

**UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA**

**NEW SOUTH WALES SYNOD**

**UnitingCare NSW.ACT**

**Prayer Service**

*(Prepared by the Centre of Concern, Washington DC)*

**Opening Prayer:**

Lord of life and creator of all,  
We pray to you in the midst of tragedy, fear and despair,  
We pray to you in the midst of great suffering and death.  
Help us, Oh Lord, in this time of trial.

**Opening Poem:**

We wait in darkness!  
Come, all ye who listen,  
Help in our night journey:  
Now no sun is shining;  
Now no star is glowing;  
Come show us the pathway:  
The night is not friendly;  
The moon has forgot us,  
We wait in the darkness!

**Iroquois prayer**

**Second Prayer:**

*One individual stands up and approaches the candles. She/he reads:*

Oh Lord, we pray for all of the victims of the hijackings and attacks. We pray for the firefighters, police officers and other rescue workers. We pray for those who have died, for those who have been injured, and for all of their family and friends. We pray for the American people, as a whole, and for the leaders of the Nation.

Lord, be with us now, as we remember.

*She/he should light the first candle, saying:*

American Airlines Flight 11 en route from Boston to Los Angeles.

81 passengers, 2 pilots, 9 flight attendants.

Hit the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City at 8:48 A.M., after which the tower collapsed, injuring and killing an unknown number of people.

*She/he should light the second candle, saying:*

United Airlines Flight 175, en route from Boston to Los Angeles.  
56 passengers, 2 pilots, 7 flight attendants.  
Hit the South Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City at 9:06 A.M., after which the tower collapsed, injuring and killing an unknown number of people.

*She/he should light the third candle, saying:*

United Airlines Flight 93, en route from Newark to San Francisco.  
38 passengers, 2 pilots, 5 flight attendants.  
Crashed near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

*She/he should light the fourth candle, saying:*

American Airlines Flight 77, en route from Dulles to Los Angeles.  
58 passengers, 2 pilots, 4 flight attendants.  
Crashed into the Pentagon at 9:40 A.M., injuring and killing an unknown number of people.

*The lighting of the candles should be followed by a period of silence.*

**First reading:**

A reading from the Book of Wisdom (Wisdom 3:1-3)

But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God,  
And no torment will ever touch them.  
In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died,  
And their departure was thought to be a disaster,  
And their going from us to be their destruction;  
But they are at peace.

**Second reading:**

A reading from the Book of Revelation (Revelation 21:3-5a, 6b-7)

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. God will dwell with them; they will be God's peoples, and God will be with them. God will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away."

And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children."

**Prayer:**

Lord, we pray to you.  
Unite us beyond all pain and all separation,  
Beyond death itself,  
With those we love and have loved,  
And, with You, Yourself.

**Intercessions:**

God of consolation and mercy, we pray to you, seeking your help and comfort in this time of great sorrow:

In loving memory of the countless victims, For all those who have left us for a time, that they may know the joy of your presence, let us pray to the Lord...  
*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For all the families and friends of the victims, for all those who grieve, that they may be comforted, let us pray to the Lord...  
*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For all the rescue workers, police officers and firefighters, that they may have courage and strength for the coming days and weeks, let us pray to the Lord...  
*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For ourselves, that trust may replace our fear, that light may replace our darkness, that peace might replace our chaos, and that faith may sustain us, let us pray to the Lord...  
*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For all those who are suffering in hospitals and homes, and for those who care for them, and for the dying, that they may be at peace, let us pray to the Lord...  
*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For all the countries of the world suffering from violence and hatred, and for all of the women, men and children who live in fear and danger, that they may find hope in You, let us pray to the Lord...  
*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For the suffering of the peoples of Israel and Palestine caused by the destruction and death of terrorist attacks, that the two nations may walk forward on the path of reconciliation and peace, let us pray to the Lord...  
*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For all those who ever gave us love, who ever helped us, who ever comforted us, let us pray to the Lord...  
*Lord, hear our prayer.*

O God of everlasting life, God with whom there is no death, help us all and sustain us in this time of great sorrow, let us pray to the Lord...  
*Lord, hear our prayer.*

And we ask this all in the name of our God.

**Our Father**

**Closing Prayer:**

Lord, you are the Light of the world.

Help us to remember in this difficult period that you are not the creator of violence and destruction.

But rather, You are the author of love and peace.

Fill our hearts with your peace.

Lord, we ask that you comfort us, heal us, sustain us.

Be with us now and always, and help us to trust in you.

**Amen.**