PASTORAL PRAYER – March 8 2020 – Rev Courtney Richards

-- RISING --

God of healing and wonder, of community and grace,  
God of each of us and of all that we are:  
Be with us in this moment, we pray.

For the concerns of our hearts, for the needs in our  
spirits,  
for the celebrations in our world.

We give you thanks because we know that you are a  
God who can hear all of those at once:  
You can hear the needs and concerns that we carry  
and you are with us in moments that we rejoice.

We are grateful for a community of faith that  
surrounds us in this moment  
For responsible leadership  
For thorough caregiving  
For unexpected graces in the forms of friends who  
pray, friends who pack and move our belongings,  
friends who visit us when we are sick, friends who  
bring meals to help us feel better.  
For family and all of the forms that it takes we are  
grateful.

For times like this when we need to cling to each  
other more closely - even with health precautions in  
place –  
We know that is our spirits that you bind together,  
and that when we are together we are most closely  
yours.

We pray that you would guide us and direct us  
that you would inspire our living  
that you would challenge us  
that you would send us into the world that needs us …  
that needs you.

May we be agents of your compassion and your  
grace, of your peace and your healing.  
We pray in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

-- TRADITIONAL --

Gracious and merciful God you are one of healing and  
one of wonder.  
For all the ways you are at work in the world, we give  
you thanks.  
For the things that happen that we aren’t even aware  
of, but have been your hand at work in our lives,  
for all of the ways that you move closely through our  
community,  
the ways that your hands and feet of Christ are made  
known by the hands and feet and hearts of those  
around us.

We come today in a new season  
with time that has shifted by an hour  
with lives that have changed dramatically since last  
we were together.  
We pray for calm, for peace, for leadership, for  
responsibility.  
We know that you are a God who overcomes all  
things,  
that you are a God who will overcome our fears as  
well.  
You will help us to be wise, to be compassionate, to  
be just,  
to bring healing, to offer mercy, to extend grace.

Even as we must find new ways occasionally to move  
in the world,  
you are a God who is always moving, always doing  
something new.  
So draw our hearts more closely to you.  
Bond us more closely to one another.  
Even in those moments we need to make different  
physical choices,  
we know that it is our spirits that rise to greet one  
another,  
and our hearts that are bound together.

In this moment and in this place, we are your people.  
Remind us that that doesn’t only happen here:  
that we are always yours  
that you will always be our God,  
to whom we give thanks and praise.  
Amen.