

Litany from “9/11”

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Commissioned by Saint Peter’s Lutheran Church, New York City
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Lord and lover of humankind,
Teach us to groan as you must groan, sudden mourners, all of us.
Cry with us, instruct us in the language of lamentation.
For wars we thought were far away have snatched lives so near,
Anonymous as our own, and dear as our own,
And what shall we do Lord, with all our might?
What are we to do?

Lord, Good Lord, hold us in your arms as we tear open the gospel’s hard truth.
Is this the hour to trample down violence, to deny death any more lives?
To refuse false safety in walls and weapons, to beg of you Lord,
Courage enough to look at all that is amiss in our world?

Father, forgive. Father, forgive the hatred which divides nation from nation,
race from race, class from class.

Father, forgive. Father, forgive the greed which exploits the work of human hands
and lays waste the earth.

Father forgive. Father, forgive our envy of the welfare and happiness of others.

Father forgive. Father, forgive our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the
homeless, the refugee.

Father, forgive. Father, forgive the lust which dishonors the bodies of men, women, and
children.

Father, forgive. Father, forgive the pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in
God.

Father, forgive. Father, forgive.

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave
you.

Amen.