

## GATHERING PRAYER

Gracious God,  
inspire us with the gift of shalom--  
the gift of wholeness and the promise of your presence.  
Give us wisdom to seek nonviolence  
as an answer to the violence of our lives and world.  
Give us courage to seek wholeness in a fractured and divided world,  
to find reconciliation rather than revenge,  
to abandon the instruments of violence and death  
to entrust our lives, our homes and our families to you.  
May we and others receive your Shalom  
that we might be faithful instruments of your love.  
Amen.

*-Adapted from Episcopal Peace Fellowship, "Gift of Shalom"*

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

O God of all people, we know that you are as near as our next breath wherever we go, you are already there. Thank you for creating us in your image, and claiming us as your children. O Lord, we confess that we have forgotten who we are; that each of us belongs to you. We confess that we have forsaken your peaceable kingdom, and allowed gun violence to shatter our communities. Forgive us O God. Remind us that your love is more powerful than any gun and that your spirit will sustain us as nothing else can. Let us desire, as you desire, forgiveness rather than revenge, reconciliation rather than retribution. Give us the courage to live not by the gun but by your spirit. Open our hearts to you so that we also may open them to each other. Guide us on the path of peace. In the name of all who love you, we pray. Amen

*-written by Rev. Rachel R. Smith*

## PRAYER INSPIRED BY MLK'S WORDS

### *SUGGESTED CLOSING CALL TO ACTION:*

God of justice, whenever we settle for the way things are instead of the way love would have them to be, forgive us.

Whenever we are paralyzed by fear or limited in vision, increase our trust in you.

Whenever we offer charity, but fail to work for justice, show us the more excellent way that love requires.

Whenever we tire of the struggle and tomorrow feels overwhelming, restore our hope.

Whenever we forget those who have gone before us or act as if we are the only ones who are trying, allow us to recognize our arrogance

## FINAL BLESSING

O Holy God, make of us a receiving people.

Let us walk with your feet.

Let us touch with your hands.

Let your voice speak in and through us.

Let your wisdom be transformed into right action within us.

Let us carry forth your spirit into the world.

Let us be at one with You, O God.

And may each who feels as one with You,

know also that we are one with every other,

until all creation is unified in the light of love.

May we go in peace and in the light of God's love.