

Sovereign Lord,

With the psalmists, we come to you today in the hope that you hear our prayer. Do not be silent, God – do not hold your peace or be still. Move and act in our lives, in the life of Calvin Church, and in the life of the world. Let us hear you when you speak, and because you are a faithful God, teach us how to trust you more fully, and how to represent your faithfulness to a world divided by distrust and deceit.

Thank you, Lord, for the goodness of your creation. For the new buzz of insects, the crisp morning air, the nourishment and light of the sun, the refreshment of rain – all these things play a part in our knowledge of you. Thank you, too, for your Word, where we experience you most intimately and most clearly. Thank you for accommodating yourself to us, not content to simply rule over us, but coming to us in Word and in Spirit, to the point where you even call us “friend” and “child.” Draw us closer to you, even now, so that we might know you and ourselves more each day, each hour. Keep knocking at our door and encourage us to open.

Because you listen Lord, we pray to you. We come to you on behalf of each other, as a family knit together by you. We ask this morning that you make your presence felt in the lives of the Dykgraafs, Burghgraefs, Bowdens, and Colagos as they all grieve the loss of someone they loved dearly. To any of us grieving, shelter us under your presence, and whether our grief is nostalgic or sharp, remind us of your victory over death in Jesus Christ.

God, we’re tossed and thrown constantly by the tumult of life. Some of us suffer from chronic, physical pain. Others wrestle with deep anxiety or depression or another form of emotional pain. Our pain is real, but you are more. Soothe our bodies and our minds, and strengthen us by your mercy and love. Give strength to Sharon Hecker, Kim Stapert, Marian Heerema, John and Ann Shooks. Don’t let sickness and death defeat us, but instead train us in your patience, in your grace, and in your steadfastness. Hear us when we cry out to you in grief or in pain because sometimes we’re not sure what else to do. Thank you, Lord, for standing in the gap.

Finally, gracious God, we are broken by the ways your church, including us, has failed to advocate for the weak: for the poor, the oppressed, the abused. Please delight in our worship despite the ways we’ve sinned against our neighbors. And convict us. By your Holy Spirit, bring us into those places where we do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our Creator and Sustainer. May our faith always spill over into how we live our lives, so that we cannot praise your name one day and then ignore some people the next. Make our worship complete.

Triune God, we don’t always know how to pray or when to pray or what to pray for. So thank you for Christ, our Lord and Savior, who prays with us and for us. Together, we pray the prayer 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.