

Prayer by Jill Duffield in memory of those lost on 9-11-01

“God of grace and God of glory, on this the 15-year anniversary of the terrorist attacks of 9/11, grant us the wisdom to remember the lessons from that tragic day that make us more Christ-like. Drive away from us any vengeful urges, any hate-filled sentiment, any whisper from within or without that goads us to return evil for evil.

As we look back and recall where we were, who was with us and how we felt that fateful day, may those vivid memories compel us to acts of kindness, words of love and demonstrations of community. May the myriad of images of helpers – firefighters, police officers, pastors, office workers, and ordinary citizens – be the icons that inspire us to be helpers, too. May texts and voicemails of “I love you” and “You are everything to me” assure us that love always has the last word, but that we should never wait to say it.

As the world still heaves with violence and war seems to never end, assure us, Prince of Peace, that ultimately crying and mourning will be no more. In the midst of suffering, our own and that of the world, speak again, Creator God, your performative Word of life and its goodness.

We pray for those whose lives were forever changed on September 11, 2001. Grant comfort to those who grieve. Strengthen those who struggle with questions that remain unanswered. Assure those who worry that they should have said or done something differently that you gather up all the fragments of our lives, bless and use them in ways that nourish.

We thank you, Lord of all, for the people who every day put their lives in danger in order to protect and serve others. We pray for all first responders, for medical personnel, police officers, firefighters and others who never know what a shift at work will bring on any given day. Grant them wisdom, courage and rest.

As we consider that fall day 15 years ago, grant us the ability to cling to the examples of goodness that emerged out of the horror: strangers banding together to thwart more carnage, people lining up to donate blood, congregations opening their doors to offer respite for anyone and everyone, people offering comfort and care to those they knew and those they’d never met. May these acts of mercy emulated in our lives be the ripple that reverberates through history, revealing your sure power to bring redemption, reconciliation and resurrection out of the depths of death and despair.

We are grateful for the new life born since the attacks 15 years ago – for those beloved children who don’t remember that day. We give thanks for the saints who were with us then, but have since gone on to eternal life. When we mark anniversaries of sorrow, corporately or alone, may they be occasions to discern what truly matters, to let go of what really doesn’t and recognize your grace.” 1

1 Prayer by Jill Duffield, Presbyterian Outlook 9-5-16.