

# Blake MORE

## UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Dear Church Family,

There are specific events in our lives that hold a sense of before and after. Those moments not only shape who we are, they shape how we respond to the world around us, how we interact with one another and who we claim God to be. COVID will be a marker just as the death of John F. Kennedy was a particular generation, the Berlin wall falling for another, or 9-11 for yet another generation. Each event leads us to experience the breadth and depth of humanity and lean into what unites us instead of what divides us.

In the coming days the staff invites you to join together in prayer to seek the fullness of God's divine grace and God's fullness working through our human construct and structure of leadership. On following page you will find a prayer guide to pray as often as you'd like leading into the election and the days that will follow.

*You will need the following:*

*a candle*

*a puzzle piece*

*a rubber band*

*a willingness to choose the headlines of the day you are praying.*

These stations are designed to lead us into a spirit of what unites us, claim our own frailties and intercede on behalf of one another and pray for our leaders locally and nationally. Feel free to use this guide to fit your personal needs (you can choose to do all of them every day or do one activity each day).

*Before each exercise, light a candle to be reminded that God is the ever-present light in our lives and shines brightly even when we cannot see the path before us.*

My prayer is that this will bind us together as a community, heal our hearts and remind us that God is the sovereign one that guides our path in the midst of difficult times.

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Amanda

“Breathe” {uses a candle}

Read: John 20:21-22

Prayer Activity:

Find your breath, feel yourself breathing in and out.  
Notice the movement within your body.  
Take a deep breath in  
Exhale that breath slowly

Repeat by taking a deep breath in  
Exhale that breath slowly

As you inhale lift of the names of those on our state and national ballots.  
As you exhale pray “Lord, your wisdom, fall upon them.”

As you inhale again lift of the names of those on our state and national ballots.  
As you exhale pray “Lord, your unity envelope and set them apart for the work of the people”

As you inhale again lift of the names of those on our state and national ballots.  
As you exhale pray “Lord, your peace be with them.”

Repeat this for as long as you wish.

As you inhale breathe the breath of God within your spirit.  
As you exhale allow God’s presence to envelop you.

“Piecing Together” {uses the puzzle piece}

Read: Matthew 5:43-45

Prayer Activity:

Hold the puzzle piece in your hand.  
Feel its shape  
Imagine the fullness of the picture that this piece has an integral part in creating.

As you hold the puzzle piece, begin to imagine the integral part that you play within creating a community of wholeness and unity.

Confess the ways that you have not created harmony or unity within community.

Confess the ways that you have held implicit biases against someone else.

Continuing to hold the puzzle piece, how are you being called to be the ‘piece’ of unity and hope at Blakemore...within your community....within your family....with your neighbor?

With the puzzle piece held in the palm of your hand, pray for the courage to be God’s ‘piece’ and peace in our world.

“Headlines”

Read: John 8:12 and Micah 6:6-8

Prayer Activity:

Look at the headlines for today (you are invited to print them off or look at them on your electronic device)

Circle or write down the words that catch your attention.

For the words that are harmful, divisive, filled with anger, blame and seek to tear down rather than build up, seek God’s direction for the ways God is calling you to be the light, do justice, love and walk humbly.

Listen and hear God’s presence in your story

Listen and hear God’s presence in your story.

Listen and ask God where you need to walk with humbleness in this presidential election and the outcome?

Let your shortcomings rise like incense so that you might be filled with love over blame to walk humbly.

“Resilience” *{uses the rubber band}*

Read: 2 Timothy 1:7

Prayer Activity:

Stretch the rubber band as far as you can

Let it ‘bounce back’

Notice the resilience in which the rubber band as the shape returns.

Stretch the rubber band as far as you can, claim the ways you are being stretched in this season of life.  
Release the rubber band and pray, “Lord, in your mercy hear my cry.”

Stretch the rubber band as far as you can, claim the ways in which our social structures are being stretched.  
Release the rubber band and pray, “Lord, heal our wounds.”

Stretch the rubber band as far as you can, claim the ways that the leaders of our nation have stretched us to what feels like beyond repair.  
Release the rubber band and pray, “Lord, heal our nation.”

Stretch the rubber band and open yourself to the ways that God longs to stretch you to have a spirit of courage instead of timidity, praying “Lord, here I am.”

Release the rubber band and pray a prayer of resiliency for yourself, our community, and our nation.