

"God never said that the journey would be easy, but He did say that the arrival would be worth it all."

Max Lucado

O Holy, holy, holy God of power and might, as the psalmist says, "This is the day you have made, and we will rejoice and we will be glad in it!" Thank you for the beauty, the sun, the summer season we are entering. And thank you for this place, your house, where we can come and worship and show our love for you. And Lord, we enter into this time of quiet, of reflection, of prayer, wanting to settle our minds and bodies, ready to be fully attentive to you. For we know that when we focus our attention on you, we learn not only about you, but about ourselves. For in your presence, when we come honestly before you with our questions, our concerns, our doubts, our fears, our requests, we learn just how much we really trust you, we learn if we are being selfish, we learn if we are trying to be in control, and hopefully we learn to surrender to you and to rely on you – the God who created us because he wanted someone to love and care for and share this life with. And so Lord, help us when this journey is not easy. Help us remember that Jesus said the rain would fall on the just and the unjust, so that we might not expect any "special treatment." Help us to remember as St. Paul said, that your grace is sufficient for us, no matter what our circumstance. That in all the things we think we need, it is really you we need the most. For it is you that can heal us in ways that transcend just the physical. It is you that can give us a peace that is more than just feeling calm. It is you that can guide us with wisdom that sees the bigger picture of our lives. It is you that holds us in a love that accepts and wants to help us even when we don't say or act as we should. Thank you, O Lord. And help us always to remember that if we follow go the journey faithfully, it will lead us to a place where there will be no pain or sorrow or crying. Where there will be joy and glory and abundance of all we could ever hope for. Where we will be forever in your loving presence. And that alone, makes our journey here on earth worthwhile!

Lord, we also come in prayer to lift up those who are struggling on the journey. For all who are suffering, grieving, who are in pain. For those who are lost, and troubled. And we pray also for those who do not think they need you, who think they have life all figured out. Until they realize, they don't. May our prayers and our witness as a church and as Christians lead them to find you, know you and follow you. We want to be specific in our prayers, and so just as you have heard those who are listed on our prayer list, may you now hear us as people in this congregation lift aloud the names for whom we ask your blessing.