

Confession

Call to Worship

O God, we come before you carrying the baggage of the week we have just left behind and already picking up the luggage for the week ahead.

We carry with us both worry and anticipation, both energy and weariness, both hope and doubt.

We have come home from vacations and from daily work.

We have experience solitude—both welcome and unwelcome—and we have been in the midst of crowds of people.

Whatever we bring with us, Lord, we lay down before you.

Clear our hearts and minds, that we may hear and know and understand what you have to say to us today.

SILENCE

“O Lord, Hear our Prayer” HWB 348 *Note plural pronoun “our”*

Today we want to focus on the way that you work in our daily lives.

Bring to our minds the times that you have been faithful to us in our individual lives and as a congregation.

We give thanks to you for your steadfast love.

SILENCE

“O Lord, Hear our Prayer” HWB 348

O Lord, we confess that we are not always eager to share our hearts with you.

We confess that sometimes we disobey. We confess our sins to you this morning, and ask that you forgive us through your boundless grace and mercy.

SILENCE

“O Lord, Hear our Prayer” HWB 348

O Lord, once again we invite your Spirit to fall fresh on us.

Revive us and empower us, Lord. Transform us into the people you want us to be, the people that you *need* us to be so that we may be witnesses to the world of your love.

We want to give you glory and honor, both in our worship today and in every moment of our lives.

“O Lord, Hear our Prayer” HWB 348

Thank you, Lord, for hearing our prayers and answering us. We have prayed in the name of Jesus Christ, who walks with us in all things. AMEN

Anita Kehr, copyright 2000

Jesus, I need you now!

Where are you Jesus?

I called for you and you did not come.

I needed you

And you did not respond.

I was in pain

And you did not ease my suffering.

Where are you Jesus?

My soul is in anguish and you give me no comfort.

I cry out in distress

And you do not hear me.

My heart is broken.

Why do you ignore me Lord?

Where are you Jesus?

I need you now, not tomorrow or the next day.

Please tend to my need before it is too late.

You can fix things, Jesus.

So do it now

And relieve me from my torment.

Where were you Jesus

when Lazarus was dying?

**Your dear friends called for you
and you delayed your coming?**

**“Lord, if you had been there,
my brother would not have died.”**

Where were you Jesus?

We had faith in you.

You opened the eyes

of a man blind from birth.

Surely you could have healed

your friend Lazarus and kept him from the grave.

Where were you Jesus?

Was it too much to ask to be with us in our hour of need?

We are your friends.

We believe in you.

Why did you delay?

Were we not worthy of your healing touch?

Jesus began to weep.

David Livingstone Haarer, copyright 2000

Prayer of Confession

Lord, Lord, we give thanks for the gifts you have so graciously given us.
We ask for forgiveness that your spirit within is not as healthy and fruitful as you would like to see.

We repent of our negative ways and turn toward you for guidance and wisdom in prayer and in your word, and we ask for your help to use more of your gifts.

We thank you for your mercy.

We thank you for the refreshment we have in you—that your spiritual food and drink is satisfying.

We give our lives to you. AMEN

Dianna Miller, copyright 2000

Prayer of Confession

Oh Lord, our God and Savior, how wondrous to confess you as One.

You are the One who created us, the One who saved us,
and the One who sanctified us.

Oh Lord our God and Savior, we confess to you that we are not one but many who claim and defend a piece of your truth, a piece of your Word.

We have paid more attention to our theologies, doctrines and church denominations and therefore have become many and divided.

Sometimes we fight each other instead of help each other.

Our own inclinations have many times blinded us from seeing you in a different way.

Our self-reliance has hurt others instead of healing them,

Our narrow vision of your truth has sometimes made us unaware that you want to teach us a new truth through others.

Please forgive us, Oh God.

Please help us see in each other the face of your grace and truth that we have not come to understand.

We pray that your unifying power would fuse us in one as each individual grain of wheat gets lost to become one loaf of bread to feed the hungry. AMEN

Pastor Romero, copyright 2000

Prayer of forgiveness for causing pain

Forgiving God,

we come to you now acknowledging our human weaknesses;
we come confessing our sins and asking for your forgiveness.

For things spoken, which have damaged your children,
killing their joy, injuring their spirits, we are sorry.

Forgive us, we pray. (Silence)

For things done which have hurt your children, maiming their self-esteem,
crushing their breath from them, we are sorry.

Forgive us, we pray. (Silence)

For things left unsaid or undone, which have caused pain to your children,
stealing their peace, causing them to doubt themselves or their work,
we are sorry.

Forgive us, we pray. (Silence)

And for the damage this has caused your holy name and your church, we are sorry.

Forgive us, we pray. (Silence)

Compassionate God,

You have embodied forgiveness in your son, Jesus,
and to your deep well of forgiveness, we come,
asking you to fill us with your mercy and compassion,
so that we may also forgive one another.

Thank you for the gift of forgiveness you have extended to us when we ask.

Through your mercy and grace,
grant us the ability to extend forgiveness to one another.

In the name of Jesus Christ who died that we might be forgiven. AMEN

Receive this word of blessing from the Bible.

If we confess our sins, God is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John. 1: 9)

As far as the east is from the west, so far has God removed our transgressions
from us. (Psalm 103: 12)

Now to the one who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think,

according to the power that works within us,
to God be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations,
forever and ever. AMEN (Eph.4: 20-21)

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Corporate Prayer of Confession

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love;
According to your abundant mercy blot out our transgressions.
Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity
and cleanse us from our sin.
For we know our transgressions, and our sin is ever before us.
Against you, you alone, have we sinned and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless
when you pass judgment.
Indeed, we were born guilty, sinners when our mothers conceived us.

(Silence)

**You desire truth in the inward being;
therefore teach us wisdom in our secret hearts.
Purge us with hyssop, and we shall be clean;
wash us and we shall be whiter than snow.
Let us hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.
Hide your face from our sins and blot out all our iniquities.**

(Silence)

Create in us a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within us.
Do not cast us away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from us.
Restore to us the joy of your salvation, and sustain in us a willing spirit.
Then we will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.
Deliver us from bloodshed, O God, O God of our salvation,
And our tongues will sing aloud of your deliverance.

(Silence)

**O Lord, open our lips, and our mouths will declare your praise.
For you have no delight in sacrifice;
If we were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.
The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;
A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

(Silence)

We come to you tonight God, with broken and contrite hearts.
We come with confusion and sadness and fear.
We offer our prayer corporately.
We pray to you as a body—as a presence for you in this world.
We ask for forgiveness on behalf of humanity.
We don't understand this thing that has happened but we acknowledge
the forces of evil and hatred carried by some of your children.
We ask for courage and love enough to show a different way to live.
Help us not to be complicit in this cycle of hatred
but give us pure and contrite hearts that we may show another way to live,
your way of peace and compassion.

**We give thanks that you are the God of love and truth.
May we know your love at such a depth in our own lives that it can't help
but pour out of us and spill into the world around us.
We give you thanks for your constant presence with us,
and for the assurance that we are not alone,
but that we have the comforter and advocate
from you—the Holy Spirit.
Thank you for this gift of your love. In Jesus' name we pray. AMEN**

Lois Harder, copyright 2000

Litany of Confession (not used for lack of confirmation of originality)

He was careless about himself,

we are careful.

He was courageous,

we are cautious.

He trusted the unworthy,

we trust those who have good collateral.

He forgave the unforgivable,

we forgive those who do not really hurt us.

He was righteous and laughed at respectability,

we are respectable and smile at righteousness.

He was meek,

we are ambitious.

He saved others,

we save ourselves as much as we can.

He had no place to lay his head and did not worry about it,

we fret when we cannot have the last convenience manufactured by science.

He did what he believed to be right regardless of consequences,

we determine what is right by how it will affect us.

He feared God not the world,

we fear public opinion more than we fear the judgement of God.

He risked everything for his Father, God,

we make religion a refuge from every risk.

He took up the cross,

we neither take it up, nor lay it down, but merely let it stand.

Father, forgive, and in the freedom of forgiveness, may we climb to the threshold of our belief in you, take up our cross and follow you Son. Amen.

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