

Pastoral Prayers

God of light, we have heard your message, proclaimed of old, that in you there is no dark cloud at all; nothing exists that can hide the light of your presence. Forgive us when we cling to the shadows, failing to heed your call to wake up and join the work of your reign. Send us to do your deeds of mercy and peace: to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, touch the sick with your healing balm, console the sorrowing, visit the prisoners, welcome the stranger.

Guide us in this time of shadows. Keep us from despair when we see that there is no peace in our cities and no security in our places of higher learning. Lift our eyes toward you that we may see your face shining on us and walk in your light. Comfort with your presence those who are living in the shadow of grief, shattered by the loss of children, parents, spouses, friends, and colleagues. Give assurance to all who are missing loved ones that the living and the dead are in your care, certain of being joined again in the unbroken circle that will sing your praise forever. Amen.

--Blair Gilmer Meeks

Gracious God, our Friend and Companion, we have much on our minds. We are trying to comprehend the enormity of what happened at Virginia Tech. We feel victimized and vulnerable. We wonder why it happened? Where were you? Why didn't you do something to stop this violence and death? We know the theologically correct answers to our questions. But God, these gnawings have been formed deep within our inward parts. They just won't go away by intellectual effort alone. We yearn to know with certainty that you hold us in your hands; that your Spirit, the Comforter, walks beside us every step of the way.

Remind us that you choose us for salvation; that you have called us, even in our pain, to proclaim your good news. Be patient with us as we recover our spiritual balance. We promise to move ahead, even if our steps are tiny and a bit unsteady. We trust you to comfort our hearts and to strengthen us in every good work and word. O Word become flesh, we know we are not alone. You are with us! We are loved! And we believe we shall obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whose dear name we pray. Amen.

--Kel Groseclose