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For Hope, Of Hope: Prayers of the Community

Stephanie Falkowski

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University

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FOR HOPE, OF HOPE: PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY¹

Stephanie Falkowski

God,
we're ready. We want to talk with you.
Yet our words seem useless. We can't
praise you as you deserve, and still,
we come before you.

Lord,
bring our wills into alignment with
yours, so that we may seek to do your
will. Help us to not just believe but to
trust in you. Trust that you hear our
prayers, and respond in love.

There is much that weighs on us; much
on our minds and in our hearts, causing
us distraction and worry.

We have our own personal worries
that we'd like to entrust to you.

Not to mention bigger problems our world faces which need your attention.

There are so many who need your healing, guiding presence. Many among our own number, and those we know and care about.

We ask that you be with them Lord, bring them the healing that will make them whole. Watch over them, and all who care for them. Put things right.

Lord,
there are so many situations over which we worry and yet feel powerless to change.

Lord,
bring hope to hopeless situations.

Lord,
have mercy:

For those grieving or in despair, let them see that your light still shines and will overcome...

For those facing intolerable circumstances, insensible hatred and violence preserve them and provide for them,

bring them hope...

For those attempting to do your will,
guide them and aid them in their
quest...

Be with those who struggle with their
faith. Be patient, and let them come
to some sort of inner peace.

Lord,
teach us your way, that we may be your
presence in the world, bearing the light
of hope in the midst of dark despair
teach us so we may obey.

Lord,
watch our hearts, hear the prayers
living in them, calling out to you
in ways words fail to.

[silent prayer]

Oh unknowable absolute being that I
call God: in the midst of all this, all
the worries and cares that shape us,
your light somehow comes through.

You are a God who changes lives, who
takes what is broken and finds ways
to set it right, sometimes even better
than before.

We don't understand you, but we can experience you, and we can respond to what you are doing in our lives, in faith and cooperation or in resistance.

It's baffling that you let us disappointments that much free reign, but you are no tame lion.

As part of your church, we are more than we ever could be alone.

You break barriers, even those of time and place, to join us with one another, that we may recognize our oneness.

And so we pray together, the words which have become so familiar, the words Christ taught us when we asked how to pray:

Our Father,
who art in heaven
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,

as we forgive our debtors.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine in the kingdom,
and the power,
and the glory,
forever.

Amen.

Notes:

¹ Ms. Falkowski has prayed continuously with the community of Hope Community Presbyterian Church in Virginia, MN, since her baptism as an infant. This prayer was featured in a Lenten worship service this year. Ms. Falkowski was asked by her pastor to not only write these prayers, but to also provide a homily and to officiate on this occasion.