

A Service of Lament
For the Losses Being Experienced during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Suggestions for the service: Gather together 9 candles (8 small, 1 large if possible). Light 8 candles to start and place them in a line with the unlit candle in the middle. Extinguish one candle after each "We Lament." During the silent reflection before the reading of the Isaiah 51 text light the center candle. If possible, divide up the roles of the service between; the duties of the candles, the Scripture readings, and the prayers. All join together in the bolded "We Lament" and the final Prayer/Psalm 51. An accompanying audio track is available for those who are worshiping on their own.

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen

God, we raise our voices to you this day, joined with the songs of Scripture, to pray for peace in our hearts and minds.
Lord grant us this mercy.

Lamentations

*1.1 How lonely sits the city
that once was full of people!*

O Lord Here Our Cries...

For a lost sense of community,
For closed in-person worship,
For unsung hymns,
For unspoken prayers,
For meals not had,
For memories never made.

Loving God,
We Lament

Psalm 130:5

*I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;*

6

*my soul waits for the Lord
more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who watch for the morning.*

For those who are missing family and friends,
For those longing for company,
For those who cannot be together.

Loving God,
We Lament

Lamentations

*1.4 The roads to Zion mourn,
for no one comes to the festivals;
all her gates are desolate,
her priests groan;
her young girls grieve,
and her lot is bitter.*

For lost wages,
For those missing work,
For those furloughed and laid off,
For shuttered businesses,
For those facing closure and bankruptcy.

Loving God,
We Lament

Psalm 137

*By the rivers of Babylon—
there we sat down and there we wept
when we remembered Zion.
On the willows there
we hung up our harps.*

For canceled concerts,
For dances dropped,
For empty stages,
For games and matches not played,
For truncated or lost seasons, performances, and tours.

Loving God,
We Lament

Psalm 6

*O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger,
or discipline me in your wrath.*

2

*Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am languishing;
O Lord, heal me, for my bones are shaking with terror.*

3

*My soul also is struck with terror,
while you, O Lord—how long?*

For misunderstandings,
For fear and distrust,
For confusion and disillusionment,
For frustration and stress.

Loving God,
We Lament

Psalm 31

*Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in distress;
my eye wastes away from grief,
my soul and body also.*

*10 For my life is spent with sorrow,
and my years with sighing;
my strength fails because of my misery,
and my bones waste away.*

For those facing death,
For those in isolation,
For those battling illness,
For those who have died.

Loving God,
We Lament

Psalm 73

*You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will receive me with honor.*

25

*Whom have I in heaven but you?
And there is nothing on earth that I desire other than you.*

26

*My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.*

For those who are exhausted,
For those working extra hours,
For those feeling weak,
For those desperate for rest.

Loving God,
We Lament

Romans 8

²⁶ The Spirit helps us in our weakness;
for we do not know how to pray as we ought,
but that very Spirit intercedes
with sighs too deep for words.

For losses named and left unnamed,
And for the pain we name to you now _____.

Loving God,
We Lament

Psalm 86

*Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me,
for I am poor and needy.*

2

*Preserve my life, for I am devoted to you;
save your servant who trusts in you.
You are my God; 3 be gracious to me, O Lord,
for to you do I cry all day long.*

4

*Gladden the soul of your servant,
for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.*

5

*For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,
abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you.*

6

*Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer;
listen to my cry of supplication.*

7

*In the day of my trouble I call on you,
for you will answer me.*

(silent reflection)

Isaiah 51

*Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness,
you that seek the Lord.
Look to the rock from which you were hewn,
and to the quarry from which you were dug.*

2

*Look to Abraham your father
and to Sarah who bore you;
for he was but one when I called him,
but I blessed him and made him many.*

3

*For the Lord will comfort Zion;
he will comfort all her waste places,
and will make her wilderness like Eden,
her desert like the garden of the Lord;
joy and gladness will be found in her,
thanksgiving and the voice of song.*

4

*Listen to me, my people,
and give heed to me, my nation;
for a teaching will go out from me,
and my justice for a light to the peoples.*

5

*I will bring near my deliverance swiftly,
my salvation has gone out
and my arms will rule the peoples;
the coastlands wait for me,
and for my arm they hope.*

Psalm 51

Loving God

**Restore to [us] the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in [us] a willing spirit.**

Amen