

### **A Prayer of Thanks for Our Ministers and Church Leaders**

Most gracious God, through you we have purpose and meaning.

You give to the human family a variety of gifts and to those whom you have called to the Word and Sacraments we give you thanks.

To the ministers, to those preparing for ministry and to the church leaders of our congregations: we give you special thanks.

Whether you are young, young at heart, female, male, single, married, widowed – each of you bring your life experience to the ministry that you pour out for us each day.

For it is you, in this time of change, reminding us that community can take on a new meaning:

You arise early in the day and bring groceries to leave on our doorstep when we cannot leave our home.

You stay up late to read how technology may help our prayers, our study, our worship, our personal witness.

Your passion for the Word stretches us to embrace new tools and methods to study and to worship.

And you courageously pioneer into new territory by preaching into microphones, camera lenses and empty pews just so that we can hear the good news.

You call, text, message, email and speak to use through screen doors and computer screens to make sure that we are okay, remain connected; and feel a part of the covenant community.

You listen to our gripes, our fears, our cries, our anger with patience and fortitude.

And what appears bleak and uncertain, you illuminate with scriptures and words of hope.

You blunt the sharp edges of sickness and death with your counsel and prayers.

And encourage us to enjoy God, our friends, our sleep, our food.

We pray that God blesses each of you as you face your own struggles.

We pray that you take care of yourself and your family and that you keep both healthy and safe.

We pray that you take time to find rest, enjoyment, and humor each day. For not only are you our minister, you are our friend, family member and companion in this faith journey. We pray for you always.

Amen.