

UU Church of Annapolis
September 13, 2001
Pastoral Prayer by Rev. Fredric John Muir

O God, Spirit of Life in whom we all move and before whom we all must share our grief, fear, anger, and confusion,

We pray for those whose lives ended so abruptly on Tuesday - for those who thought they were merely going to another day of work, for those on vacation, for those who were in the wrong place at the wrong time. We remember and pray for those valiant and strong women and men who gave their lives in the hope that others would live - the police, fire fighters, emergency personnel, volunteers, and those who struggled and met their deaths in rural Pennsylvania so that their plane would not be a weapon of mass murder.

We would not forget and we pray for the families, partners, lovers, friends, and colleagues who are in pain because of their losses. We hold these wounded close to our hearts as they grieve and mourn. May their loneliness and anguish be eased by close friends, strong memories, and an abiding faith.

O God, before whom we share our pain and agony, we pray for the leadership of our own nation and we pray that the leaders of the world's nations act decisively and with justice; not out of thoughtless anger, revenge, or political hysteria but action that will lead to constructive promise and hope for all people.

We hold close in our thoughts our own family, friends, colleagues, and acquaintances who live or work in New York City or who live or work in Washington, DC. The stresses, uncertainties, and anxieties they have known and will continue to live with are many. We hope they are able to set this trauma aside and continue with their lives - changed forever, but still living.

O God, God of Life, we pray for our nation, for all the nations of the world. We pray for the courage, vision, and determination to know right from wrong and to speak the truth. Let us not be divided by this attack and destruction, but united regardless of religion and ethnicity. We pray that we can remember at a time such as this what has made our communities and cities places of hope and promise: that in our diversity and our commitment to democracy grows stability, freedom, and a future of new generations.

We pray not to be immobilized and overwhelmed. We want the right words, we want the right actions; we pray that our lives might make some difference for what is good and true.

Our God of Life and what is greater than Life, the events of Tuesday, September 11, 2001 will change us forever. Let us promise ourselves and each other that in the face of so much that feels out of our control, that we do all that we can to deepen our relationships with those we love and care for, that we will go out of our way to welcome the stranger, and that we will broaden our efforts to shape a democracy that is for all.

For these things we pray, Blessings and Amen.