

## **Pastoral Prayer - September 12, 2010**

by Dr. Robert Lee Hill

Gracious God, Our Day-Maker and Life-Keeper, Our Creator and Our Friend – How meager are our words to address your majesty and glory! We grow nearly tongue-tied when we think about how we have been granted another day of living and breathing and loving. We stammer when we try to describe the miraculous beauty of this day and its wonders. How grand is Your grace. And for it we say thanks.

We offer You thanks as well for Your merciful ways. You are the Giver of Second Chances. And my-oh-my we need them so. For anyone among our gathering this morning who needs assurance that You are granting them a new lease on life, please O God, quicken their awareness of that assurance in this very moment.

The whole of the human family the world over is in need of second chances – in Pakistan and China, in the Israel and on the West Bank, and even right here where we live, North of the river and south of the I-435, in the heart of the city and in the hearts of every resident throughout out this beautiful metropolis. In all situations burdened by nagging suspicions of hopelessness, grant strong hope. In all circumstances of cynical despair, grant a bold grasp of the second chances You are granting everyone every day.

On the day after 9/11, comfort one and all who have been wounded by loss and the ravages of mayhem and physical desecration, especially the families of the victims in New York and Washington and in the countryside of Pennsylvania. Strengthen all souls of good will who are working to craft a secure world transformed beyond the petty and puny limitations of violence and the wastefulness of war.

Caring Lord, You have heard my private prayers of thanks for this congregation. Now hear them again. Accept my gratitude, Gracious God, for the experiences of being cradled in prayer by these Your loving people. Their hands and hearts have been the hands and heart of Christ in ways that are beyond the power of words to tell. I know well the ministrations of mercy they have done for countless others and now I've been an extravagantly mercied recipient of their generosity.

Continue to hold us in the hollow of Your mighty and tender hand, and grant us peace and courage and gladness for all of our days. Through Jesus Christ, and for the sake of Your loving realm, we pray. AMEN