



**Forty Days of Prayer as Our Nation
Prepares to Go to the Polls
Sept 22 through Nov 3, 2024**

Sunday, Sept 22

God of all nations and peoples, we begin our cycle of prayer with praise for you. We celebrate that you are bigger than any person, any nation, and any election. We trust that you hold us in the palm of your hand. Amen.

Monday, Sept 23

“The light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it.” (John 1:5)
God of both light and shadow, bless this candle and all the prayers said by it. May they bring your light and love where they are most needed. Amen.

Tuesday, Sept 24

Our scriptures challenge us to love our neighbors as ourselves. To love our neighbors, we need to see and understand them as they really are. Creator God, inspire us all to see the goodness in our neighbors, whoever has their vote. Amen.

Wednesday, Sept 25

God of strength and hope, this election cycle triggers our anxieties with advertisements, memes and a relentless news cycle. Pause our doom-scrolling. Quiet our hearts. Help us to regain our center. Amen.

Thursday, Sept 26

“A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.” (Ecclesiastes 4:12) Holy God, remind us that when we join together in community, we are stronger and more joyful. Hold us together in this season. Amen.

Friday, Sept 27

“Let’s not love with words or speech but with action and truth.” (1 John 3:18) God of Action and Truth, there is so much that claims to be truth. The lies try to capture our hearts and our actions. Remind us that your truth and action go together. Keep them together for us today. Amen.

Saturday, Sept 28

Pray the Prayer of Our Savior, pausing to place extra emphasis on the line, “on earth as it is in heaven.” Using your spiritual imagination, picture God at work within each voter, inspiring their choices in the voting booth, so that we collectively become the answer to Jesus’ prayer, with each candidate elected aligning themselves with God’s love.

Sunday, Sept 29

Transforming God, elections are not just about loving our neighbors; they are about transforming the neighborhood. Give us a vision for how our systems of injustice may be transformed into your beloved community. Amen.

Monday, Sept 30

God of all vocations, you call some of us to be candidates and government servants. We pray for all who are running for office. Inspire their motives, protect their safety, and strengthen their resolve for justice. Amen.

Tuesday, Oct 1

“If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other,” Mother Teresa observed. Pray for those whose values and visions differ from yours. Ask that God might heal our divisions and enable us to see one another as kin.

Wednesday, Oct 2

God of all people, we imagine today all the different languages spoken by Americans, their words capturing different aspects of your diversity. We celebrate these languages, their cultures of origin, and the beautiful tapestry of words that make our

nation. We pray for all the ballots being prepared in many languages and we grieve that not all languages will be represented. We pray that all will be able to find a way to translate their ballots and vote. Amen.

Thursday, Oct 3

“Don't worry about being effective. Just concentrate on being faithful to the truth.” (Dorothy Day) Holy God, we ground ourselves in faithfulness to your truth today, trusting in your effectiveness. Amen.

Friday, Oct 4

Fred Rogers sang the song, “Won’t You Be My Neighbor?” extolling the beauty of our neighborhoods and the potential of our neighborly relationships. God of our neighbors, give us openness to our neighbors and neighborhoods in this election season. Amen.

Saturday, Oct 5

In a time of uncertainty of election protections, we pray that every person who wants to vote in the election will be able to vote in the election. May God encircle their rights with strength and protection. Amen.

Sunday, Oct 6

“The end is reconciliation, the end is redemption, the end is the creation of the beloved community.” (Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.) May the efforts of this season bring us closer to this Beloved Community. Amen.

Monday, Oct 7

Holy God, today we lift up the election system and everyone in that system as they are making preparations for a fair and free election. We pray your blessing and protection upon every ballot, polling place, poll worker, and each state’s election board members. Amen.

Tuesday, Oct 8

God of all time and space, it takes time for an election. It takes time for each individual to learn, to discern and to decide which candidates to choose. It takes time for the

system to prepare for an election. Give all the time that they need. Amen.

Wednesday, Oct 9

“And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philip. 4:6-7) May the peace of Christ be with all today.

Thursday, Oct 10

To have true dialogue, we must be brave enough to speak to one another and be brave enough to listen to one another. God of courage, strengthen us all to speak and to listen in equal measure. Amen.

Friday, Oct 11

God of all Creation, we seem so grounded in political party identity. Give us imagination to ground ourselves in other identities too. How would it be to take on the identity of bridge-builder, unifier, or compromiser? Help us to lift these up. Amen.

Saturday, Oct 12

Holy God, we know that elections have consequences on our daily lives. They even have disproportional consequences for the poor and marginalized. We turn to you in prayer that the outcomes of this election would lift up those most in need. Amen.

Sunday, Oct 13

These are wearying times for many, but Jesus offers us ease. *“Come unto me, all you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.”* (Matt. 11:28) Offer Jesus whatever burdened thoughts or feelings you have about our nation and its future. Let him know about the stressed or stuck places in your body that need reassurance and support. As you entrust these to Jesus, notice if your body feels lighter or more spacious. Give thanks for his companionship.

Monday, Oct 14

In a season of increased political violence, we pray for peace. In a season of increased inflammatory language, we pray for calm. In a season of charged emotions, we pray for balance. Amen.

Tuesday, Oct 15

There are so many that will be impacted by our elections who do not have the power to vote in it. From our own formerly incarcerated citizens to those receiving aid across the world to the very Earth itself. May these impacts inspire all who can participate, to vote.

Wednesday, Oct 16

“Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.” (1 Corinthians 12:12). God of all bodies, you teach us that we are many parts, but we are all one body. We cannot be separated from each other no matter how much we try. Help us all to feel that connection. Help us to act for the benefit of all. Amen.

Thursday, Oct 17

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.” (James Baldwin) God of all things, we know that the election will not change everything, but it is a step in facing the things that need changing. Give us the courage we need to vote. Amen.

Friday, Oct 18

Our sacred story begins with God creating out of emptiness. At the end of each day God was pleased with what had been created. (Genesis 1) With this in mind, lift up to God anything on the local, regional, or national level that feels devoid of the Holy One’s creative power. As you do, ask God to plant deep within you the certainty that even now, amidst hard headlines and frightening realities, God’s creativity is at work. Let the Peace of God fill you.

Saturday, Oct 19

To vote is to cast a vision for the future, to lay our hopes bare. God of our dreams, carry our hopes for the future into the systems of power that can make them a reality. Free them from cynicism and corruption, so that they might flourish. Amen.

Sunday, Oct 20

Holy God, today we pray for the churches—the congregations that are sending postcards, making phone calls, registering voters, hosting candidate forums, and planning rides to polling places. Thank you, God, for the engagement of all. Amen.

Monday, Oct 21

The prophet Micah tells us that God’s desire for us is that we do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God. (Micah 6:8) As our nation prepares to go to the polls, we pray that our collective deliberating and decision-making will reflect God’s dream for us as a people.

Tuesday, Oct 22

Words have power. Words from someone in power can lead others to act. Will our leaders speak words of encouragement, calm, and truth? What will the resulting actions be? We are uncertain, Holy One. Comfort us with your Word, so that we may stay grounded in You. Amen.

Wednesday, Oct 23

“When we look away from the pain of any people, we diminish their humanity and our own.” (Brené Brown) God of all people, strengthen us to not look away. Hold all of us together as we prepare to vote. Amen.

Thursday, Oct 24

God of Many Names, people of all faiths are preparing to vote. We pray that our society will continue to protect people of all faiths and people of no faith. Amen.

Friday, Oct 25

We are a traumatized people. We remember when our last election was contested. We remember violence in the seat of our government. We are worried and we are angry. We lift up our memories and traumas, so that, God, you may restore us. Amen.

Saturday, Oct 26

“Wisdom cries out in the street; in the squares she raises her voice.” (Proverbs

1:20). Holy God, give us ears to hear the cries of your wisdom from the squares. Amen.

Sunday, Oct 27

Read Psalm 46 and hear it as a prayer that at this very moment is being lifted up on behalf of all who are feeling uncertain or fearful (including you, if you're in that space). Let your attention rest on any phrase you find especially helpful. Spend a few extra minutes with the verse "*Be still and know that I am God.*"

Monday, Oct 28

As the election nears, we pray not only for safety, we pray for the transformation of what "safety" means to us. May all be protected in the preparation and carrying out of this election. Amen.

Tuesday, Oct 29

"All great spirituality is about what we do with our pain. If we do not transform our pain, we will transmit it to those around us." (Father Richard Rohr). Transforming God, protect us and our neighbors from our pain. Transform that pain into growth, peace, and joy. Amen.

Wednesday, Oct 30

Those seeking elected office are seeking positions of authority and power. God of all power, grant these candidates humble hearts so that they may use their power for the benefit of others. Amen.

Thursday, Oct 31

As the election nears, we pray for clarity – a clear outcome with all candidates accepting those outcomes and moving forward together. God make it so. Amen.

Friday, Nov 1

Comforting Spirit, remind us that through all the ages you are God. Today, tomorrow, and the day after the election. Wrap us in the protection of your love as we press forward into tomorrow. Amen.

Saturday, Nov 2

Teaching God, as we look back on 40 days

of prayer, teach us to continue our prayers. An affirmation, a gratitude, a cry for help. Teach our hearts to turn to you every day. Amen.

Sunday, Nov 3

Keep company with this prayer. If a specific line speaks to you, repeat it as many times as feels right. Let your God love you!

Let Your God Love You

Be silent.

Be still.

Alone.

Empty before your God.

Say nothing.

Be silent.

Be still.

Let your God look upon you.

That is all.

God knows.

God understands.

God loves you

With an enormous love.

God only wants

To look upon you

With love.

Quiet.

Still.

Be.

Let your God

Love you.

– *Edwina Gateley*

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*Bring your VOTE-ive to worship with you on Nov. 3 where we will light them and remember the enduring truth that we do not walk alone in seasons of uncertainty.*

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Prayers written by Rev. Karen Winkel and Rev. Amber Henry Neuroth for the UCC Potomac Association.