

Pastoral Prayer April 14, 2013

Lord of the universe, we praise you for your creation. In the bright splendor of this day we see the blossoms proclaiming your goodness and the sunshine announcing your care. The world is so filled with beauty, it makes us noble as well. We can more easily understand how small are the disappointments which seem overwhelming while they are happening to us.

On this spring morning we are reminded of your solemn promise to Noah and to us: "While the earth remains, springtime and harvest, summer and winter, shall not fail." With you in control, Father, giving us your strength, we can handle whatever comes. Keep us filled with hope and purpose as we connect with you today. Help us choose noble goals. Fit us for service. Let us become happy and fruitful human beings, just as you intended when you made us.

We pray for those who cannot find the richness of life. Some never learn the paths which bring enjoyment and confident living. Some cannot meet ordinary demands for food and shelter. We pray for any who are in conflict with their neighbors. We intercede for any who turn to gangs and violence and drugs in their quest for satisfaction, but are finding not heaven, but hell. Lord, give us the wit and will to see where we can help. Let us bring your love to them through our touch, and even through our courts and our taxes.

We pray for those who are sick or heartbroken and who wonder what is next. Grant your healing and your comfort. Listen now to the prayers of these people here in Oxford Church. They have brought their hopes, their hurts and their guilt to this place of prayer. But they also bring their thanksgiving and their praise. They made the effort to come. Do not send them away empty.

Your great mercy is proven for us in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. He is our living Lord. In his name we lift up our prayers. Amen.

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