**Prayer of the Church – *Proper 8C***

*Guided by the Spirit, let us come in prayer to our Father in heaven in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Dear heavenly Father, you have freed us from the condemnation of your law, and from slavery to sin by the saving work of your Son, and by the power of the Holy Spirit. Keep us in step with the Spirit, always trusting in Christ for our salvation, rejecting sin and struggling against our sinful natures, and showing the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

*Lord, hear our prayer:* **and free us to follow Christ.**

We pray for the church throughout the world, that you would keep it in step with the Spirit in truth and love. Strengthen the resolve of all who have given up things to follow Christ, and open ears everywhere to his call.

*Lord, hear our prayer:* **and free us to follow Christ.**

We pray for the people of the world, that you would free them from hatred and violence and from every evil. Bring peace and good government where there is unrest. Move all rightful authorities to perform their duties properly in obedience to your will so that you may bless the world through them.

*Lord, hear our prayer:* **and free us to follow Christ.**

Have mercy on all who suffer oppression and injustice. Feed the hungry, house the homeless, and give worthwhile work to all who need it. Bless the work of Lutheran Community Care, and keep us in step with the Spirit by contentment with simple things and generous giving to those in need.

*Lord, hear our prayer:* **and free us to follow Christ.**

We pray for those with whom we share our daily lives. Bless them all, and keep us in step with the Spirit so we love even the unlovely. Release all bound up in sin and unbelief, and let them know the freedom and joy of Christ.

*Lord, hear our prayer:* **and free us to follow Christ.**

We pray for those in trouble or distress, the lonely, the sorrowing, the sick - especially *(insert names).* Release them from anxiety and pain, and heal them, together with others we know to be in need and whom we now name silently in our hearts... *(brief silence)*

*Lord, hear our prayer:* **and free us to follow Christ.**

Heavenly Father, when the time us right release us from the struggle of discipleship and bring us with all your saints into the freedom of everlasting life, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**