

Opening prayer: Almighty God, bless us with a deep sense of your presence with us in this hour. We cannot worship you or sing your praises, we cannot lift our prayers or hear your word, except by the power of your Spirit. Grant us your Spirit this morning, in our midst as your people and in our hearts and minds. We pray in Jesus' name.

Pastoral prayer: God of heaven and earth, of the past and the present and the future, we thank you for Jesus Christ, through whom we know your love for us and all the world. We thank you for Jesus Christ, through whom we know new depths of life here and now and through whom we hope for eternal life.

We thank you for your Holy Spirit, who nurtures and sustain our very being, who reminds us of your presence and love, who inspires us to see in the ordinary occurrences of life glimpses of eternal life.

We pray for those to whom you seem very far away. We pray for those whose faith is faltering, who face life or sickness or death with fear and doubt. Grant them the shelter of your comforting, reassuring Spirit. Grant them courage and renewed faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

We pray for our world, in which violence

And injustice shatter innocent dreams and
distort lives beyond repair. We pray for our
world, in which souls die even as bodies live.

We pray for our world, in which greed for money
and power has hardened human hearts, while the
poor die in quiet despair. O God, teach us
and your world the way of sacrifice, instead
of self-aggrandizement. Teach us and your
world the way of community, instead of in-
dividual advancement and pleasure. O God,
speak loudly and clearly, for our ears have
grown deaf. We have tried desperately to
shut out the hurting, hungry, war-torn, greedy
world. Forgive us Lord, forgive us —