

God Bless You

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half truths, superficial relationships, so that you will live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you will work for justice, equality, and peace.

May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war, so that you will reach out your hand to comfort them and change their pain into joy.

And may God bless you with the foolishness to think that you can make a difference in the world, so that you will do the things which others tell you cannot be done.

Author unknown,

EM TUA GRACA: RESOURCES FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER
World Council of Churches 9th Assembly, Porto, Allegre, Brazil 2005



Yearbook of Prayer for South Carolina

2008



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South Carolina
Christian Action Council

**THE YEARBOOK OF PRAYER
FOR SOUTH CAROLINA**

More than a decade ago under the leadership of then Executive Minister, Dr. L. Wayne Bryan, the South Carolina Christian Action Council (SCCAC) published in successive years books of prayers with a prayer for each Sunday of the year. The following served as the introduction of the 1994 book:

Jesus prayed that “they may be one even as we are one” (John 17:22).

This High Priestly Prayer reveals His dream of believers who care for each other. It reveals as well that caring is to be expressed in prayers of intercession where all those in the community of faith hold each other up before God.

How very important it is, then, that Christians pray for each other! To that purpose, the SCCAC is glad to provide...this *Yearbook of Prayer for South Carolina*.

These prayers invite Christians ... to remember each other in prayer as part of their regular worship experiences, Sunday by Sunday, throughout the year.

With that same invitation, the SCCAC Christian Unity Workgroup offers the *Yearbook of Prayer for South Carolina 2008*. Additionally, the prayers will be posted on the SCCAC website and may be copied from there (www.scccouncil.net).

As stated the Yearbook makes available a prayer focus for each Sunday of the year. Denominational executives and other proponents of Christian Unity have served as writers, compilers, and editors for this yearbook. The prayers focus on special events or requests of denominations; the ministries of the SCCAC; those in public life in our state; those with special needs; and other Christian ministries that serve the common good.

These prayers may be used in a variety of ways. In worship the prayers could be used during the time for intercessory prayer (the Pastoral Prayer, Prayers of the People, the Great Prayer, etc.).

Index of Themes by Page Continued

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Page</u>
Missional Partnerships	15
New Religious Leadership	7
Peace, Christmas	29
Peace, Easter	9
Persons Affected by Violence	25
Persons Infected and Affected by HIV/AIDS	27
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)	20
Public Safety Personnel	19
Racial Healing	26
Reformed Episcopal Church	22
Refugees in SC	17
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)	19
Restorative Justice	6
Retirement Communities	18
Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston	4
Salvation Army North and South Carolina	28
SC Legislators and Staff	12
SC Legislature Opening	4
Servants of the Sick	22
Social Services Agencies	7
Stewardship and Commitment	21
Teachers of Religious Education	18
United Church of Christ	15
United Methodist Church	10
Unity of the Church	21
USA and National Election	25

Index of Themes by Page

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Page</u>
Advocacy Work Group SCCAC	14
African Methodist Episcopal Church	16
Alliance of Baptists	10
Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention	12
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)	23
Christian Clergy	26
Christian Methodist Episcopal Church	24
Christian Unity Work Group SCCAC	13
Christian Unity, National Workshop	11
Church and Denominational Staff	16
Church of the Nazarene	27
Congregations in SC	6
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in SC	11
Cultural and Racial Reconciliation	17
Death Penalty	8
Denominational Unity	9
Ecumenical Lord's Prayer	3
End of Year Thanksgiving	29
Episcopal Diocese SC	5
Episcopal Diocese Upper SC	24
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, SC Synod	8
Homeless Neighbors and Those Who Serve Them	23
Inmates and Their Families	28
Institutions of Child Care	20
Law Enforcement Personnel	13
Marginalized and Disenfranchised	5
May God Bless You	32
Military Personnel & Families	14

Permission is given to adapt the prayers as needed for your form of worship; to use the prayers as written, with or without introduction of the author. Prayers may be printed in an order of worship or your church newsletter.

You are encouraged to use the prayers in whatever order or way best serves your worship needs. For a index of themes see pages 30-31.

We are happy that you have chosen to use the *Yearbook of Prayer for South Carolina 2008*. Our prayer is that the full Christian Community and the lives those in our state with whom we live and work will be enriched by our concert of prayer throughout the year.

*Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
On earth as in heaven.*

*Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
As we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
And deliver us from evil.*

*For the kingdom, the power,
And the glory are yours
Now and for ever. Amen.*

Ecumenical Version
English Language Liturgical Consultation 1988

January 6, 2008

Today's prayer for: the Opening of the Legislative Session of SC

Gracious God, we pray for those who are the elected leaders in the South Carolina Senate and House of Representatives. Guide and strengthen each Senator and Representative as they wrestle with significant issues and exercise their collective wisdom and concern for the citizens of this State. May each of these officials follow the guiding of Your Spirit, seeking the best results possible for all South Carolinians. In Your loving name we pray, O Lord. Amen.

(The Reverend Dr. James I. St. John,
Chaplain of the Senate of SC)

January 13, 2008

Today's prayer for: The Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston
Administrator: Monsignor Martin Laughlin
Number of Congregations: 92 Parishes and 24 Missions

Gracious God, in the waters of the Jordan, your son was baptized by John and you declared your love for Him. May all your sons and daughters made new by the waters of baptism find in Christ their model and source of unity. We ask this through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

(The Reverend C. Alexander McDonald,
Ecumenical Officer, Catholic Diocese of Charleston)

December 21, 2008

Today's prayer for: Peace

Eternal God, as we prepare to again receive the gift of Emmanuel, God with us, let us hear clearly the message of those who heralded His birth: 'Glory to God in the Highest and on earth peace and goodwill to all humankind.'" In this festive season give us a hunger for peace which must be filled. A hunger that in its filling will lead us individually and as the Body of Christ to more peaceful existence so that peace may spread throughout the land and unto the very ends of the earth. We ask this gift in the name of the One whom you sent who is called Prince of Peace. Amen.

(The Reverend Brenda Lynn Kneece,
Executive Minister, SCCAC)

December 28, 2008

Today's prayer for: Thanksgiving for God Ordering Our Steps

O Lord you are our Guiding Light! We give you praise, glory, and honor for your goodness and mercy to humankind. We thank you for your saving grace and the power to live in Christ's righteousness. Order our steps and lead us the path of righteousness today and each day this new year in the name of Jesus. Amen!

(Reverend Sotello Long,
Regional Minister, Christian Church [Disciples of Christ])

December 7, 2008

Today's prayer for: the North and South Carolina Division of the
Salvation Army
Divisional Commander: Major Vern Jewett
Number of Corps in SC and NC: 61

Eternal God, we pray for the Salvation Army and its work for the restoration of the homeless so that individuals and families might be restored and that communities might be healed. We pray for strength and comfort for the Army—personnel and volunteers—so together this Christian Army may continue to fight the battle of doing good. Amen.

*(from statement of Captain Ethan Frizzell,
Columbia)*

December 14, 2008

Today's prayer for: The Imprisoned and Their Families

We pray, O God, for all inmates in the SC Department of Corrections. Forgive us when we ignore their needs. Open our hearts to seek reconciliation and restoration. Teach us to do justice and love mercy.

We lift to the light of your love, O God, the families of inmates in SC. We celebrate, in this season of giving, all programs such as the Angel Tree that provide gifts and aid to the children and families of those incarcerated; and the gift bags for inmates provided by the South Carolina Baptist Convention and its many volunteers. Help us break down the barriers that often isolate these families, so that they may find full inclusion in the community of grace.

*(Reverend Terry L. Brooks,
SC Correctional Chaplain, retired)*

January 20, 2008

Today's prayer for: the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina
Bishop: The Reverend Mark Lawrence to be consecrated
Saturday, January 26, 2008
Number of Congregations in SC: 76

Most Gracious God, we thank you for raising another faithful Shepherd. Grant that Your servant, Mark, called to be the new Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of SC, may so live and teach the Gospel that many are brought to know and cherish the saving Good News of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen

*(The Reverend Dow Sanderson,
Ecumenical Officer, the Diocese of SC)*

January 27, 2008

Today's prayer for: the Marginalized and Disenfranchised

God of Compassion, help us do what needs to be done to bring people into communities of faith. Help us to go where the marginalized and the disenfranchised live, to seek them out and to care for their needs, and to invite them into our lives and into Your Life. For their sake, and for thy sake, we pray. Amen.

*(The Reverend Dr. Marion D. Aldridge,
Coordinator, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of SC)*

February 3, 2008

Today's prayer for: All Congregations in SC

O God, we pray for the congregations of the state, as they gather around your mission to redeem this world. May your people live into your hopes and dreams for them. May the congregations of this state demonstrate what it means to live in a community of love and grace. We pray that more of your children will join your movement of reconciliation, peace, and renewal. Amen.

(The Reverend Mark Tidsworth,
Director, Center for Clergy and Congregations
Palmetto Health Baptist, Columbia)

February 10, 2008

Today's prayer for: Restorative Justice

Creator God, You declared all that you had made as good. When sin corrupted our world, you provided a way to restore your wayward people. We pray for the criminal justice system in SC which seeks to practice restorative justice to heal the brokenness among victims, offenders, and communities. Lead faith communities to work with law enforcement, courts, victim advocates, and prisons as partners in the work of restorative justice. Amen.

(The Reverend Mark Cerniglia,
Chair, Interfaith Restorative Justice Network,
and Chaplain, Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas)

November 23, 2008

Today's prayer for: the Church of the Nazarene, SC District
District Superintendent: The Reverend Dr. Eddie Estep
Number of Congregations: 60

Dear Father, Creator of the heavens and the earth: we thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ, who has redeemed us and invites us to follow Him.

We thank you for the wooing of Your Holy Spirit, drawing us to experience your transforming grace in our hearts and lives.

We thank you for the Church, and for the churches, and pray that you will enable us to be missional in ministry as we endeavor to make Christ-like disciples in the nations.

These things we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who makes believers one in faith. Amen.

(The Reverend Dr. Eddie Estep)

November 30, 2008

Today's prayer for: Those Infected and Affected by HIV/AIDS

O Lord, who reached out to the sick and the lost with unquestioning love, we pray for the healing of HIV/AIDS in our community and in the world. We pray that all those who are infected or affected by this virus be aware of your compassionate presence in their lives. We pray especially for the care-givers, health professionals, mental health professionals, and clergy who minister to these patients and their families. Give them strength, courage, patience, wisdom, and discernment of spirit. And, for all whose lives are impacted by this epidemic, we pray for hope and that peace which passes all human understanding. In your precious name, Amen.

(Chaplain Capers Limehouse,
Staff Chaplain, RoperSaintFrancis Healthcare, Charleston)

November 9, 2008

Today's prayer for: Christian Clergy

O God, ancient of days, ever-watchful, we pray that you will be present with those who labor and have labored faithfully in your Vineyard; who look ahead to days of peace and reflection under their vine and fig tree. Continue your graciousness to all such servants that they may retain their health and strength, offer wisdom to younger generations, and dream dreams that sustain their trust in your promises; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

(The Reverend Dr. Philip H. Whitehead,
The Episcopal Diocese of Upper SC)

February 17, 2008

Today's prayer for: Social Services Agencies

Almighty God, you loved your people so much that you came to dwell among us even as a vulnerable child. Bless the work of Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas as its staff, volunteers, and supporters seek to walk with the most vulnerable on a journey toward healing and wholeness. Bless all of the children, families, refugees, veterans, and individuals who seek the assistance of this and all such agencies within our state. Amen.

(The Reverend Mark Cerniglia,
Chair, Interfaith Restorative Justice Network,
and Chaplain, Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas)

November 16, 2008

Today's prayer for: Racial Healing

Almighty God, you have created every race in your image by granting to all humankind the freedom to love and participate in your just and good creation. Open our hearts and minds to you and to one another so that we might share your justice and goodness, and stand before you as the sisters and brothers you created us to be—one family under one God and Father of all, through the grace and mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

(The Reverend Furman L. Buchanan,
St. Martin's in the Fields Episcopal Church, Columbia)

February 24, 2008

Today's prayer for: all New Christian Leaders in our State

Gracious God, our Father, our creator, and our source of strength and power, we pray for the stability of the Reformed Episcopal Church and each denomination in our state transitioning to new administrations. We pray that you will speak to the hearts of those who will be a part of these administrations that their efforts will be in accord with your will for your Church. We ask these and other blessings that you deem necessary for the maintenance and growth of your whole Church in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Bishop Alphonza Gadsden
Reformed Episcopal Church)

March 2, 2008

Today's prayer for: Action against the Death Penalty

Creator of us all, you promised us that nothing could separate us from your love and you asked us to mirror that perfect love for all people. Grant us the strength and courage to love all people as you love them, especially those on Death Row in SC and the families they have devastated. May we be a blessing to all those affected by violence in their grief and imprisonment, and may we learn from their experiences as we seek to free SC from the violence that separates us all from you.

(Mrs. Julia Sibley-Jones,
Columbia Friends Meeting (Quakers)
and former SCCAC staff)

March 9, 2008

Today's prayer for: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
SC Synod

Bishop: The Reverend David A. Donges, L.H.D.

Number of Congregations in SC: 163

God of peace....in a world where nations wage war and where violence violates the sanctity of human life, send your Spirit of reconciliation and healing. Bring peace to our troubled world and healing to those whose lives have been victimized and broken. By your grace instill in every human heart those things which make for peace, in the name of Him who is the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

(Bishop David A. Donges)

October 26, 2008

Today's prayer for: Persons Affected by Violence

Overcome our fear, O Lord, and keep us ever in your safe embrace. Let all who have been harmed by violence know the comfort of your presence.

Make us bold in our love for all people, especially the ones we deem unlovable and irredeemable, knowing that we all have fallen short of true discipleship and yet you promise forgiveness.

May we be faithful to your call to Love.

(Mrs. Julia Sibley-Jones,
Columbia Friends Meeting (Quakers)
and former SCCAC staff)

November 2, 2008

Today's prayer for: Our Country and Our National Election

Eternal and divine Creator, we seek your blessings and your guidance as we prepare to chart the course of our nation for the next four years. Grant us wisdom, courage and discernment, so that we will be led by your will in the voting booth. Bless us and bless our nation, so that regardless of color, culture or creed, we'll elect those who will do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with you. Amen

(The Reverend Dr. Joe Darby,
Pastor, Morris Brown AME, Charleston)

October 12, 2008

Today's prayer for: Christian Methodist Episcopal Church,
Charleston-Columbia District
Presiding Elder: The Reverend Jimmy Gilbert
Number of congregations: 39

God of all, we pray for the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church in SC and it's Presiding Elder, the Reverend Jimmy Gilbert; watch with your loving and guiding care over the lives of believers in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. Amen.

(Bishop Dorsey F. Henderson, Jr.)

March 16, 2008

Today's prayer for: Denominational Unity

Almighty God there is much bickering these days within congregations about severing the ties that bind our denominations together. We seem to go our separate ways over issues about which we disagree, rather than celebrate our oneness in Jesus Christ. Help us to remember that the church is your body and each believer is engrafted into that body through baptism. Give us the wisdom we need to affirm our unity even in the midst of our diversity. Loving God, grant us your generous Spirit to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to all. Amen.

(The Reverend Donnie Woods,
Presbyter Charleston-Atlantic Presbytery)

March 23, 2008

Today's prayer for: Peace

Today, O Lord, this very day when "resurrection" moves easily upon our lips and fills the hymns of the congregation, our hearts celebrate that One whom we have known as Savior and as Prince of Peace. We reach out with thanksgiving to receive His proffered salvation and pledge with deep commitment to live His life of peace. In parting He said, "My peace I leave with you." In our living we pledge, so far as it depends upon us, to make that peace the engaging relationship between all the people of your creation. Amen.

(The Reverend Dr. L. Wayne Bryan,
Executive Minister, SCCAC, retired)

March 30, 2008

Today's prayer for: the Alliance of Baptists

Eternal God, we hold in your Light our brothers and sisters who individually and through their congregations are believers who support and receive counsel from the Alliance of Baptists. May they continue to stand fast in their commitment to historic Baptist principles and their advocacy for the whole of creation.

April 6, 2008

Today's prayer for: United Methodist Church, SC Conference
Bishop: The Reverend Mary Virginia Taylor
Number of congregations: 1,020

God of all nations and peoples, we pray for the people of the United Methodist Church in South Carolina. Sanctify her witness. Preserve her unity. Enable her mission.

We entrust to your care and keeping the people called United Methodist who will assemble April 23-May 2, for their General Conference in Fort Worth, Texas. Bring to unity the diversity of voices until yours alone is heard! Set amidst a world of ever changing complexities, make effective her mission of making disciples for Jesus Christ and so prosper the work of her hand that your kingdom might come and your be will done through her. Amen

(The Reverend Kenneth L. Nelson
Congregational Specialist-Columbia & Hartsville District
United Methodist Church)

September 28, 2008

Today's prayer for: the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Regional Minister: The Reverend Sotello Long
Number of Churches: 40

We worship you O God and give praise to your majesty! We thank you for your favor and grace upon the 5th Regional Conference of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting October 3-5, 2008, at First Christian Church in Aiken. We pray that your presence be felt as they meet to glorify your name! In Jesus name, Amen!

(The Reverend Sotello Long)

October 5, 2008

Today's prayer for: Our Homeless Neighbors and Those Who
Serve Them

Living God, mindful of our blessings we humbly approach you on behalf of our brothers and sisters without shelter. Care for them in their hour of need, carry us to them in service, and consume us by your mercy as we seek to transform the world by your spirit. In the name of our homeless Lord and Savior we pray, Amen.

Living God, we pray for the Midlands Interfaith Homelessness Action Council and all such servants throughout the state as they seek to minister to our homeless friends and neighbors. Grant these servants the diligence to persist in difficult circumstances, give them courage to ask difficult questions, and strengthen them for the loving journey. In the name of our homeless Lord and Savior we pray, Amen.

(The Reverend Amos Disasa, Chairperson,
Midlands Interfaith Homelessness Action Council
and Associate Pastor, Eastminster Presbyterian Church)

September 14, 2008

Today's prayer for: the Reformed Episcopal Church Diocese of Southeast

Bishop Ordinary: The Right Reverend Alphonza Gadsden

Number of Congregations in SC: 33

Almighty and everlasting God, we lift up before you the clergy and delegates of the 36th Annual Synod meeting of the Diocese of the Southeast of the Reformed Episcopal Church. We pray that your Holy Spirit will rule in the deliberations of this council, that your blessed will be done in Your Church, that all glory may be yours. We ask these and whatsoever you deem necessary for the good of the Church of Christ. Amen

(Bishop Alphonza Gadsden)

September 21, 2008

Today's prayer for: Those Who Serve the Sick

O Lord, called through the ages, the Great Physician, be with all those who minister to the sick and their families the healthcare professionals and clergy. Help them feel always your compassionate presence in their lives. Give them that patience, strength, and especially the discernment, knowledge and wisdom which must always first come from you. In your Precious Name, Amen.

(The Reverend Capers Limehouse,
Staff Chaplain, RoperSaintFrancis Healthcare, Charleston)

April 13, 2008

Today's prayer for: The National Workshop for Christian Unity, meeting this week in Chicago

Loving God, we lift up to you all who dream of and work for the unity of Christ's disciples by their participation in the National Workshop for Christian Unity this week. Unleash new energies and graces upon the Body of Christ through this event and upon all the activities that serve Christian unity in our state. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(The Reverend C. Alexander McDonald,
Ecumenical Officer, Catholic Diocese of Charleston)

April 20, 2008

Today's prayer for: the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of SC
Coordinator: The Reverend Dr. Marion D. Aldridge
Number of Congregations: 80

Creator God, Redeeming Savior, Sustaining Spirit, move in the midst of those gathered Christians called Cooperative Baptists in their General Assembly, April 25-26, in Charleston. We join with all people of faith in praying that Justice, Peace, and Grace should guide Christian thinking and acting when we are together and when we are apart. Keep us loving of one another and of you. Through Christ, we pray. Amen.

(The Reverend Dr. Marion D. Aldridge)

April 27, 2008

Today's prayer for: the SC Legislators and Staff

Holy God, we give you thanks and praise for those who provide caring leadership for every resident here in SC. Especially this day do we pray for the members of the State Legislature, for their commitment to the wellbeing of our citizens. Bless these Senators and Representatives richly, dear Lord, and equally support all of their staff members. Allow these women and men to feel your power and presence as they diligently carry out their duties. And in all things, O God, to you be the glory. In your name we pray, Lord. Amen.

(The Reverend Dr. James I. St. John,
Chaplain, Senate of SC)

May 4, 2008

Today's prayer for: the Baptist Educational and Missionary
Convention in SC

President: the Reverend Dr. Lewis P. Graham

Number of Congregations: 1,100

Lord of all humankind, we pray for the Baptist and Educational Missionary Convention, it's President, Dr. Lewis P. Graham, and it's many congregations in SC. Bless the Convention when it convenes in its 130th Annual Session early this month.

August 31, 2008

Today's prayer for: the Unity of the Church

God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior, the Prince of Peace: Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions; take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord; that, as there is but one Body and one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

--from the Episcopal BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

(Offered by Bishop Dorsey F. Henderson, Jr.,
Episcopal Diocese of Upper SC)

September 7, 2008

Today's prayer for: Stewardship and Commitment

God of encouragement and expectation...when we feel a disconnect from you and your Church, there is the human tendency to want to think our selves into new ways of behaving in order to feel reconnected. Teach us that the opposite is true, that it is usually more helpful for us to behave ourselves into new ways of thinking and that the feeling of reconnection from our point of view happens when we read the Bible, pray daily, worship regularly, and give generously. Thank you, Jesus, for loving us no matter what and for gifting us through baptism with faith. Amen

(The Reverend David A. Donges,
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, SC Synod)

August 17, 2008

Today's prayer for: the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Presbyters:

- The Reverend Donnie Woods, Charleston Atlantic Presbytery
- The Reverend Judson Shaw, Presbytery of New Harmony
- The Reverend George Wilkes, Foothills Presbytery
- The Reverend Alan Arnold, Trinity Presbytery
- The Reverend Mark Verdery, Providence Presbytery

Number of Congregations in SC: 322

Loving God, you equipped and called Mark, Alan, George, Judd, and Donnie to be the spiritual leaders of our South Carolina Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). You blessed them with great staff to work alongside them in this ministry. We pray for each of the churches, ministers, educators, and volunteers who provide leadership and service. Continue to strengthen and guide their congregations as they make their lives and resources available to you to build your kingdom both here and around the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Reverend Donnie Woods, Presbyter
Charleston Atlantic Presbytery)

August 24, 2008

Today's prayer for: Institutions of Child Care

Dear Father, we pray today for the children and staff at Connie Maxwell Children's Home. Assist all those who work to bring children of abuse, abandonment, and neglect out of this darkness into your caring light of love. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

(Dr. Ben Davis,
President/CEO of Connie Maxwell Children's Home)

May 11, 2008

Today's prayers for: Christian Unity Work Group, SCCAC

Chair: Mrs. Missie Walker

God of all, we pray for the members of the Christian Unity Workgroup of the South Carolina Christian Action Council as they witness to the unity given us through our Lord Jesus Christ. Help them to make available tools and resources to promote this unity within SC; to grow in their understanding of our diversity and commonalities; and to celebrate the unique gifts of all. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

(Mrs. Missie Walker,
Administrator, Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston
Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious
and Director of Religious Education,
Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church, Chapin)

May 18, 2008

Today's prayer for: Law Enforcement Personnel

Eternal and loving God, we pray your blessings upon those women and men in law enforcement who strive to bring peace and calm into homes where there is violence and chaos. Empower them to influence young people to resist the temptation of gang affiliation and to seek positive role models to follow, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

(The Reverend Clyde Waters,
Senior Chaplain, Columbia Police Department)

May 25, 2008

Today's prayer for: Military Personnel and Their Families

Heavenly Father, it is into your presence we come petitioning your care and protection upon all families involved in military service. Help us to be appreciative of their honorable and necessary service.

For the times when families are separated no matter the amount of time, always, Lord, surround them with your love. When loved ones are in war zones give peace and hope to all. We ask that goodness and mercy will be with them these days of sacrifice. Amen

(The Reverend Robert L. China,
Pastor, Spring Hill AME Church)

June 1, 2008

Today's prayer for: the Advocacy Work Group, SCCAC
Chair: The Reverend Stewart Rawson, Pastor, McGregor PCUSA,
Columbia

O Lord, we pray for the Advocacy Work Group of the South Carolina Christian Action Council. Jesus promised that those welcomed into heaven would hear the words, "I was hungry, thirsty, sick, in prison...and you ministered to me." We know that delivering such ministry involves structuring society to eliminate hunger, thirst, poverty, homelessness, hurt.... So we hold before you the Advocacy Work Group who lead us in thus shaping the laws and structures of SC so that such pains are removed from the lives of your children and their communities. Amen.

(The Reverend Dr. L. Wayne Bryan,
Executive Minister, SCCAC, retired)

August 3, 2008

Today's prayer for: the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

From Friend Michael Shell, 2007

Traditional Quaker faith and practice can be full of moment by moment prayer life. However, Quakers understand that often prayer is not about speaking to God but about listening attentively.

We also understand that often what we need to say or to hear cannot be expressed well in words.

We know the truth of Paul's words: "The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express" (Romans 8:26).

So, in Quaker prayer we may wait in silence, alone or together, to hear the inner voice of the Spirit. If Spirit leads us to share prayer with others, we write or speak as we are guided.

(offered by Ms. Gita Larson, Columbia Meeting)

As we listen in silence, reveal to us your Truth. We hold in the Light our sister and brother Friends in thanksgiving for their faithful presence and thoughtful commitment to justice and peace.

August 10, 2008

Today's prayer for: Public Safety Personnel

God of grace and mercy, we thank you for those guardians of public safety—our police officers, firefighters, and emergency medical technicians. Bless them as they strive to protect us and keep us safe. Walk with them as they enter the dark and dangerous places of our communities. Amen

(Reverend Clyde Waters,
Senior Chaplain, Columbia Police Department)

July 20, 2008

Today's prayer for: Retirement Communities

Loving God and God of Love, you made us all to live forever and called us to care particularly for our elders who embody our history and yearn for our loving attentive presence. We ask for your presence with and blessings upon for the residents and staff of the Still Hopes Community and all such communities. Grant them we pray the grace, the wisdom, and the resources to continue to build together a faithful caring community where life is just as rich and full as you created and intended it to be for us all.

(The Reverend Dr. Martha H. Conner,
Chaplain, Still Hopes Episcopal Retirement Community)

July 27, 2008

Today's prayer for: Teachers of Religious Education

Eternal Word, ignite the hearts of those who teach religion both voluntarily in local congregations and in formal classroom settings with your love and give them minds to hunger for your wisdom. Grant them the voice to share their insights with young and old alike, that together all students and teachers may praise the wonders of your creation; through Jesus Christ, Incarnate Word and good Teacher. Amen

(Dr. Robert D. Hawkins,
Leonora G. McClurg Professor of Worship and Music,
Dean of Christ Chapel,
Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia)

June 8, 2008

Today's prayer for: United Church of Christ, Southeast Conference
Conference Minister: The Reverend Timothy Downs
Number of Congregations: 3 and 1 Church Start

We pray for our sisters and brothers of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ gathering for their 31st Annual Meeting on June 14th, 2008, in Pleasant Hill, Tennessee. As they lift the words "be not conformed but transformed" may they be vessels to transform lives and congregations in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

We pray for the United Church of Christ on the occasion of its 51st Anniversary when the Congregational and Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church became one communion, dying so that they might live to give witness to the prayer of our Savior, "that they may all be one."

(The Reverend Timothy C. Downs)

June 15, 2008

Today's prayer for: Missional Partnerships

God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth. Bless all missional partnerships formed to further your Kingdom. Specifically, grant that the people of the Episcopal Diocese of SC may continue to rejoice in the partnership with the Episcopal Diocese of the Dominican Republic. Bless their Bishops, Mark and Julio, strengthen their witness, and prosper their handiwork, that the lame may walk, the blind may see, and the poor have Good News preached, through Christ our Lord. Amen

(The Reverend Dow Sanderson,
Ecumenical Officer, Episcopal Diocese of SC)

June 22, 2008

Today's prayer for: Seventh Episcopal District of the African
Methodist Episcopal Church

Bishop: The Right Reverend Preston Warren Williams II

Number of Congregations: 634

God of the whole creation, we pray for the Seventh Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, its Bishop, Preston Warren Williams II, its clergy, and its congregations.

As it gathers later this year in its several regional conferences to refresh itself, fill its people with the nourishment of your spirit that it may, indeed, be refreshed in a spirit of service and proclamation.

(from 1994 Yearbook of Prayer, adapted)

June 29, 2008

Today's prayer for: Church and Denominational Staff

In your wisdom, O Lord, you have made all things, and have allotted to each of us the days of our lives. Bless, we pray, those who continue in and those retired from employment as staff members in congregations and in denominational positions. Let the Biblical words "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" color and characterize their reflection on their daily work and retirement to come. Give them enjoyments, peace, and health to live fully the days ahead; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(The Reverend Dr. Philip H. Whitehead,
The Episcopal Diocese of Upper SC)

July 6, 2008

Today's prayer for: Refugees

Gracious Lord Jesus, when you were a child, your parents took you and fled as refugees to Egypt, fearing for your life.

We pray for the 19 million refugees around the world displaced from their homes by war and persecution, that they might find safety and a chance to rebuild their lives.

We pray for the refugees recently resettled in SC through the help of Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas, that they will be welcomed with hospitality in our community in the same way we would welcome you. Amen

(The Reverend Mark Cerniglia,
Chaplain, Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas)

July 13, 2008

Today's prayer for: Cultural and Racial Reconciliation

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh; and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

--The Episcopal *BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER*