

PRAYER 1

God of all peoples, we come to you today first and foremost to thank you for your love embedded in creation, embodied in Christ, and pulsing in us.

Thank you that you not only show us your way of *shalom*, you also share your power for good with us. Your Spirit prompts us to pray and also empowers us to be a part of the answer to our prayers. Overshadow us now as we open our lives to your mysterious presence, your awesome power, your abundant provision, and your whispered command.

Fill us with your love, O God, and take away our fear.

Ever-watchful God, help your church to stay wide-awake and girded for action. Cause us to move and live and give and act so that all people can live their lives fully and joyfully. Plant each of us where we may bloom for your glory, and help us dare to believe that billions of lives will be impacted as we say “yes” to the part you are asking us to play.

Fill us with your love, O God, and take away our fear.

Merciful God, our minds can barely comprehend the stories of greed and exploitation we are hearing. We cry out against human trafficking in all of its forms, and we pray for it to end. Make real your promises to work with those who are doing the difficult and dangerous work of apprehending traffickers, gaining the trust of victims, changing the minds and hearts of policy-makers, and confronting the offenders who create the demand. We recognize that no one can receive your gift of freedom unless their hearts have been made ready to receive that gift. So we pray for the conversion of hearts, beginning with our own.

Fill us with your love, O God, and take away our fear.

Flesh-bound God, you swaddled yourself in our fragile and frightened humanity so that might have a share in all that is divine. Thank you that your call is not generic or one-size-fits-all, but is tailored to each of us. Thank you for binding us to particular people in prayer. As we pray for those caught in trafficking – men, women, and children whose names we do not know – write their names on our hearts. Give us the courage to stand up and be counted on their behalf. And give them what is yours alone to give: the peace that the world cannot give, cannot understand, and cannot take away.

Fill us with your love, O God, and take away our fear.

PRAYER 2

God of love, God of peace...

Create within me a heart for people.

This fractured world cries out in pain, and we cry out against the evils of trafficking. Send friends for the lonely, rescue for the enslaved, and healing help for the broken. Make real your promises to fill victims with a love that is tender and good, and send the exploiters away empty-handed. Awaken our hearts and deepen our commitment to work for a world where every person is free and able to live their lives fully and joyfully.

God of love, God of peace...

Create within me a heart for people.

Give us grace, O God, to do the deed which we know cries to be done. Let us not hesitate because of concern for our own ease or security or self-image. Mighty causes are calling us, but they call us with voices that mean work and sacrifice and a willingness to risk failure. Mercifully grant us the spirit of Esther, who said: "I will go unto the King, and if I perish, I perish."

God of love, God of peace...

Create within me a heart for people.

God of all peoples, we pray for conversion of heart for traffickers and for strong laws that protect victims. Help us to grow in our awareness that we are all connected. We remember that Jesus was once a child, that poverty stole his bread, that tyrants sought his life, that his mother tasted tears. Help us to share our possessions, leave our comforts, lend our voices, and love people, not out of pity or guilt, but because we want to love others as you love us.

God of love, God of peace...

The pain of the world burns deep into my soul, challenging me to make a difference. Soften hearts of stone, beginning with mine. Then send me where I can be used for your glory, until my work on earth is done. Amen.