

## *Reflecting on the Death Penalty*

- **Welcome**
- **Hymn – Gather Us In**

1. Here in this place new light is streaming,  
Now is the darkness vanished away,  
See in this space our fears and our dreamings,  
Brought here to you in the light of this day.

Gather us in the lost and forsaken,  
Gather us in the blind and the lame;  
Call to us now, and we shall awaken,  
We shall arise at the sound of our name.

2. We are the young – our lives are a myst'ry,  
We are the old who yearn for your face,  
We have been sung throughout all of hist'ry,  
Called to be light to the whole human race.

Gather us in the rich and the haughty,  
Gather us in the proud and the strong;  
Give us a heart so meek and so lowly,  
Give us the courage to enter the song.

3. Not in the dark of buildings confining,  
Not in some heaven, light years away,  
But here in this place the new light is shining,  
Now is the Kindom, now is the day.

Gather us in and hold us forever,  
Gather us in and make us your own;  
Gather us in all peoples together,  
Fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

- **Ritual**

**A candle is lit**

**A Bible is enshrined**

**A crucifix is enshrined**

- **Reading** -- From **Ephesians 4: 1-3, 26, 31-32.**

“I, Paul, the servant of Christ, am here in jail because of you ... I implore you ... to lead a life worthy of your vocation, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

... Even if you are angry, you must not sin: never let the sun set on your anger.... Never have grudges against others, or lose your temper, or raise your voice to anybody, or call each other names, or allow any sort of spitefulness. Be friends with one another, and kind, forgiving each other as readily as God forgave you in Christ.

- **Prayer Response:**

### **A Litany of Repentance**

(Adapted from *The Fire of Peace*, Pax Christi USA, 1992.)

**Leader:** O God, we ask forgiveness for our personal failings, but especially for our complicity with state and national governments in the violence unleashed through our country's judiciary and prison systems, and in particular, through the use of the death penalty.

**Leader:**                    **All Respond: Forgive us, we pray.**

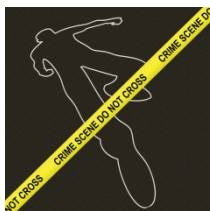
For hardness of heart ....  
For wasting our gifts....  
For wanting too much....  
For ignoring the poor....



**Leader:**

**Forgive us, we pray.**

For trusting in violence....  
For refusing to listen....  
For the proliferation of  
handguns....  
For desiring dominance....  
For lacking humility....



For failing to risk ....  
For failing to trust in restorative justice ...  
For failing to act ....  
For failing to discuss civilly ....  
For failing to have hope in our neighbors ....  
For failing to love ....  
For our arrogance ....  
For our impatience ....  
For our cowardice ....  
For our pride ....  
For our silence .....

**Leader:**

**All Respond:**

That we learn compassion ....

**Change our hearts.**

That we embrace nonviolence ....

That we act with justice ....

That we live in hope ....

That we might believe in conversion of heart ....

That we might be strong .....

• **Leader: Concluding Prayer**

O God, help us to repent of these failings and sins. Help us to transform our thinking and reform our lives to mirror and model a world more just, compassionate and peaceful. We ask all these things in the name of Jesus, our brother and savior, unjustly convicted and sentenced to death for our sins. Amen.

## PRAYER SERVICE

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