

Faithful God,

On this Sunday after Easter, we dare to hope. We dare to let hope seep into our bones because the stone was rolled away, and the tomb was empty. You, Lord, are responsible for this hope, and we are eager to bask in it. If your resurrection feels somehow old or stale or trite to some of us, instill empty tomb hope in us. If Easter brings subtle reminders of death's irrefutable grasp on our still sin-filled world, remind us that the resurrection of Jesus means, one day (one day!) death will meet its final end.

Conquer our darkneses today, dear God, our Lord of light. We pray for those fighting for their lives in hospitals around the world. We pray for doctors, nurses, and medical professionals of all kinds. We pray for those who are isolated and lonely at home. We pray for people on the margins of our society who have in this moment faded even further into the background. We pray for parents learning how to be teachers. We pray for the person who might feel they have "no real reason" to feel as downhearted as they do right now. We pray for those who feel far away from you. We pray, Lord, for all: may our world know your presence and your peace.

Lord of light, be with Wally Bratt as he recovers from a fall, and with Sharon Hecker as she endures treatment for lymphoma. Bring healing to both of them, and speak to their hearts. Continue to heal Nellie Brown; may the symptoms of Covid-19 remain moderate for her. And be near to the Laveralls as they mourn the death and celebrate the life of Marilyn's brother George. Give peace and comfort to their entire family.

And as the coronavirus dominates our news feeds, you know that our lives are affected by more than just Covid-19. Our lives contain multitudes, and inside of them are joys and sorrows, highs and lows, celebrations and quiet laments. Speak to us in all these moments, and may the deeper joy of our resurrected Lord find its place in our bones. Fill us with your Holy Spirit and encourage us by your Word in Scripture.

As we set our hearts toward another week, remind us by the Spirit of Jesus' presence with us. Thank you for the new life we have in Jesus. And thank you for Jesus, who in this anxious time prays with us and for us, even when we feel we can't muster the right words. We pray now the words he taught us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**