



## Wednesday Prayer

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – Open our hearts to each other

***Do not let the flood sweep over me, or the deep swallow me up, or the Pit close its mouth over me. Answer me, O Lord, for your steadfast love is good; according to your abundant mercy, turn to me. Do not hide your face from your servant, for I am in distress—make haste to answer me. Draw near to me, redeem me, set me free because of my enemies.”***  
***Psalm 69:15-18***

Many within the human rights movement can relate to this level of anguish and exhaustion. As a white woman, I can never claim to fully understand the depths of suffering my sisters and brothers of color continue to endure. However, as a survivor of exploitation who lives with PTSD and as a mother of a son living with severe developmental disabilities, I am personally familiar with issues of discrimination and systemic abuses.

The disability rights movement arose out of centuries of atrocities such as rampant sexual abuse, mass institutionalizations, forced sterilizations, and the thousands buried by the state – nameless – with only a number to mark their graves. Some of these abuses are as recent as within my lifetime, and the sexual abuse of people with disabilities continues. Read more about restorative work at <http://monitorsaintpaul.com/midways-own-remembering-with-dignity-receives-national-attention/> and <https://mn.gov/omhdd/resources/treat-people-like-people.jsp>.

In response to the death of George Floyd, disability advocate and CEO of The Arc MN, Andrea Zuber wrote in The Capitol Connector, June 5, 2020:

*“As we are dedicated to protecting the human rights of one population, we must be committed to extending that to all populations who have experienced oppression... We are advocates, freedom fighters, rebels, and activists...Not until we can truly process the trauma that has brought us to this point, and open our hearts to each other and the humanity in all people, will this end. The first step is that we need to heal as a collective and mutually find ways to restore and move forward together.”*

Psalm 69 also speaks of transformative change. Grief shifts into righteous anger and cries for justice shift into resounding praise even though external circumstances have not yet changed. “Let the oppressed see it and be glad; For the Lord hears the needy, and does not despise his own that are in bonds.” Perhaps through prayer, God transforms our sense of powerlessness into unapologetic collective resilience – trusting love and mercy will ultimately prevail.

**Holy Creator, tenderly hold the cries of your children who endure the effects of systematic racism and exploitation. Strengthen advocates and allies so that in solidarity with one another, we can create a society reflective our Your love for all people. Amen.**

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