

Emmanuel Community Prayer – March 29, 2020

(composed for our congregation by the Rev Matt Randles)

From the Lamentations of Jeremiah, written in the wake of a national crisis:

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.
They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion;
therefore I will wait for him."
The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him,
to the one who seeks him;
it is good to wait quietly
for the salvation of the Lord. —Lamentations 3:22-26

O Lord,

We don't like to wait:
We live in an instant gratification world,
And we long for things to be made right,
For right decisions to be made,
And right policies to be enacted.

We see evil and injustice and suffering
And we wonder why you let it continue.
We see our own failings
And long to be free.

But then the word comes: "Wait on the Lord."
How long, Lord?
How long until justice and righteousness reign on earth?
How long until sickness and suffering and death are no more?
How long until we are made whole?
How long, Lord?

And then a further word comes: "It is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord."
O Lord, this can be hard to accept, even harder than the waiting!
But grant us the humility to receive it,
And accept that there is "a time to be silent and a time to speak." (a)

And so we will wait:
Trusting in your unfailing love,
Remembering all that you have done for us,
Rejoicing in your salvation,
And proclaiming your goodness.

O Lord, have mercy on us,
And especially on the sick and the dying;
On those who suffer,
And those who don't have enough;
On the persecuted,
And those who are hated because of you.

With the Spirit and the whole church we pray:
Maranatha!—Come, Lord Jesus. (b)
Amen.

Notes:

a. Ecclesiastes 3:7

b. See Revelation 22:17, 20