

## **2017 PRAYERS OF CONFESSION**

### **January 1**

[Dave says his own prayer; no text on the screens. After prayer, Dave invites the congregation to be seated "as we continue singing"]

### **January 8**

Gracious and Loving God, we come into Your presence asking for Your forgiveness. Forgive us for aspirations that never get translated into action and for promises that we have not kept. Forgive us for having good intentions that were not fulfilled and for the good deeds that we never got around to doing. Grant us a new vision and help us to move from intention to action. Help us, Lord, to keep our eyes on You and to be faithful in all that we say and do. In Christ's Name we pray. Amen.

### **January 15**

Heavenly Father, we come before Your throne of grace to confess our sin. We have been selfish instead of generous; we have been proud instead of humble; we have held grudges instead of forgiving; we have proven over and over again that we cannot be good enough on our own. We need more of You, and less of ourselves. Gracious God, we ask for Your forgiveness and receive it with joyful hearts. Renew our minds so that we may discern what is good. Fill us with Your Spirit so that we may be Your witnesses in the world. Comfort our hearts, that we may know that we have complete redemption by Your grace alone. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

### **January 22**

Holy and merciful Father, we confess to You and to one another that we have sinned against You by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart, mind, and strength. We have not fully loved our neighbor as ourselves. We have not always had in us the mind of Christ. You alone know how often we grieve You by wasting Your gifts and by wandering from Your ways. Forgive us and renew in us the grace and strength of Your Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **January 29**

Lord God, You are the perfect Creator, and You tell us we are fearfully and wonderfully made. We confess that our pride prevents us from believing this truth. We question Your craftsmanship and often wish that you had made us a different way. Heal us of this sinful tendency. Help us celebrate how You have made us in Your image with perfect purpose and care. Lord, we know that You call us into Your holy service to use our gifts to further Your Kingdom on earth. We confess that we find ourselves using our God-given gifts to further our own agendas instead of Yours. Renew our hearts and strengthen us. Go with us as we do the work You have given each of us to do. In the powerful Name of Christ, Amen.

### **February 5**

Gracious Lord, our efforts at being faithful seem to produce mixed results. Sometimes we do what is right and the result is pain and suffering. Other times we turn our back on what is right and things seem to go just fine. Faithful living is confusing to us. Forgive us when we are faithful just to gain an advantage. Forgive us when we reject faithful living because we can't see any advantage. Have mercy on us, we pray, and help us to love You so deeply that the only desire of our heart is to honor You with our lives, no matter what the outcome. We ask all this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

### **February 12**

Lord, through history Your people have refused Your plans in exchange for self-indulgence. Adam and Eve sought to define good and evil for themselves. The Israelites demanded water in the desert. David took Bathsheba and killed her husband. Today, we are no different. We exchange intimacy for fantasy. We hoard wealth rather than trust in Your provision. We confuse self-help for discipleship. Lord, You declare, "My ways are higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." Forgive us for trusting more in ourselves and our desires than trusting in You and Your plans. We are sorry. Change our hearts. Amen.

### **February 19**

Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name and what our hearts can no longer bear. Set us free from a past that we cannot change, and open to us a future in which we can be changed. Grant us grace to grow more and more in Your likeness and image, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, the Light of the world. Amen.

### **February 26**

Merciful God, we remember that Your Son was tempted in the desert as we are, and yet He won the victory over sin. And now, because of His victory, we have hope that we too can be victorious over the temptations we face in life. There are times when we feel weak, and we do things that we should not have done, and there are times when we leave undone many things we should have done. We have failed to love You with our whole heart, mind, and soul, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We try to make excuses for our actions, but there is no excuse for giving in to temptation. Lord, grant us the strength and courage we need to overcome our weaknesses so that one day we can stand before You and hear You say, "Well done, my good and faithful servant." We ask these things in the Name of Your Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

## **March 5 – Confirmation Sunday**

[The Prayer of Confession was written by 2017 Confirmation Class]

Dear God, we confess that we have sinned and need Your forgiveness. We want to do things on our own, without You. We have been distracted from Your Word and behave as if Your instructions were vague. We are unworthy of Your grace and undeserving of your forgiveness. We 've failed You once again. God, thank You for being merciful. Thank You for giving us the Holy Spirit to guide us. May we experience the Spirit's presence more clearly every day. Give us the focus to follow Your Word and Your ways. Show us the way to your Kingdom and Your grace. Help us when we're in trouble and guide us away from the darkness of this world. Show me what you want me to do. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## **March 12**

Gracious God, we've gathered this morning seeking forgiveness for the sins we've committed in our lives and to hear Your words of pardon and grace. We've fallen short of Your expectations for us. We have insisted on doing things our way instead of trusting You and following where You would lead us. Like the criminal on the cross, help us to recognize that even though we deserve to pay for our sins, it's because of the sacrifice of Your Son that forgiveness can be ours. Grant us that forgiveness and create in us a new heart We ask these things in the Name of Your Son, and our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

## **March 19**

Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment. Set us free from a past that we cannot change. Open to us a future in which we can be changed, and grant us grace to grow more and more in Your likeness and image, through Jesus Christ, the Light of the world. Amen.

## **March 26.**

Almighty God, the Giver of life and Forgiver of sins, we come to You now with hope: Hope because You always love us, even though at times it seems like we have been forsaken. Hope because you do not hold our sins against us, but instead grant us Your grace. Hope because You turn our hearts toward You and give us the courage to trust You in a world filled with darkness. Help us, Lord, to confess our sins, remembering that Your Son died for our sins so that we might be reconciled to You. Create in us the desire to serve You faithfully in all that we say and do. In Christ's Name we pray. Amen.

## **April 2**

Holy and righteous God, humbly we come to You asking for Your forgiveness. Too often, we find ourselves chasing after frivolous things, worrying about tomorrow, and acting as if the promises within Your Word aren't true. We place our trust in what we can touch and see, even though we know those things will not last. Give us faith and courage to put our hope and trust in You. You alone are God, and You provide us with everything we could ever need. Be glorified in our lives, we pray. Amen.

## **April 9 (Palm Sunday)**

"It is finished." With those words, You declared victory. Sin, death, and evil lost their power. We are the church: Each of us recipients of Your victory. In Jesus, we have won! But often we deny Your victory. We allow sin, evil, and death to reign as if we do not have a Savior. When challenged in our faith, we throw up our hands in defeat. We fail to rely on You. Lord, we are sorry for our failures. Cause us to trust Your words and to stand firm in Your victory. Amen.

## **April 16 (Easter Sunday)**

Gracious, Heavenly Father, we are people who often live our lives in routine, but who rarely enter into the fullness of the abundant life. In Easter, You accomplished the impossible. You proved Your Word and Your faithfulness with the remarkable power of the resurrection of Your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. We, however, live as though the tomb was not empty. Forgive us for not walking in the light of Your love. Forgive us for doubting that Your Word is reliable and true. Forgive us for refusing to believe that You would do what You promised. As we confess our sins and doubts, we also affirm that through the cross you have conquered these once and for all. May we live abundantly in the power that raised Jesus from the dead. We pray humbly in Jesus Name. Amen.

## **April 23**

Heavenly Father, Your love for us is so very evident. Everywhere we look, we see tangible proof of Your great care for us. Yet, when it comes to following You, we confess that we often don't surrender our entire selves. We hold back portions of our lives that we would rather control instead of releasing them to Your loving care. Have mercy upon us, Lord. Forgive us for frequently saying one thing and doing another. May our words and our actions line up. Make us willing to suffer for the cause of Christ, knowing full well that You will never leave us or forsake us. We pray this humbly, in Christ's Name. Amen.

## **April 30**

Gracious God, we confess that we are often dissatisfied with our lives. We recognize the gap that exists between what we are and what we want to be. Lord, like the woman at the well, we know our failures, and we feel guilty because You know them. We feel shame because others also know. Grant that we may hear and believe the Good News, that in our Lord Jesus Christ, we are loved in spite of our failures, forgiven in spite of our guilt, and accepted in spite of our shame. Inspire us by Your love and grace and grant us the spiritual strength to follow and serve You. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

### **May 7 – Senior Sunday (Youth Sunday)**

Our compassionate and gracious God, we come before You because of Your promises and truths. You tell us that if we confess our sins then You will purify us of all unrighteousness. But even with such straightforward mercy, we lose focus on You and get caught up in everyday life. As we reveal that we haven't lived our lives to their full purpose, light our hearts on fire for you our one true God. Forgive us our sins so that we can exalt Your eternal glory and spread the Good News in our everyday lives. Help us to invite You into every thought, action, and part of our lives so that Your goodness may shine through us. In Jesus name. Amen

### **May 14 (Mother's Day)**

Heavenly Father, it is astounding how many ways we find to doubt You. At times we doubt Your power and Your ability to do actual miracles in our lives. In other situations, we doubt that Your methods and solutions are the best way to go. We fool ourselves into believing that our ways will be superior to Your ways. And, most importantly, we doubt that all You are doing is the result of your great love for us. Our heads believe in Your love, but our hearts are lagging behind. Have mercy upon us, Lord. Help us with our disbelief. Forgive us for looking through worldly eyes instead of asking You for heavenly vision. Thank You for Your endless grace and patience. More than anything, we want to walk in Your will. We pray all of this in the precious Name of Jesus. Amen.

### **May 21**

Forgiving God, in a world filled with so much pain, we confess that we often shut our eyes to keep from seeing things as they truly are. Grant us the strength to face the reality of our world, and give us the courage to bring Your light to those who walk in darkness. Open our eyes to our own misunderstandings, our own failures, and our own faults, God, lead us in the footsteps of Jesus, who reveals Your glory through His life, His teachings, and His love. Help us see others as You see them. In the holy Name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

### **May 28 (Memorial Weekend) – Two services (9:45a & 11:15a)**

Lord, only You are significant enough to deserve glory. So why do we desire glory for ourselves? Lord, to know You is to have eternal life. So why are we satisfied with worldly wisdom and living in the moment? Through Jesus, we receive the love of the Father. So why do we hunger for the love of the world? Our desires are no longer trustworthy guides to goodness, and what seems natural to us no longer corresponds to Your design. Lord, Forgive us for our failures, overhaul the desires of our hearts, and grant us greater trust in Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

#### **June 4**

Gracious and loving God, we stand in awe of You. You are holy, You are worthy, You are perfect, You are God. But our hearts often are indifferent, our wills often are enslaved, and our actions betray our confession of faith. We are sinners in desperate need of Your grace and love. Only by Your grace can we stop the misdirection of our lives, and turn ourselves back toward Your loving arms. Embrace us with Your lovingkindness, understand us with Your compassion, complete us with Your redemption. encourage us with Your Spirit. In humility and with thanksgiving, we pray in the Name of Jesus. Amen.

#### **June 11**

Omniscient God, we are a proud people who often turn away Your messengers. Open our eyes to those You have sent and let us graciously receive them into our lives. You have a plan for us that we may not see, so humble our hearts so that we may see what You have in store for us. Ground us again in the wisdom of Scripture and in the Living Word which is Christ Jesus. Renew us at the fountain of His wisdom, so we may find joy in obedience and freedom in giving ourselves to You. Give us the courage to be the ones that You send, and let our actions and intentions reflect You and give you glory. Amen.

#### **June 18 (Father's Day)**

Dear Lord, You are the King of the world, the Creator of all things, and the Giver of life. You have made us in Your image and invited us to be Your children—the heirs of Your Kingdom—and we give You our thanks and praise. We confess that we have sinned and fallen short of what You would have us be. We have found our identity in earthly things like work, money, family, reputation, our homes, our friends, even our country. We have worshiped them more than You. We have turned away from being part of Your Kingdom work to satisfy our own agendas. We have broken Your heart with our sin, and we are sorry. Please forgive us. Help us open our hearts to receive the gift of forgiveness that You offer through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Create in us clean hearts and fill us with Your presence. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.

#### **June 25**

Gracious and Loving God, in the midst of all our received Blessings, we have failed to be the people You've called us to be. We have squandered our time, our talents, and our treasure. We have lost our sense of wonder and awe. We have failed to recognize Your presence in our lives and to trust You always. Forgive us, Lord, for living in a way that goes against Your will. Grant us the strength and courage to resist the temptations that come into our lives. Like the Apostle Andrew, renew in us a desire to serve You faithfully and to bring others to Your Son. In Christ's Name we pray. Amen.

### **July 2 (Patriotic Sunday – One service at 10am)**

Dear Lord, we come to You today in worship and praise, knowing that You are God and King. You are worthy of our praise. We also come recognizing that we are sinners and stand here in need of You, our Savior. We have sinned against You and others and ourselves and have wanted to go our own way. We have been stubborn, controlling, and selfish, and have not been faithful to You. We confess that we haven't been good witnesses of Your love and grace, and have not stood firm in our faith. We are so sorry, oh Lord; please forgive us. Change our hearts and cause us to repent and turn toward You. Fill us, Holy Spirit, making us new and whole. Wash us clean and breathe Your breath into us. In the Name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

### **July 9**

Holy God, we come before You in humility, for we do not live as we ought. We do not love You with our whole heart and mind and strength. We do not love our neighbor as ourselves. We are sinners in need of rescue and transformation. So we pray, in all humility, that You will change our hearts and minds, that You will show us again how to love others the way You love us, that You will grant us the grace to experience your Spirit's guidance and love, that You will put power and courage in our hearts to do Your will. This we pray in Jesus' Name and for His sake. Amen.

### **July 16**

Lord, You are the great provider. Your Word tells us to trust You and You will direct our paths, but we often forget Your faithfulness and promises found throughout scripture. Forgive us, Father, when we stray from Your plan. Your way is the path to joy, peace, and abundant life. Give us the strength and courage to choose You rather than choosing ourselves. Draw near to us when we doubt, and give us eyes to see Your hand at work in our lives. You are good and faithful always. Amen.

### **July 23**

Gracious and Holy God, we make no pretense about our lives. We forget, even deny that we were created with wonder and delight in our souls. Yet, we go through life anxious and serious, seeking to get ahead, striving to make ends meet. We rush and hurry, and fill up our calendars. Where is the joy? Where are the days of summer rest? Where is our sense of delight? Forgive us, Lord, for failing to be the people that You created us to be and remind us that, like Nicodemus, we are loved for who we are, just as we are. Help us to remember that, in Christ, we are forgiven. Grant us Your peace as we look to You for the strength and courage to resist further temptation. We lift our prayer in the Name of Your Precious Son, Jesus our Lord. Amen.

### **July 30**

Gracious and Holy God, we make no pretense about our lives. We forget, even deny that we were created with wonder and delight in our souls. Yet, we go through life anxious and serious, seeking to get ahead, striving to make ends meet. We rush and hurry, and fill up our calendars. Where is the joy? Where are the days of summer rest? Where is our sense of delight? Forgive us, Lord, for failing to be the people that You created us to be and remind us that, like Nicodemus, we are loved for who we are, just as we are. Help us to remember that, in Christ, we are forgiven. Grant us Your peace as we look to You for the strength and courage to resist further temptation. We lift our prayer in the Name of Your Precious Son, Jesus our Lord. Amen.

**August 6**

Gracious Lord, our efforts at being faithful seem to produce mixed results. Sometimes we do what is right and the result is pain and suffering. Other times we turn our back on what is right and things seem to go just fine. Faithful living is confusing to us. Forgive us when we are faithful just to gain an advantage. Forgive us when we reject faithful living because we can't see any advantage. Have mercy on us, we pray, and help us to love You so deeply that the only desire of our heart is to honor You with our lives, no matter what the outcome. We ask it in Jesus' Name. Amen.

**August 13**

Almighty God in heaven, we confess that we are sinners in the midst of a sinful world. It's not just something we do; it's something we are. It's not merely a practice; it's a state of being. Our sins are not just momentary lapses, but they reflect our inner selves. We try to hide them in the dark closets of our soul, but in Your presence, Lord, they come into the light. So, once again, we ask that You forgive us. Judge us not for what we are, but for who we are because of the sacrifice of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us the strength and courage to live into our new identity through our Savior. In Christ's Name we pray. Amen.

**August 20**

Eternal God, our judge and redeemer, we confess that we have tried to hide from You, for we have done wrong. We have lived for ourselves, and apart from You. We have turned from our neighbors and refused to bear the burdens of others. We have ignored the pain of the world and passed by the hungry, the poor, and the oppressed. In Your great mercy, forgive our sins and free us from selfishness, that we may choose Your will and obey Your commandments through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

**August 27 (no service – HURRICANE HARVEY)**



## **September 3 – (Labor Day weekend – post hurricane Harvey – one service – no POC)**

### **September 10**

Almighty God, we bow before You, humbly able to admit how small, fragile, and dependent we are. Unfortunately, for many of us, it takes a disaster to convince us that we are not in control. Over the past days, we've been stripped bare of so much of what we cling to normally. We've lost earthly possessions, precious hours, and patience. We've also gained more than we could have imagined. Deeper love for our neighbors, an appreciation for what truly matters, and restored faith in mankind. As the waters recede and the debris clears, we ask that we don't return to the idols that were swept away. We beg You to remain on the throne of our hearts and for us to continue to live out the Greatest Commandment. We seek You as a desperate people, laid low, confessing our need. In Christ's Name we pray. Amen.

### **September 17**

Leader: For the Christian church around the world, for our MDPC leadership, and the ministry of all believers in service, evangelism, and love to a hurting world, we ask Your blessing and guidance.

***All: Lord have mercy.***

Leader: For our country, our leaders, our beleaguered city and its residents struggling to rebuild livelihoods and communities after Hurricane Harvey, we ask Your blessing, provision, and peace.

***All: Lord have mercy.***

Leader: For the flood and hurricane victims in India, the Caribbean, the South East, and here in Texas. We ask for miraculous healing and relief.

***All: Lord have mercy.***

Leader: For our neighbors living in poverty or the threat of it, the unemployed, the flooded-out, the uninsured, the sick, the heartbroken, the hungry, the addicted, the weary, and the lonely, we ask for hope, miracles, and Your promise of comfort.

***All: Lord have mercy.***

Leader: For ourselves, for the sin that tempts and entangles us, chokes out Your voice, hinders our good works, our courage, our confession, and our pursuit of You and Your Kingdom, we ask Your forgiveness.

***All: Lord have mercy.***

(minister declares assurance of pardon, and then this slide)

Leader: Friends, believe the Good News.

***All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.***

### **September 24**

Compassionate and loving God, we look around us and see the pain of those who are struggling with the devastation of their homes and lives. The evidence is ever-present on the news, on the internet, and in social media. It's hard to avoid the tears that so many people are shedding. Forgive us, Lord, for shutting our eyes and wishing that it would all go away. For many, the grief and sorrow will remain for months and maybe years. Forgive us for only thinking of ourselves and failing to consider the lives of others. Open our hearts to continue to respond in ways that proclaim Your love and grace. Help us to reach out and care for those who have lost so much. Continue to remind us each day that even in the midst of the circumstances of life, You walk beside us to offer us the strength and courage to carry on. In Christ's Name, we pray. Amen.

### **October 1 (World Communion and First Communion)**

*Leader will set up the need for private confession. Invite the congregation to confess privately before God (Meliza will play), and then part-way through this confession, invite them to confess or ask forgiveness from the person next to them. (what do you need to ask forgiveness for?)*

*Finally, close by inviting them to declare these words with you from 1 John 4.*

9 This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him.

10 This is love: Not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

11 Since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and His love is made complete in us.

21 And He has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

(1 John 4:9-12, 21)

### **October 8**

**Everyone: Holy God, we live our lives struggling in our own burdens and failing to trust You with all the things that hold us down.**

*Leader: Your Scripture says, "Come to Me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest."*

**Everyone: We chase material things and success that fades. We prioritize our schedules above our faith.**

*Leader: Your Scripture says, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness."*

**Everyone: We live as if hope doesn't exist. We fail to see the bigger picture of the needs of the world that You have called us to serve.**

*Leader: Your Scripture says, "He saved us and called us to a holy life - not because of anything we have done, but because of His own purpose and grace."*

**Everyone: We carry grudges, avoid conflict, and live in dysfunctional relationships instead of seeking wholeness and reconciliation.**

*Leader: Your Scripture says, "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you."*

**Everyone: We don't live as if Your promises are true. We don't give You our whole lives and follow You in the gift of Your forgiveness.**

*Leader: Your Scripture says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish, but will have eternal life."*

**Everyone: Help us to daily live in the gift of Your forgiveness. Help us to serve and live holy lives out of that gift. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen**

## **October 15**

**Everyone: Holy God, we live our lives struggling in our own burdens and failing to trust You with all of the things that hold us down.**

*Leader: Your Scripture says, "Come to Me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest."*

**Everyone: We chase material things and success that fades. We prioritize our schedules above our faith.**

*Leader: Your Scripture says, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness."*

**Everyone: We live as if hope doesn't exist. We are so consumed by our own troubles that we fail to see the bigger picture of the needs of the world that You have called us to serve.**

*Leader: Your Scripture says, "He saved us and called us to a holy life - not because of anything we have done, but because of His own purpose and grace."*

**Everyone: We carry grudges, avoid conflict, and live in dysfunctional relationships instead of seeking wholeness and reconciliation.**

*Leader: Your Scripture says, "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you."*

**Everyone: We don't live as if Your promises are true. We don't give You our whole lives and follow You in the gift of Your forgiveness.**

*Leader: Your Scripture says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish, but will have eternal life."*

**Everyone: Help us to daily live in the gift of Your forgiveness. Help us to serve and live holy lives out of that gift. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen**

## **October 22**

Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart and mind and strength. We have failed to be a people of generosity, withholding Your blessings from those around us. In Your mercy, forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are, and grant us the desire to be what You have called us to be. Teach us to delight in Your will and walk in Your ways, that Your glory may be proclaimed to the world around us. In Christ's Name we pray these things. Amen.

## **October 29 (All Saints Day)**

Almighty and loving God, all of us here today are hurting. Some of us are hurting as the result of circumstances beyond our control. Some of us are hurting because of our own choices. Some of us are feeling the pain of others. No matter what the circumstances, as we gather here today, help us remember who we are: sinners saved by grace. Lord, for the times we have failed to show Your compassion to others – forgive us! For the times we have failed to trust You – forgive us! For the times we have failed to praise You – forgive us! Help us always to remember that You are the Giver of mercy and wholeness, provided for us through Your Son's death and resurrection. Heal our brokenness and make us whole once more. In Christ's Holy Name we pray. Amen.

**November 5**

Holy Father, You are perfect and just, but we are sinful and unworthy. We intend the best in how we live our lives, Yet sin remains in us. Through Your Son, we are able to have redemption and a reconnection with you. Though Your Son, we are redeemed and reconnected with You. Though we continue to sin, You offer your Amazing Grace. We rejoice in this Good News. In Christ's Name we pray, Amen.

**November 12**

Merciful and Holy God, We bow before You in heartfelt confession, acknowledging that we are a broken people, living in a broken world. This world is dark with the stain of sin. Your design for creation has been corrupted by the abuse of power, the appetite for lust, and the enslavement of our wills. We allow evil to go unchallenged, and become passive and indifferent to Your call to engage the world with the Gospel. Forgive our sinfulness. Our sins of commission and omission have separated us from You, from others, and from the world You seek to redeem. Amen

**November 19**

Eternal God, in whom we gain strength and hope: We thank You for your incredible love. The height, depth, and width of Your love cannot be measured or comprehended. Yet by trusting in the life, death, and resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ, we may experience it. Praise be to Your Name! Now we confess to You the many times we choose to neither live in Your love, nor to express Your love through our words and actions. We love ourselves instead of loving our neighbors and loving You with all we have and all we are. We focus on our needs and wants; our worries and cares; and our goals and purposes, rather than on Your redeeming and sustaining love. Forgive us, gracious Lord. Free us from our self-centeredness so we may love You and love others, and thus bring honor to Your Name. We pray through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**November 26 (Thanksgiving weekend)**

Gracious Father, in this season of thanksgiving, remind us of the truth that every good and perfect gift comes from You. God, we admit that even in our moment of gratitude, we fall short. We feel thankful for the gifts without acknowledging the Giver. We praise the beautiful creation around us without drawing close to the Creator. We sing about our salvation without glorifying You – our Savior. Forgive us. Remind us, oh God, that any good we experience is only a glimpse of Your character. That any blessing is only a foretaste of what You have in store for those who put their hope in You. And that even our lives– the very breath in our lungs– is only there because of Your deep love for us. God, reveal Yourself to us in every good gift, and give us eyes to see You in them. In Christ's holy Name we pray. Amen

### **December 3**

Holy Lord, in this time of Advent, we confess we often are distracted by the season's busyness, by the stress of commitment, and even by putting our own traditions ahead of the true meaning of Christmas. We confess we also often prefer being sentimental to being sacrificial. Forgive us for all the times we have missed seeing You in our midst, for all the times we have doubted Your presence, and for all the times we have failed to hold the holidays as holy days. Pour peace into our lives and let us be bearers of Your peace to others. Remind us that this is a season of waiting and preparation for the greatest Gift of all. In the holy Name of our Savior, Jesus, we pray. Amen.

### **December 10**

Gracious God, we are called to be a joyful people, giving thanks for You and Your good gifts. There are times, however, when sin and sorrow grow, pushing joy to the side. We lose sight of Your grace, and instead fall into despair. We are consumed by loss, distracted by stuff, and crippled with fear. We focus on our lack, rather than Your love. Lift our eyes, Lord Jesus, and renew our joy in You. Remind us that: in Your sacrifice is our forgiveness, in Your death is our resurrection, in Your coming is our joy! Through Christ we pray, Amen.

### **December 17**

Leader: Scripture teaches us that there is one good and holy God; that we were created in God's image, to commit ourselves to Him, to do good works, to reflect His glory, and to know Him as loving Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*(Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Genesis 1:27, Ephesians 2:10, Isaiah 60:1-3, 1 John 3:1, Luke 2:11)*

**All: I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.**

Leader: The scripture teaches that God has given us commands for our own good and the good of our community, but that each of us has failed in thought, word and deed. We have sinned, and the punishment is death.

*(Deuteronomy 6:24-25, Romans 7:18-20, Romans 6:23)*

**All: I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.**

Leader: The scripture teaches us that Jesus Christ has ransomed us from this punishment through his sacrificial death on the cross; that death has lost its sting; that there is no fear; that love abounds; that someday every single person will see Jesus for who He really is; and that anyone who believes these truths is a new creation whose life is on a new trajectory: the old life has passed away and new life has come! *(Mark 10:45, 1 Corinthians 15:54-57, 1 John 4:18, Philippians 2:10-11, 2 Corinthians 5:17)*

**All: I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word. In Jesus' Holy Name, Amen.**

### **December 24 (Christmas Eve) – Sunday morning**

O eternal and gracious God, All year long we pursue power, money, and influence. Yet You come to us in the weakness of the manger. All season long we covet material gifts. Yet You alone offer us the only everlasting gift: Your Son, Jesus Christ, God with us. We confess to You our pride, our faithlessness, and our reluctance to accept Your grace. Through the work of the Lord Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit, forgive us, heal us, correct us, and transform us. Then enable us to be still, to know Your presence, and to praise You. We pray through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **December 31 (New Year's Eve) – Sunday (three regular services)**

Lord, You are a good and gracious God: Offering forgiveness for all our mistakes and failures and restoring us to right relationship with You. Why, then, do we wait to confess our sin to You? Why do we wallow in our muck longer than we need? Our embarrassment hinders us. Our feelings of shame and guilt cause us to hide. You are quick to embrace us as Your children; cause us to be quick to turn back to You. Your mercies are new every morning; let us enjoy Your presence and Your grace.

Forgive us, Lord, and allow us to live our lives fully for You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.