

Public Witness Weekly Prayers



July 31 2026

Join us each week as we share new prayers for the vulnerable among us facing challenges, fears, and threats. We will name many of the harms unfolding and acknowledge what is being erased, lost, and threatened. These prayers are not a replacement for action; they are meant to offer space for grounding and discernment as we seek to bear one another's burdens in the love and way of Christ.

FOR THE PRESERVATION OF INDIGENOUS HISTORIES

God of truth, who remembers every name and calls us to remember the stories of your people, we grieve the planned closure of the National Archives at Chicago, whose collections bear witness to the lives, lands, families, and history of Native American peoples throughout the Midwest and Great Lakes region. You have given us the gift of memory. Let us never forget the history of the government and church separating Tribal children from their families, the young lives lost, the criminalization of sacred practices, forced displacement, and withholding resources. Let no truth be hidden or placed beyond the reach of the communities whose histories these records preserve. Guide those entrusted with our public archives to preserve these records, to retain the wisdom needed to understand them, and to consult with Tribal Nations most affected by archiving decisions. Strengthen your church in the work of truth-telling and repair, that truth may come to light through Jesus Christ, the head of your Church and our Savior. Amen.

FOR THE CHILDREN OF GAZA AND THE WEST BANK

God of mercy, who in Jesus Christ welcomed children and warned us not to despise even one of these little ones, look with compassion on the children of Palestine, especially in Gaza and the West Bank, whose childhoods have been shattered by war, occupation, bombardment, hunger, detention, displacement, and fear. Receive the children who have been killed into your eternal care; heal the wounded, the orphaned, and the traumatized; and shelter those who wake each day without safety, school, medicine, family, or rest. Turn the hearts of all who govern, command, arm, or profit from this violence, that children may never be treated as enemies, shields, acceptable losses, or a people's future to be erased. Give courage to all nations to uphold international law, protect civilians, release the captives, feed the hungry, end this violence, and seek a just peace rooted in truth and accountability. Make us faithful to the way of your Son, who came among us as a child and reigns as the Prince of Peace. Amen.

FOR LOVE OVER THE SPIRIT OF HATRED

God of reconciling love, who created every person in your image and calls us to love one another, we mourn every act of violence born of hatred, especially when people are targeted because of who they are. We grieve especially the fear and suffering left in the wake of violence against the LGBTQ+ community. We pray for those who were harmed in the attack at the Pride event in Berlin. Comfort the grieving, heal the injured, and give your angels charge over those who live in fear. O Lord, turn all hearts from hatred and break the cycle of any type of radicalization. Give your holy wisdom to leaders, faith communities, and families as they seek to recognize and interrupt violence before they take root in their homes and communities. May your peace, through the power of your Holy Spirit, take root wherever fear seeks to divide your people. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.