



Unwrapping the

Gifts

A Lenten Prayer

The following is one of the older prayers of the Church from the Lutheran Reformation. This particular prayer owes much to Philipp Melancthon and the Reformation of Cologne, which influenced to a large degree the first Book of Common Prayer of the Anglican Church. This prayer, adapted from the original Common Service¹, was included as a General Prayer.

Merciful God, heavenly Father, You have commanded us to meet together in Your name and in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, to ask of You what is needful and profitable for us and for all people, and have graciously promised to hear our prayers and grant our requests. We implore You to pardon all our sins and unrighteousness, and to enliven our hearts by Your Holy Spirit that we may ask You for whatever things are needful for Your Church and for all the world. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For Your Church and people, we pray: Save and defend them from the power of those whom You have not sent. Send them pastors and teachers, who will faithfully seek Your scattered sheep, bring them to the Lord Jesus, the Good Shepherd, and diligently build them up in all Your will and pleasure. Grant that all ungodliness and wicked works, and all heresies, schisms, and false religion, may be done away with. In the unity of the true faith and the confession of Your dear Son, grant that we may be one in Him, and dwell together in love, to the honor of Your name and the good of all people. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For all in authority, especially, for all who bear rule over us, we pray: Grant that they may be Yours indeed, put down all evil, and uphold and further all good, that we, being delivered from the fear of our enemies, may serve You in all holiness and righteousness. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

¹ The Lutheran Publishing Society, *Common Service Book with Hymnal*, (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1917), 197–198.

And as it is Your will to be a Savior to the whole world, we also pray for all sorts and conditions of men: Draw to Your dear Son those who are yet far from Him, and grant that those whom You have drawn to Him may daily grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For all who are in any trouble or sorrow [and especially _____], we pray: Comfort them in their distress and send them speedy deliverance out of all their afflictions. Help us to lay to heart Your fatherly discipline, that we may judge ourselves and amend our ways, that we come not under Your judgments. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Grant, also, that we, who are here assembled for Your worship, may hold fast Your Word, die to self, and be wholly given to Your dear Son, our Savior, Who by His bitter sufferings and condemnation, and by His glorious resurrection and ascension has brought us to unity with Himself and with His whole Church; Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**



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