



January 8, 2021

A Call to Prayer

O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen
(Collect for Epiphany)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Images of violence and more loss of life, reminders of a polarized nation, once again filled our screens and newsfeeds. We will never forget the photographs from our capitol. We are saddened and once again, reminded of the sharp divisions between citizens who differ in political persuasions or how to live out deeply held values.

We are calling each of you to a time of prayer for our nation, especially during these next weeks of transition. We will continue this time of prayer together on Sundays at our service of worship.

As we consider the events which took place at the capitol, we also remember the bravery and inspirational words of our elected officials who remained at their posts throughout the night to complete the work before them. These elected officials labored together, both sides of the aisle, and completed the vote. However, this will not heal our divisions. For some, it will only create more division in a broken nation. These next weeks will be crucial as we pray for an orderly transition after what has been one of the most difficult years of our country.

Please pray for our President and our President Elect and their families.

Pray for those who surround them and try to faithfully execute their duties. Pray for our nation. Pray that we may enter the year with hope for our future. We pray for all of our elected leaders, that they may faithfully execute their duties with compassion and wisdom.

This week, Christians throughout the world celebrated The Feast of the Epiphany. Magi traveled, following a star which led them to the Christ child, the Prince of Peace. The light which they followed was a star leading them to Jesus. The magi knelt and worshipped this little child, offering him their gifts. Jesus is the light of the world who brings light into our darkness. We need that light now. When they left the place of worship, they returned to their country by another road.

These next few weeks of transition may bring many more challenges and will require intentional prayer and commitment to the work of peace and unity in our nation. May we as a nation take a new road this year, a road of healing, justice and peace, working side by side on behalf of the greater good for all of our citizens. For those of us who follow Jesus, may we live out the call to share His healing love in our broken world.

In the Episcopal Church, our bishops have issued a call to prayer. In the national Episcopal church, our Presiding Bishop has also issued a call to prayer. May we at St. John's lift our voices and our hearts and join them in this call to prayer.

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (The Book of Common Prayer, page 815)

Faithfully,

The Revs. Ellendale and Charles Hoffman

Call to Prayer by the Bishops of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut 1/6/21:

<https://www.episcopalct.org/news/call-to-prayer-by-the-bishops-of-the-episcopal-church-in-connecticut-in-respons/>