

## **Prayers on the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of September 11, 2001**

Today we pray with the remembrance of tragedy in our minds, with sorrow in our hearts, with longing in our souls. Together let us pray for the victims of terrorism, war, and violence everywhere.

**In your great mercy, grant them the peace that the world has denied them.**

We pray for soldiers, firefighters, police officers, and all public servants. Protect them by your grace and keep them whole, out of harm's way, wherever they may be.

We pray for the innocent lives caught in the crossfire, those who have died, those who have been maimed, those who have been made homeless.

We pray for those who mourn, weep, and live in fear amidst wars not their own. Grant them comfort from sadness, protection in danger, and the relief of daily bread and basic necessities of human life as they struggle to rebuild their lives.

We pray for families and individuals broken by the physical and psychological effects of war, violence, and terrorism; and for those suffering from long separation, fragmented relationships, missing limbs, and mental illness. Grant them the strength and aid they need to be complete, at peace, and restored to life.

We pray for the children who have been made orphans, the women who have been made widows, the men who have been made widowers, and the parents who have buried children. For those that weep this day and forever for their departed loved ones, we pray that you turn their mourning into dancing (Psalm 30:11) and surround them with a great cloud of witnesses for comfort and support (Hebrews 12:1).

We pray for the young who have never known a time when America was not at war, within or with other nations.

We pray for those taught to fragment the human family into categories of "us" and "them," and for those raised to justify animosity towards others by believing that God hates those that would harm them or disagree with them. Have mercy on them through the revelation of your divine, all-encompassing love.

We pray for all the men, women, and children who have lost the ability to forgive. Teach us all, as you have commanded, to forgive seventy times seven, even those who would cause us and our loved ones harm.

O God, you made us in your image, and you comfort and weep with us. Create in us clean hearts and holy spirits that respond to pain with compassion. Enlarge our hearts so that we may weave hope from the torn fabric of tragedies. Grant us strength and courage to offer forgiveness to all as you have so graciously forgiven us. In our pain, may we forge not swords but ploughshares. In tragedy, may we not despair, but through your Spirit, create good news, hope, and peace for a broken world. All these things, and whatever else you know that we need, we pray in the name of your Son, our Savior, who has commanded us to forgive in the infinity of his love for us. **Amen.**