



OPENING WORSHIP
PSEC Annual Zoom Conference Meeting
Saturday, August 15, 2020



Quiet Prayer

“Hope begins in the dark, the stubborn hope that if you just show up and try to do the right thing, the dawn will come. You wait and watch and work: you don’t give up.” Anne Lamott

A Prayer of Lament adapted from Habakkuk 1

Leader – O God, how long will we cry for help, and You will not listen?

People – Or cry to you “Violence!” and You will not save?

Leader – Why do You make us see wrongdoing and look at trouble? Destruction and violence are all around us; strife and contention rise!

People – Law becomes useless and justice never wins.

Leader– The wicked surround us and judgment is perverted. Let us pray.

All – Merciful God, we are in a time of lament and loss, and we see trouble all around us. We see people refusing to care about others – we experience fear everywhere we go. We try to reach out in different ways, but sometimes feel that our work is futile. As we mourn, we cry out to You. We seek answers and solace and hope. During this time together, fill us with a new vision of Your old story, and guide the Conference and our congregations towards a new and hopeful future. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Scripture John 11: 1-6, 11b-14, 17-35 – The Story of Lazarus Rising & Jesus Weeping

Reflection Rev. Bill Worley, Conference Minister, PSEC

An Affirmation of Hope by Gerardo Oberman.

Leader – I believe in God.

People – The God of all creeds, with all their truths. But, above all, in the God that rises from the dead to become part of life.

Leader – I believe in the God...

People – that accompanies me along every step of my path on this earth, many times walking behind me, watching me and suffering with my mistakes, other times walking beside me, talking to me and teaching me, and other times walking ahead of me, guiding and marking my pace.

Leader – I believe in the God of flesh and blood, Jesus Christ ...

People– the God who lived in my skin and tried on my shoes, the God who walked in my ways, and knows of lights and shadows. The God who ate and starved, who had a home and suffered loneliness, who was praised and condemned, kissed and spat on, loved and hated. The God who went to parties and funerals, the God who laughed and cried.

Leader – I believe in the God who is attentive today ...

People – who looks at the world and sees the hatred that segregates, divides, sets people aside, hurts and kills, who sees the bullets piercing the flesh, and the blood of innocent people flowing on the earth, who sees the hand that dips into another’s pocket, stealing what somebody needs to eat, who sees the judge that favors the highest bidder, the truth and justice of hypocrites, who sees the dirty rivers and the dead fish, the toxic substances destroying the earth and piercing the sky who sees the future mortgaged and humanity’s debt growing.

Leader – I believe in God who sees all this ...

People – and keeps on crying. But I also believe in God who sees a mother giving birth – a life born from pain, who sees two children playing - a seed growing, who sees a flower blooming out of the debris - a new beginning, who sees three crazy women clamoring for justice – an illusion that doesn't die who sees the sun rising every morning - a time of opportunities.

Leader – I believe in God who sees all this ...

People – and laughs, because, in spite of it all, there is hope.