox, OSB – *Four-Fold Blessing*

May God bless you with a restless discomfort about easy answers, half-truths and superficial relationships, so that you may seek truth boldly and love deep within your heart.

May God bless you with holy anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may tirelessly work for justice, freedom, and peace among all people.

May God bless you with the gift of tears with those who suffer from pain, rejection, or the loss of all that they cherish, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and transform their pain into joy.

May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you really CAN make a difference in this world, so that you are able, with God's grace, to do what others claim cannot be done.

And the blessing of God the Supreme Majesty and our Creator, Jesus Christ the Incarnate Word who is our brother and Savior, and the Holy Spirit, our Advocate and Guide, be with you and remain with you, this day and forevermore. Amen

Day 24 – Oct 10

Hildebard of Bingen (1098-1179)

Holy Spirit,
Comforting fire,
Life of all creation.

Anointing the sick, cleansing body and soul,
Fill this body!

Holy Spirit,
Sacred breath, Fire of love,
Sweetest taste, Beautiful aroma,
Fill this heart!

Holy Spirit,
Filling the world,
from the heights to the deep,
Raining from clouds, filling rivers and sea,
Fill this mind!

Holy Spirit,
Forgiving and giving,
uniting strangers, reconciling
enemies,
Seeking the lost, and enfolding
us together,
Fill these gathered here!

Holy Spirit,
Bringing light into dark places,
igniting praise,
Greatest gift, our Hope and
Encourager,
Holy Spirit of Christ,
I praise you!

Amen



Block party with Nicaraguan asylum seekers, September 2019

Day 23 – Oct 11

Sister Joan Chittister, OSB

Great God, who has told us
“Vengeance is mine,”
save us from ourselves,
save us from the vengeance in our hearts
and the acid in our souls.

Save us from our desire to hurt as we have been hurt,
to punish as we have been punished,
to terrorize as we have been terrorized.

Give us the strength it takes
to listen rather than to judge,
to trust rather than to fear,
to try again and again
to make peace even when peace eludes us.

We ask, O God, for the grace
to be our best selves.
We ask for the vision
to be builders of the human community
rather than its destroyers.
We ask for the humility as a people
to understand the fears and hopes of other peoples.

We ask for the love it takes
to bequeath to the children of the world to come
more than the failures of our own making.
We ask for the heart it takes
to care for all the peoples
of Afghanistan and Iraq, of Palestine and Israel
as well as for ourselves.

Give us the depth of soul, O God,
to constrain our might,
to resist the temptations of power

to refuse to attack the attackable,
to understand
that vengeance begets violence,
and to bring peace—not war—wherever we go.

For You, O God, have been merciful to us.
For You, O God, have been patient with us.
For You, O God, have been gracious to us.

And so may we be merciful
and patient
and gracious
and trusting
with these others whom you also love.

This we ask through Jesus,
the one without vengeance in his heart.
This we ask forever and ever. Amen

Day 22 – Oct 12

Matthew 6:9-13

Our Creator, holy is your
name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily
bread
and forgive us our debts
and we forgive our debtors,
and lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us
from evil,
for yours is the kingdom
and the power
and the glory, forever.
Amen



Day 21 – Oct 13

Rev. Loey Powell, pastor and former UCC executive

Dear God,

I don't do this very often but I need prayers for myself, for my heart, for my troubled soul. There are fires burning, disrupting and challenging life, and I can't put them out. There are storms causing flooding and damage to homes and crops and lives, and I can't stop them. I can only pray and support efforts being done to accost those most affected. There is a pandemic causing massive deaths and illness, and I can only put on my mask and keep a distance.

But there is also unrest, fear, distrust and intentionally crated divisions among us, your people. This causes me the most pain because I have always believed in your Beloved Community, your love for us, your justice meant for all. And we are failing and flailing around the chaos. At least it feels like it some days.

So, dear God, I ask for your love and strength to infuse my soul so that I continue to be lifted by those calling out for truth, for justice, for fairness, for righteousness on the days when it feels most bleak. I ask for your love and strength to continue to infuse my soul so that my own actions crack open barriers to hope and to peace.

For your love, I am most grateful. Thank you.



Day 20 – Oct 14

Rev. Jenny Whitcher, founder of Juniper Formation

Creator God,
What have we become?
Estranged from You,
form one another,
and from Christ's way.

If ever we needed a miracle, it is now.
A mystical experience,
An opportunity for sacred hope to burst forth,
A moment in time where the tide will turn.

We pray that You would save us,
yet we are not willing to save ourselves or one another.

God, forgive us for not believing that we are miracle workers.
Forgive us, for our resignation, our fear, and our abandonment.
Forgive us, for forgetting that we are created in Your image.

God, be with us,
even when we turn away.
Heal our broken hearts,
so that we might know and share Your abiding love.

Let our hearts trust that we are Your beloved children,
And in so doing, let us be filled with the power of Your Holy Spirit.

May our prayers, lived out in our love for one another,
cause hatred to crumble,
justice to roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an every-flowing stream.
Like the tides of the ocean,
may we never cease embracing all of Your creation
with love everlasting. Amen

Day 19 – Oct 15

Credited to Mother Teresa

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered.
Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.
Be kind anyway.

If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you.
Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight.
Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous.
Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, will often be forgotten.
Do good anyway.

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough.
Give your best anyway.

In the final analysis, it is between you and God. It was never between you
and them anyway.



Youth
group
preparing
for
annual
Easter
Egg Hunt

Day 18 – Oct 16

Rev. Laura Harris, member of Park Hill

Spirit of Holiness,
awaken us to all that is holy in these 40 days.

Spirit of Love,
infect us with love for all our fellow citizens
of this divided and troubled nation.

Spirit of Wisdom,
enlighten us with your insight
into the powers and principalities we are facing.

Spirit of Fire and Wind,
ignite your flame in us
and blow your mighty wind through us
so that we may do our part
to restore our democratic institutions
for the sake of justice and peace.

Spirit of Hope,
lead us into our future
with the hope that overcomes fear. Amen



Day 17 – Oct 17

Edwina Gateley – *Let Your God Love You*

Be silent.
Be still.
Alone.
Empty before your God.

Say nothing.
Be silent.
Be still.

Let your God look upon you.
That is all.

God knows.
God understands.
God loves you
With an enormous love.
God only wants
To look upon you
With love.

Quiet.
Still.
Be.

Let your God
Love you.



Our
Tuesday
night
shelter
for 20
women



Guests on our labyrinth

Day 16 – Oct 18

Dr. Walter Brueggemann – *When the World Spins Crazy*

When the world spins crazy,
spins wild and out of control
spins toward rage and hate and violence,
spins beyond our wisdom and nearly beyond our faith,
When the world spins in chaos as it does now among us...

We are glad for sobering roots that provide ballast in the storm.
So we thank you for our rootage in communities of faith,
for our many fathers and mothers who have believed and trusted as firm
witnesses to us,
for their many stories of wonder, awe, and healing.

And when we meet you hiddenly,
we find the spin not so unnerving,
because from you the world again has a chance
for life and sense and wholeness.
We pray midst the spinning, not yet unnerved,
but waiting and watching and listening,
for you are the truth that contains all our spin. Amen

From Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth: Prayers of Walter Brueggemann

Day 15 – Oct 19

Michele Elise, submitted by Sue Wofford

I am not a liberal snowflake. My feelings aren't fragile. My heart isn't bleeding. I am a believer in human rights. My toughness is in tenderness. My strength is in the service of others. There is nothing more fierce than formidable, unconditional love. There is not a thing more courageous than compassion. But if my belief in equity, empathy, goodness and love indeed makes me or people like me snowflakes, winter is coming.



Day 14 – Oct 20

Rev. Amy Forte – Psalm 23 for 2020, member of Park Hill

God is my light: I shall cry out.

God calls me to lie down in the streets,

God leads me in the path of justice

God restores my soul

God leads me in the paths of reconciliation

To manifest the promise of a righteous world

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of division and hate

I will fear no evil

for God is with me

Your protesters and leaders

They comfort me

You prepare a table before me

In the presence of my enemies

You bless me with an open heart

I weep with your promise for a just Kingdom

Surely reconciliation and healing shall follow me all the

days of my life,

and I shall dwell in a transformed world forever. Amen

Day 13 – Oct 21

Rev. Thomas Hall – *My Cry to God*, member of Park Hill

(Read Habakkuk in the Old Testament, Chapters 1-3 preferably in The Message. Go to www.biblegateway.com and use the search function.)

Eternal God, like others before, I cry out. Like Habakkuk I plead with you:

God, how long do I have to cry out for help before you listen? How many times do I have to yell, "Help! Murder! Police!" before you come to the rescue? Why do you force me to look at evil, stare trouble in the face day after day? Anarchy and violence break out, quarrels and fights all over the place. Law and order fall to pieces. Justice is a joke. The wicked have the righteous hamstrung and stand justice on its head. (Habakkuk 1:1-4 The Message)

I am frightened God, frighten for our country, frightened for the widows and orphans, frightened for all nations and for all people. There is so much fear and frustration. There are those who claim we have a new Messiah. There are those who point to our leaders as your chosen ones.

How is it and when is it that lying and cheating,
falsehoods and wickedness,
wanton killing and discrimination of those whose skin is a different color
flourish in this country that proclaims
"We are one nation under God?"

Where is your Mercy? Where is your Justice?

Where are you, God? Where are you? Amen



Day 12 – Oct 22

Rev. Thomas L. Hall – *God’s Answer to My Cry*

(Read Habakkuk in the Old Testament, Chapters 1-3 preferably in The Message. Go to www.biblegateway.com and use the search function.)

Eternal Creator, you led your people to freedom from the Egyptians, you guided them in the wilderness, you even showed your mercy, forgiveness and compassion to them, and to all people in and through Jesus, the man of Nazareth, who is the Christ. Yet the wicked still rule. To my cry of “where art thou?” Then I hear your voice. I remember your works. I read what you said to Habakkuk, and I again have hope. (Habakkuk 3: 2-17)

2-3 And then God answered: “Write this.

Write what you see.

*Write it out in big block letters
so that it can be read on the run.*

*This vision-message is a witness
pointing to what’s coming.*

*It aches for the coming—it can hardly wait!
And it doesn’t lie.*

*If it seems slow in coming, wait.
It’s on its way. It will come right on time.*

*4 “Look at that man, bloated by self-importance—
full of himself but soul-empty.*

*But the person in right standing before God
through loyal and steady believing
is fully alive, really alive.*

5-6 “Note well: Money deceives.

The arrogant rich don’t last.

*They are more hungry for wealth
than the grave is for cadavers.*

*Like death, they always want more,
but the ‘more’ they get is dead bodies.*

*They are cemeteries filled with dead nations,
graveyards filled with corpses.*

*Don't give people like this a second thought.
Soon the whole world will be taunting them:*

*6-8 "Who do you think you are—
getting rich by stealing and extortion?
How long do you think
you can get away with this?'
Indeed, how long before your victims wake up,
stand up and make you the victim?
You've plundered nation after nation.
Now you'll get a taste of your own medicine.
All the survivors are out to plunder you,
a payback for all your murders and massacres.*

*9-11 "Who do you think you are—
recklessly grabbing and looting,
Living it up, acting like king of the mountain,
acting above it all, above trials and troubles?
You've engineered the ruin of your own house.
In ruining others you've ruined yourself.
You've undermined your foundations,
rotted out your own soul.
The bricks of your house will speak up and accuse you.
The woodwork will step forward with evidence.*

*12-14 "Who do you think you are—
building a town by murder, a city with crime?
Don't you know that God-of-the-Angel-Armies
makes sure nothing comes of that but ashes,
Makes sure the harder you work
at that kind of thing, the less you are?
Meanwhile the earth fills up
with awareness of God's glory
as the waters cover the sea.*

*15-17 "Who do you think you are—
inviting your neighbors to your drunken parties,
Giving them too much to drink,
roping them into your sexual orgies?*

*You thought you were having the time of your life.
Wrong! It's a time of disgrace.
All the time you were drinking,
you were drinking from the cup of God's wrath.
You'll wake up holding your throbbing head, hung over—
hung over from Lebanon violence,
Hung over from animal massacres,
hung over from murder and mayhem,
From multiple violations
of place and people.*

And I heard God say: "Quiet, Thomas, Listen to the Holy Silence." Amen

Day 11 – Oct 23

Bernadette Farrell

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.

*Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.*



parkhillucc.org



Annual Christmas Pageant



page 26

Day 10 – Oct 24

A Farmer's Prayer, Submitted by Larry Ricketts

A visiting pastor attended a men's breakfast. The group had asked an older farmer to say grace. "Lord, I hate buttermilk", the farmer began. The visiting pastor opened one eye to glance at the farmer. The farmer loudly proclaimed, "Lord, I hate lard." The pastor was growing concerned. But without missing a beat, the farmer continued, "And Lord, you know I don't much care for raw white flour." The pastor opened an eye again and saw that he wasn't the only one beginning to feel uncomfortable. Then the farmer added, "But Lord, when you mix them all together and bake them, I do love warm fresh biscuits. So Lord, when things come up that we don't like, when life gets hard, when we don't understand what you're saying to us, help us to just relax and wait until you are done mixing. It'll probably be better than these biscuits." Amen



Day 9 – Oct 25

Rev. Susan Yarbrough, member of Park Hill

God of many names, whose highest name and form is human love, thank you for bringing us to this day, and thank you for all people of good will. You know us better than we know ourselves, and you see how sad and frightened and broken-hearted we are by what is happening to our country and your world. We lift up in prayer the families and friends of the almost one million people worldwide who have died in the pandemic, the additional millions who have lost their jobs and their homes, and the people of color everywhere who continue to suffer disproportionately unforgivable injustices legally, socially, economically, and medically.

In the days ahead and beyond, teach us to use our privilege for the good of all creation, to speak truth to those in power who are cruel and corrupt, and to be your eyes and hands and feet in repairing the world. Give us strong minds and loving hearts, and fill us with courage for the facing of these days. Amen

Day 8 – Oct 26

Bernadette Farrell

Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.

*Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts. Shine through the
darkness.*

*Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.*



Day 7 – Oct 27

Thomas Merton

My Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think I am following your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you
does in fact please you.
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.

And I know that if I do this, you will lead me by the right road,
though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore will I trust you always though
I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.
I will not fear, for you are ever with me,
and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

Day 6 – Oct 28

Rev. Guthrie Graves-Fitzsimmons, The Resistance Prays

God, give us hearts for the most vulnerable,
strength to act for the common good,
peace that comes with justice,
freedom for the oppressed,
and courage for the days ahead.

Trusting in your word,
in solidarity with people of all faiths,
hopeful for a better future,
respecting the dignity and worth of all,
caring for creation,
may we do our part to bring about
the world you desire for humanity. Amen

Day 5 – Oct 29

Kat Gaskins, member of Park Hill

Mother God!

As we consider our responsibility to vote in this election, we pray that our citizens will consider the future of our environment. We acknowledge how climate change has affected the quality of life and health for all peoples, especially those who are already marginalized or oppressed. Right now, hotter and drier conditions have resulted in record setting blazes in many parts of our country. We pray for an end to these fires, and for the safety of those in harm's way and



Tree planting at a Denver park as part of Jesus Left the Building

for those fighting the fires. So many of our politicians and leaders have added fuel to the flames with policies and practices that exploit or don't consider earth's scarce resources. You asked Your People to live as responsible stewards protecting and respecting the gift of Your Creation. May our citizens vote for policies and lawmakers who will protect our lands and resources, considering that Science is Real! Amen

Day 4 – Oct 30

Eydie McDaniel, member of Park Hill

Dear God,

Sometimes your name seems tainted when I hear it used by those with whom I disagree. But I believe in you because I feel your strength and peace around me. I know you are real by any name and to any person. I know the diversity you have created includes love for every person. I humbly bow to accept that wisdom now.

Forgive me, when in fear my words contribute to the ugly ailment of separation and distrust.

I pray God, to hear you better and understand how to help our beloved world join, on your upward path.



Annual Park Hill Family Day at La Foret Camp

Day 3 – Oct 31

Rev. Phil Campbell, former pastor of Park Hill

Ever good and gracious God, in these momentous days prior to the election, we pray for insight regarding nation's vocation. To what, O God, are you calling the country in which we live, and to what are you calling us? The questions resonate with Matthew's story of the Human One judging sheep and goats during an assembly of all the *nations* of the earth. What is our nation doing for the hungry, the ill-housed and ill-clad, the stranger, and the imprisoned, in which we either see you, or turn away from you? What is our nation doing, and what are we doing to shape our nation's response? Be with us in our questions, God.



Easter Sunday Greeters

The partisan divides are deep in our country, O God, and we know this isn't the first time in our history. There have been divisions before when siblings have risen up against siblings, and parents against children. When enmity and persecution have held sway. Amid the divide in our day, what will we do? Be with us in our questions, God.

In our perilous times as pandemic rages, as racism's pernicious evil abounds, and as the needs of the least of our siblings too often go unaddressed, we seek to speak and to act in ways that reflect your Spirit among us. Your Spirit of love and justice, of compassion and peace for all people and all of creation. In these bewildering times as the election looms, may our lives and may our votes show forth your Spirit, your will, and your way.

O God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, you who have led us thus far on the way, be with us and lead us now, we pray, Amen

Day 2 – November 1

Kelly Ann Hall – May Peace Become You

In the cross-fire,
In the cross-contamination,
At the cross-roads that call you forward but give you no sign,

May peace become you.

In the seemingly impossible
In the human tragedy
In the unworkable situation of division and strife,

May peace become you.

May peace become you, Beloved,
and courage carry you
when you cannot see your way forward
But, nevertheless, take one more step in the direction of love.



Day 1 – Nov 2

Terri Bowen, Park Hill Minister for Congregational Care

Holy and Loving God,

We are blessed to live in a society where each citizen has the opportunity, and the incredible responsibility, to participate in our democracy. We live in a society where we are free to practice whatever religion we choose. And where our faith can, and must, guide us as we vote. Thank you.

We are also thankful for the many ways our faith has carried us through the past forty tumultuous days. We've taken stands against racism, hatred, and fear. We've denounced voter suppression. We've tried to ensure that every person had the opportunity to vote safely during a pandemic. We've considered the issues--climate change, economic crises, income inequality, health care, foreign affairs and relationships, and women's reproductive health, to name a few, as we work toward a world that is more open and inclusive, just and compassionate.

For those times we allowed our differences to cause dissension, times we felt we could not possibly love our neighbor, and times we refused to listen; for the times we were unsympathetic, less than loving, or lacked empathy, we ask for forgiveness. Help us to remember that it is love that builds bridges.

Forty days have passed. We registered, made phone calls, wrote letters and post-cards, had conversations, prayed and voted. Now...we wait.

It is in this waiting time, this in-between time, when fears creep in, anxiety seizes us, and doubts speak loudly, hold us in our fears, in our anxieties, and in our doubts. Kindle in us a hope for the future, regardless of the outcome of the election. Hold us in Your love and remind us that You never leave nor forsake us—Ever! Remind us that You are as close to us as our own heartbeats. May we rest and find comfort in Your presence. Thank you for your love, and we pray that it sustains us in our waiting and every day thereafter.

May it be so.

Prayer for Election Day – November 3, 2020

James Weldon Johnson – *Lift Every Voice*

Lift ev'ry voice and sing
'Til earth and heaven ring
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list'ning skies
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun
Let us march on 'til victory is won

Stony the road we trod
Bitter the chastening rod
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died
Yet with a steady beat
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered
Out from the gloomy past
'Til now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast

God of our weary years
God of our silent tears
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way
Thou who has by Thy might
Led us into the light
Keep us forever in the path, we pray
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee
Shadowed beneath Thy hand
May we forever stand
True to our God. True to our native land

Day After the Election – November 4, 2020

Rev. Jane Vennard, renowned author, UCC pastor, and spiritual director

Gracious God, Spirit of life.....

We pause in your presence.....

We breathe deeply.....

The day we have been waiting for has come and gone.

Some of us are celebrating, grace us with humility in our victory.

Some of us are mourning, grace us with compassion in our loss.

Grant all of us the courage to go forward into the unknown future

With hands out stretched in kindness,

With hearts overflowing with empathy,

With our minds set on justice and peace.

Help us be patient.

Help us stand strong in the midst of chaos.

Help us see to all of creation through your eyes of love.

Be with us as we work to create harmony in this divided world.

Be with us as we struggle and fall and rise again.

Shower us with your mercy opening our hearts to receive your blessing

We ask this in the name of all that is Holy. Amen

*We are a diverse community of seekers
Inspired by the teachings of Jesus
Called to bold acts of compassion and justice*

To participate in our digital congregation of online groups
and worship, contact pastor@parkhillchurch.org



Park Hill Congregational United Church of Christ
2600 Leyden Street
Denver, Colorado 80207



parkhillucc.org