

## Reconciliation Prayer Service

(Note: Materials needed for this prayer service include small pieces of paper and pens, planting soil, a scoop or large spoon, a large pot, and some flowers to be replanted during the service.)



**Leader:** We gather together to consider what we have done and what we have left undone, to recognize our failings and our woundedness, and to ask that from the ashes of the past, new life can spring up for us and for all members of God's human family. Let us listen to the word of God, let us acknowledge what is difficult, and let us move together toward the hope of the Resurrection and Spring time.

### Reading: Psalm 51: 3-17

- Reader 1: Have mercy on me, God, in your goodness;  
in your abundant compassion blot out my offense.
- Reader 2: Wash away all my guilt; from my sin cleanse me.  
For I know my offense; my sin is always before me.
- Reader 3: Against you alone have I sinned; I have done such evil in your sight  
That you are just in your sentence, blameless when you condemn.
- Reader 4: True, I was born guilty, a sinner, even as my mother conceived me.  
Still, you insist on sincerity of heart; in my inmost being teach me wisdom.
- Reader 5: Cleanse me with hyssop, that I may be pure; wash me, make me whiter than snow.  
Let me hear sounds of joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.
- Reader 6: Turn away your face from my sins; blot out all my guilt.  
A clean heart create for me, God; renew in me a steadfast spirit.
- Reader 7: Do not drive me from your presence, nor take from me your holy spirit.  
Restore my joy in your salvation; sustain in me a willing spirit.
- Reader 8: I will teach the wicked your ways O Lord, that sinners may return to you.  
Rescue me from death, God, my saving God, that my tongue may praise your healing power.  
Lord, open my lips; my mouth will proclaim your praise.

# PRAYER SERVICE

## Reading: Matthew 18: 21-22

**Reader 9:** Then Peter approaching asked him, "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times."

## Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

**Reader 10:** So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come.

**Reader 11:** And all this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting their trespasses against them and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

**Reader 12:** So we are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who did not know sin, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

**Leader:** Let us take some time for silence as we reflect on the words of Scripture, what we need forgiveness for, and who we must forgive.

### *(TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION)*

**Leader:** Please take time now to write on one slip of paper first, a few failings on our part, what we have done or failed to do as individuals, as members of families, as communities, and as members of our nation.

Secondly, on another slip of paper, write down who we and what we must forgive, in our families, our communities, our nation, the world—we ask forgiveness for ourselves, our communities, our nation.

### *(TIME FOR REFLECTION and WRITING)*

**Leader:** From giving up the old, we will contribute to new life and growth. Let us ask the Lord for mercy

**All:** Forgive us our sins, O Lord, and help us find the strength and courage to forgive others. Create in us a renewed spirit.

**Leader:** Please tear up the papers in as small pieces as possible. Come forward to plant these as we all pour in dirt to plant new life that can bloom as a sign of hope.

(All participants will bring up pieces of paper, put them into the planting pot around the transplanted flowers, and add dirt to cover them.)

**Leader:** Let us thank the Lord for the promise of new life.

**All:** We give thanks to you, Lord of Life, for this opportunity of renewal.  
May we join with all others who celebrate life in re-committing our selves  
To walk in yours ways of forgiveness.

May we lift our eyes towards hope for ourselves and for all our brothers and sisters.  
May we open our hearts to all in the human community,  
And may our intentions and actions help create your Kingdom of justice and peace.  
Amen.

