

PASTORAL PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we come broken and weary as we hear the news from Noblesville West Middle School. The images and emotions from this past Friday are still with many of us and the questions about what lies ahead keep coming. In the words of the prophet Isaiah, we long that you would "rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at your presence." We raise our voices to ask how long, O Lord, how long?

We come before you this morning, as your children, to pray that your name would be hallowed, your kingdom come and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. We pray in boldness and confidence this morning knowing that our prayers are heard in the name of Jesus.

We pray for all of the individuals and families of those who have been affected by Friday's shooting. We pray for teacher Jason Seaman, whose courage prevented a greater tragedy. We thank you that Mr. Seaman loved his students with a full measure. We praise you that you placed him in that classroom at that moment. Heal and restore his body and be with his wife and children as they walk through this dark valley.

We pray for 7th grader, Ella Whistler. We rejoice in the news that she is in stable condition. Merciful Father, we ask that you bring healing for mind, body, and soul. When she relives the darkness of those moments, we ask that you fill her with your peace. Bless the doctors and medical staff as they minister to her. Be with her parents and family; may you fill them with your peace, a peace which passes all understanding.

We pray for the students at West Middle; those who were in the classroom or nearby. We pray for those who are filled with fear at the prospect of going back to school next week. We pray for all of the students of our community as they enter the classroom with more than just learning on their mind. Remind the students of our church that they walk in the words of the prophet Isaiah: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine."

We pray for teachers and staff as they seek to remain strong for their students, but also feel broken, weary, and weak. We pray for them as they seek to guide and shepherd their students through more than just the subject matter of the classroom.

We pray for our First Responders and thank you for their courage, training, and strength. Father, we know that some of those who showed up at West Middle on Friday were more than just professionals doing their job, they were also parents fearing the worst. We pray for our community as we ask questions that do not readily produce answers.

And, we even pray for the young man who carried out this shooting that the hope of eternal life in Jesus Christ would enliven his heart and soul. In a world that will forever turn its back on him, may he know that you knock on the door of his heart. Bring about life, we ask, where there is death.

Good and great Father we come before you this morning declaring that the 'world was good, the world is fallen, and the world will be redeemed.' May you grant that we will hold onto your promise that Jesus makes all things new. Amen.

SERMON TEXT - PSALM 130

1 Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord! 2 O Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleas for mercy!

3 If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? 4 But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared.

5 I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; 6 my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning.

7 O Israel, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is plentiful redemption. 8 And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

A TIME LIKE THIS - PSALM 130

#1 | Cry to you, O Lord! (v. 1)

#2 | Wait for the Lord (v. 5)

#3 | Hope in the Lord! (v. 7)