

Dear St. Timothy Folks,

I am writing this on November 6th, the day after the election. I apologize for the Parchment being late this month, but I have had a couple of health issues over the past week and a half – nothing contagious, for those who talked to me Sunday.

The results of the election - as we have reflected over past weeks - will be a cause for rejoicing for some, and a cause for grieving for others. Some things will change over the next months and years. That would be the natural order of things, regardless of the election. What will not change is our identity as God's beloved people, called at St. Timothy's to emulate Christ and to be a loving and caring family to the community and ourselves. That is the Mission Statement we embrace.

This past Sunday, as we celebrated the Feast of All Saints, we reflected a bit on the Saints and our identity as saints today, all of us flawed, imperfect, but given new life through Baptism. So how do we live this new life God gives us through Baptism? Jesus was asked what commandment was first of all. His answer was "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Mark 12:28-31.

What does living out our identity, and loving God and our neighbor, look like? We renewed our Baptismal Covenant, and made some promises in answer to these questions:

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

To each question we responded "**I will, with God's help.**" These promises are only possible with God's help and grace. But we can work toward these, we can commit to these, as followers of Christ.

We will continue to love and care for one another at St. Timothy's, and love and care for our neighbors in Calhoun and Gordon County. We will continue to worship together and work together and volunteer together and fellowship together. What we share in common is greater and stronger than what divides us. On Sunday, November 10th, we will sing "God himself is

with us.” Do not doubt that God is present and active in our lives. I see it whenever I am among you, and I believe it with all my heart.

Blessings,

Rev. Linda+

I recommend the following prayers from the Book of Common Prayer for your use.

For the Human Family [page 815]

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

For Social Justice [page 823]

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart [and especially the hearts of the people of this land], that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In Times of Conflict [page 824]

O God, you have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

For our Country [page 820]

Almighty God, who hast given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favor and glad to do thy will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and

tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in thee to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*