

A LITANY HONORING THE 4TH OF JULY

(adapted from prayers by St. John's Lutheran, Baltimore & Lisa Frenz)

Leader: GOD of Love and Mercy,

YOU have lavished YOUR Creative Might on this land -giving us an abundance of natural beauty and resources.

PEOPLE: LORD, may we always remember that this earth is YOURS and we are its caretakers. Guide us, we pray, that we may use what YOU have given us with care and thanksgiving.

Leader: Because YOU shower us with mercy not condemnation, we strive to respond to hate with love and we reject fear in favor of YOUR Divine Embrace.

PEOPLE: May we always remember that justice is more than law. Give us the wisdom to see injustice disguised as "protection," and the courage and knowledge to challenge anything that goes against YOUR Will and Way.

Leader: In, 1776, the forebearers of this nation bravely advanced the causes of freedom and liberty. They declared this country's independence, and we declare YOUR Sovereignty over all Creation.

PEOPLE: Help us to continue to uphold the values that YOU want to bless all with; those certain unalienable rights -Life, Liberty, and The Pursuit of Happiness. In turn, we humbly ask, also, that YOU would guide and show kindness to our land, government, and our fellow citizens.

Leader: For YOU are King over all the nations. YOU, alone, sit upon YOUR Holy Throne. YOU want everyone to be glad and sing for joy.

PEOPLE: With might, YOU judge all peoples with equity and long to be gracious to anyone who seeks YOUR Face.

Leader: So, allow YOUR Ways to be known upon the earth -YOUR Saving Power among all peoples.

PEOPLE: Strengthen us, we humbly ask, to continue to pursue the Justice and Freedom which inspired our country's creation.

Leader: In gratitude for the unique gifts of this nation, we thank YOU as well for any prosperity we enjoy.

ALL: May we, in turn, commit ourselves to being better citizens and, more importantly, to more faithfully representing Christ, our Lord, in all we say and do; AMEN!

Hymn #759 [vs. 1,2] "America, the Beautiful"

*O beautiful for spacious skies, For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties Above the fruited plain!
America! America! God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood From sea to shining sea!
O beautiful for pilgrim feet, Whose stern, impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat Across the wilderness!
America! America! God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control, Thy liberty in law!*