

Prayers for Our Nation, Virginia, Richmond, and Our Church

Prayer for Our Nation

Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Your name. We acknowledge that there is none like You for You are the One true living God. You are sovereign over all. You are great and greatly to be praised, and Your greatness is unsearchable. You are perfect in all your attributes. You are perfectly holy, just, merciful, slow to anger and great in loving-kindness.

We see Your loving-kindness most perfectly when we see Jesus and His love for us by going to the cross and taking our sins upon Himself that all who believe in Him have eternal life. We see Your great kindness in the sending of Your Holy Spirit to live in our hearts to guide us, comfort us, to point us to Jesus and to convict us of our sins. We need You every day, Lord, and we are truly lost without You.

O heavenly Father, we come to You this morning in humility and ask that You would bring healing to our land. We are in such great need of Your love and Your peace in our country and in our world today. So many problems have come upon us, one after the other. The Coronavirus has spread seemingly overnight around the world, and then the resulting economic difficulties, and now the nationwide rage and unrest over the senseless death of George Floyd. It makes us all wonder, "What's next, Lord?"

Yet we know that You are still in control, Father. You are still on Your throne and You are our only hope. As Dr. King said, "darkness is not driven out by more darkness but only by the light." Father, You sent Jesus to break down the walls that separate us. Your gospel message sets us free from our fear and mistrust of one another. Lord, break down the barriers that cause us to hate and fear others who are not like us. We know that it is Your desire that all people come to trust in Jesus and live in peace together, united in love for You and each other.

Lord, we pray for our leaders to have Your wisdom and strength to do what is right, and that their words and actions would be used to bring us together and not to separate us. We pray that Your kingdom come and Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. For Your kingdom is a kingdom of love, unity and peace. We pray that You would not only give wisdom and strength to our leaders, our police officers and others in authority, but that You would also give each of us the courage to take initiative and action when we see injustices being done. We ask that You would make each of us part of the solution and not just mere spectators. Lord, we need Your love for the oppressed, for the weak, for the hurting among us. And, we need Your power to help and to be Your hands and feet to bring love, hope, and healing to our land.

We do pray for the end of violence and for the healing of the wounds caused by others and perhaps even by ourselves. O God of heaven and earth, we cry out to You! Save us from destroying ourselves through our hurtful words and actions. Forgive us for our many sins, O Lord, but especially for our sin of pride in thinking we can live life without You. Father, You have sent Great Awakenings to our nation in the past that turned our country back to You. We pray for another Great Awakening and revival in our land that lets us see You for who You are – the Great I AM. Do this Lord, for Your glory and for Your Kingdom's sake.

God, we also pray that this pandemic be taken away sooner rather than later. We ask that You would comfort those who have recently lost loved ones due to the Coronavirus. We lift up President Trump, Vice President Pence, Dr. Fauci and the Task Force to have understanding and unity about how best to fight this disease. We continue to ask that doctors, researchers, and scientists would be able to come up with a vaccine quickly. Please give nurses, physicians and all those treating the sick strength, energy and protection while they unselfishly put their own lives in jeopardy in order to help others. Bless them for their Christ-like attitude.

Please give us insight, Father, to know how we can serve others as well during this time of isolation and hardship. We pray You would keep those who are the most vulnerable to this virus safe and healthy. We ask that our government leaders have wisdom about how they can work together to benefit the country during this time of crisis. We trust that You are working all things together for good for those who love You and are called according to your purpose, even in the midst of this pandemic.

Father, we also lift up those who are hurting from the loss of jobs and income due to the shutdown of our economy. We give thanks for the economic help from the government, and we pray for our economic recovery as we begin to reopen businesses. Father, we pray that in the midst of all these hardships, we would look to You to provide for our needs. Jesus taught us to ask You for our daily bread. We pray that all eyes would look to You, and You would give us what we need day by day. Father, we give thanks for those here in this church who, instead of hoarding, have increased their giving to help others who are in financial need. O Lord, we pray for healing of our country not only spiritually and physically but also financially as well.

Father, as each new day seems to bring new and overwhelming challenges, we pray that we would not give in to fear and hopelessness but rather fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. For You, O Lord, have plans and purposes for each of us, not for our calamity but for our good. Even in these dark times our trust is You. For You are trustworthy and You have promised to never leave or desert us. Have mercy on us, Lord, and heal and save us. Your hand has been upon this nation from its beginning, and we pray that You would use the present pressures to cause us to seek You with all our heart, with all our mind and with all our strength. For when we have You, Lord, we have all we need. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen

Prayer for Virginia and Richmond

O Lord, our God, how wonderful it is to come in the name of our Savior this morning. For we cannot come into Your presence in any other way. We are not worthy, but we come in the Worthy name of Jesus Christ our Savior.

Father, we Your church at Grace, are grateful for Your Word that encourages us this morning to come before You both humbly and expectantly. For You have promised to hear our prayers and to answer us. Christ Himself has invited us to keep asking, keep seeking and keep knocking. And we are assured that You want to give us good gifts, Father. So we come now as Your needy children, to pour out our hearts before You and to receive Your gracious promise of hearing and answering and blessing us.

You alone are our hope and our firm foundation. You see and know all. Our knowledge and sight is limited. So we bow before You, acknowledging this morning that our need of You is great and acknowledging our desperation in these very desperate days. There is no one else like You, no one else we can turn to. Our governments, our jobs, our friends, our wealth, our own efforts cannot rescue us from this national and worldwide crisis. We need You, Lord! Oh how very much we need You!

Please surround our state and local leaders - Governor Northam, Lt. Governor Fairfax, Attorney General Herring, and Mayor Stoney - with wisdom and guidance as they carry out their responsibilities for the welfare of the people of VA and the city of Richmond. Grant them each with an abundance of wise and righteous counselors who know what is right, and please enable them to accomplish what is right in your eyes. Protect them and their families as they serve the people of our state and city. Thank you for placing them in positions of authority for our good. As Your people and according to Your command, we give You thanks for them and ask that in Your mercy You would bring each one to saving faith and use them to live godly lives as they impact and influence so many throughout our state and city.

O Father, show us, Your church, how to live in submission to our governing authorities. Teach us the way of love and obedience even in the face of opposition to our faith. Show us how to speak the truth in love and as far as we are able to live at peace with all men. Grant us favor with our enemies as we live righteously before You. And grant us courage with sensitivity when we must, like Peter, obey You rather than men. But keep us ever mindful of the humility of Christ and following His example of servant hood, not seeking our own interests first, but the interests of others.

As Governor Northam and Mayor Stoney continue to press forward in opening the state and the city, guide them and others who are making decisions and determining the best means to keep us safe and when to ease social distancing. Please guide business owners in our area as they begin to reopen. Help those who have suffered financially because of job loss and grant them encouragement and provision. And lead our police officers to be wise in their law enforcement of new and challenging government directives. Lord, as Your people, lead us to a spirit of cooperation and peace in response to our governing authorities. O Father, lead us to use words filled with grace rather than complaint and criticism.

In Your mercy, we ask You to stop the spread of this virus... and bring healing to those in nursing homes and other extended stay facilities like Canterbury and Beth Shalom. Please look with favor on those who daily provide health care to the sick and dying. Grant them new strength both physically and emotionally. Encourage them with good health and new energy for each day.

Father, You have put your image stamp on each human being, giving dignity and value to all you have made. Now, we ask that you bring unity among the races in our city, that You heal the disease of racism and hatred, hostility and anger. And, Lord, please grant Mayor Stoney and other officials the best way to curb the violence that has erupted in our city these past few days. Bring peace and bring comfort to those who suffer injustice because of the color of their skin. God, show Your people how to be bridges of Your healing and reconciliation. Forgive us where we have defaulted to our own comfort instead of actively seeking Your justice for the oppressed. Guide us in how to reach out and how to become more actively involved.

Our Father, please raise up men and women of integrity, who value what You value, who value the sanctity of life. Place them in positions of power and influence in our state legislature....men and women who are courageous and bold and willing to stand firm on behalf of mothers and the unborn. Show us, as Your church at Grace, how to be actively engaged for these precious ones who greatly need our love and encouragement. Father, make Your provision through us at Grace. And continue Your blessings through the Pregnancy Resource Center and the Family Foundation.

Father, in Your strength grant us strength and perseverance in a time where our state's impending laws could jeopardize our religious freedom. We ask that You grant us the right response at the right time with the attitude of our Savior Jesus Christ who for the joy set before Him endured the cross. O Lord, keep us alert and mindful to love even those who do not love us. Grant us the courage to remain faithful and steadfast and obedient even in the face of opposition or persecution.

Our Father, we know that You are Sovereign over all people at all times. And this includes the city of Richmond and the state of Virginia. We acknowledge that we, Your church at Grace, belong to You, that we are Yours forever and that You continually watch over us and keep us. We are assured of Your love poured out for us on the Cross of Christ our Savior. We desire for You to make for Yourself a glorious Name here at Grace, in this city and in this state! May Your will be done. May Your Kingdom come! We pray all this in the name of Christ our King. May He receive all the glory now and forever. Amen.

Prayer for Our Church

1. Pray for **a clear vision and guidance** from God by His Spirit according to His word for our church
 - a. *Psalm 25:4-5 - "Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long."*
2. Pray for **a spirit of yielding**, a spirit of reconciliation, of love, unity and humility **where we are not lining up with God's word**; Pray for a willing spirit as we allow God to show areas of correction and be open to allow the Holy Spirit to work in us
 - a. *Ephesians 2: 10 – For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do*
3. Pray for a pure heart, a heart of gold and silver taken through refiner's fire; Pray that **we would become the bride that Christ envisioned and died for**, pursuing righteousness and a blameless life amidst a broken world
4. Pray for **unity and effectiveness in embracing Christ's mission and our great commission to make disciples**; Pray that God's power be displayed by causing us at Grace and the global Church to hunger for His ways; Pray for unity that would display the love of Christ for everyone around us to see
 - a. *Ephesians 3: 10-11: His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose, that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord*
5. Pray that we are **intentional in being aware of and caring for our neighbors**
6. Pray for **boldness to follow Christ** in love and obedience
 - a. *Eph 3: 16-19 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God*