

God of the promise: we put our trust in you.

As I write this on Thursday morning, October 29th, there are 228,000 plus deaths due to Covid 19 in the United States. The grief and loss this number represents cannot be adequately put into words. One loss is one too many. 228 thousand and counting defies description.

On Sunday, November 1, we will remember those who have died in faith, from our own faith community, as well as the nation and the world. The hymns often sung at funerals ring in our ears like a familiar carol, I Know that My Redeemer Lives, Blessed Assurance, Children of the Heavenly Father. Each liturgical chant places words in our mouth, *Lord, have mercy*, when the loss we are experiencing leaves us with no words.

A favorite litany of mine at the time of death comes from the prayer service when life sustaining care is being ended. These are words we say through the tears.

With the faithful of every time and place, let us place ourselves in God's hands.

With Sarah and Abraham, who set out from home for a land unknown:
God of the promise, **we put our trust in you.**

With Moses, who prayed for his people before going up the mountain to die:
God of the promise, **we put our trust in you.**

With Ruth, who pledged faithfulness until death to her mother-in-law, Naomi:
God of the promise, **we put our trust in you.**

With the disciples, who left their nets to follow Jesus:
God of the promise, **we put our trust in you.**

With Mary the mother of Jesus, and the women who watched at the cross:
God of the promise, **we put our trust in you.**

With our Lord Jesus, who commended himself into your hands
when he breathed his last: God of the promise, **we put our trust in you.**

Our Lord, you have called your servants to ventures
of which we cannot see the ending,
by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown.
Give us faith to go out with good courage,
not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us,
your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Pastor Kristine