

LITANY FOR HEALING

By Rev. W. G. Robinson-McNeese, MD

READER: Most high God of the universe, who was and is and ever will be, we stretch our hands to you, because there is no other help we know. Disease, distress, adversity, public unrest, and spiritual wickedness are rampant in the land, threatening physical and nonphysical lives. Provide the cure we so desperately need. As you have done many times before, rescue us. Make crooked places straight and rough places plain.

RESPONSE: I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

SILENT PRAYER

READER: Lord, arrest the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic consuming our nation's lives and resources. Give us wisdom to behave properly in the face of the pathogen. Give us knowledge to create and refine therapies, medications, and vaccines to check viral spread. Give us understanding to design policies for present and future well-being.

RESPONSE: Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.

SILENT PRAYER

READER: We pray for physical health especially for all leaders of this country's government and their families. We need them well if they are to show wisdom; strong while being sympathetic, vibrant as they execute good vision. Please let our leaders value wholeness in all its forms and know true healing comes through love, humility, recognizing you and adherence to your principles.

RESPONSE: That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all goodness and honesty.

SILENT PRAYER

READER: Bless those who are most at risk during this season—first responders, medical, civic, and other essential workers, the elderly, homeless, poor, and disenfranchised. They bear a disproportionate part of the pandemic burden and need special protection. Cover them and guide us all towards fitness and economic strength measured not merely by numbers on charts, but numbers of women and men who are hearty, employed, housed and well-fed.

RESPONSE: Be merciful unto me, O God; for my soul trusteth in thee.

SILENT PRAYER

READER: Give spiritual recovery to thousands whose loved ones have died because of this viral illness. While death persists let your perfect peace reign, offering comfort to all bereaved. Also, refresh those whose loved ones have died of racial virulence, endemic to this country for centuries and affecting groups of every ancestry. Relieve this systemic hurt, while eliminating violence as a tactic of the aggrieved. Forgive the sins of racism and intimidation. Substitute in their place love and anti-racist activism, changing not only attitudes about, but actions towards, the other.

RESPONSE: The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?

SILENT PRAYER

READER: Lord, God, some struggle more than others during these times of uncertainty, physical distancing, and community isolation. Psychological wounds can be as debilitating as physical ones, especially when acute strain is layered on top of chronic illness. Please guard and tend fragile psyches. Provide encouragement through family and neighbors alike. Let trauma-induced stressors be mitigated for us all, as fears and depressions are eased through our daily walk with you.

RESPONSE: I will cry unto God Most High; unto God that performeth all things for me.

SILENT PRAYER

READER: Educate us about education. The pursuit of formalized learning and all its trappings is honorable and worthy of effort. Even so, help us know when to pause, when to stop, and when to go forward with our educational programming during these troubled times. Keep foremost in our minds the safety of our learning communities over the carrying out of strategic plans. And while literacy and acquisition of knowledge are desirable, teach us to follow loftier goals, as well: to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before you.

RESPONSE: Yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge until these calamities be overpast.

SILENT PRAYER

READER: Storms rage, wildfires spread, climates change, yet none of this is beyond your power to effect. Show us how to live synergistic with the earth, managing environments with acknowledgement of present need balanced against future good. As we become more in tune with nature, lead us towards increased harmony with one another. Teach us to model social justice and a sincere adoption of beloved community. During these polarized times, meld our public choices with our private beliefs in the matchless power of godly love, so by prudent selections all will know we are your disciples, and through us be blessed.

RESPONSE: My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire. Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth.

SILENT PRAYER

READER: Now, oh God, when it is yours to call and ours to answer, lift us off our knees and onto our feet to make constructive difference. Equip us for an ever-changing world. Give us liability for all oppressed, and charity to embrace all mankind. And since darkness cannot drive out darkness, lead us in paths of reconciliation rather than division, teaching us to fight with courageous voices rather than clenched fists, remembering: the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds. Ground us in unity, equity, integrity, and righteousness, so in all disputes we follow your instructions to study war no more.

RESPONSE: For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

SILENT PRAYER

...Amen!