Lord, Protect Me From the Pandemic
Prayer by Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner

March 18, 2020

NCNW National Chaplain and President of Skinner Leadership Institute
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Almighty and awesome God, Creator of heaven and earth, thank You for Your unchanging love, your mighty acts of power and your healing virtue. Today, O God, with millions of your children afflicted and thousands dying from the invisible but devastating plague – COVID-19 - I pray your healing power over my body, that I not be afflicted by this virus.

Thank you, God for your promise that Jesus, Himself, bore my sins in his own body on the tree that I might die to sin and live to righteousness so that by his wounds, I have been healed.

By faith I claim your promise that I will prosper and be in good health even as my soul prospers. In the midst of all my distractions, anxieties, and stress about the impact of the pandemic on my life, my health, financial and the lives of those I love, help me to stop and recall words of the Psalmist, “Let all that I am praise the Lord with my whole heart, I will praise his holy name. Let that I am praise the Lord.”

Move me, O God, to turn off the continual daily stream of 24/7 bad news, leadership scandals, and political power-plays, that I might remember all the good things you do for me. And, help me God, to stop from my daily striving, quiet my heart, mind and spirit long enough, to thank you for forgiving all my sins, healing all my diseases, redeeming me from death, and crowing me with love and tender mercies. Amen!

Scripture References: 1 Peter 2.24; 3 John 2, Psalm 103.1-3 (New Living Translation)
0 Lord Our God, whose ways are perfect; whose love is unconditional, and whose supply of everything needed for healing, help, and hope never, ever runs dry, we, bow our hearts, minds, bodies and spirit before you. In this new age of the deadly coronavirus pandemic that has brought America and much of the world to a literal halt, help us to look to the hills from which comes our help, knowing that our help comes from you the Maker of heaven and earth.

With much of our nation now in quarantine help us to not let the physical distancing required to protect our health become human disconnection. Though we are required to be apart, help us to discover new ways, even virtual ways, to be together as a human community.

We praise you today 0 Lord for our wonderful leader, Dr. Cole and Director, Janis Mathis the Sister to Sister bond of National Council of Negro Women that binds us all. Let not fear, 0 Lord, not become our new way of life, for your word teaches that perfect love casts out fear.

Let not self-care not blind us from the need to care for the sickest and most vulnerable among us-the elderly especially those in nursing homes, the poor, those in already crowded prisons, in the true spirit of the Matthew 25. Let not ugly words, dear God, blame this virus on China instigate more racist attacks that have broken out against Asian people.

God of all Comfort, we implore you to comfort the hundreds who mourn the loss of loved ones to COVID-19, and provide real help for the millions displaced by an historic closure of nearly all businesses; Because Proverbs 21:1 reminds us that "the hearts of ruler is in the hand of the Lord," we call on you God to rule and reign in the hearts of congressional and executive branch leaders deliberating on measures to put money in the hands of Americans made more desperate by an enemy that would overwhelm the worlds vastest armies.

We pray to you, 0 Lord, the Great Physician, for health care workers frantically pleading for essential medical supplies while their own lives are at risk. We pray for families mourning those lost thru the virus; and those make desperate by the pandemic. We pray to You, 0 God, who promised to supply every need, for tests to be rapidly produced so those afflicted may be tested and provided care.

We pray to you, 0 Lord, Giver of every good great gifts, for the gift of governors and mayors stepping up and providing strong leadership and creative solutions to the health, wellness, and safety of those they lead.
Lord, Protect Me From the Pandemic

May 18, 2020

Prayer by Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner
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Scripture References: 1 Peter 2.24; 3 John 2, Psalm 103.1-3 (New Living Translation)
A Prayer of Mourning and Reimagined Justice for George Floyd, Ahmaud Abrey, and Breonna Taylor

JUNE 1, 2020

Prayer by Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner
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O Lord Our God, we bow before you, our Merciful Comforter, Consoler and Protector, in deep sorrow, weeping, wailing, and mourning the modern day public lynching of George Floyd, 46 year old African American father of two daughters, handcuffed, lying face down on a Minneapolis city street during an arrest, as Derek Chauvin, a white Minneapolis police officer, callously kept his knee on Floyd’s neck for almost 9 minutes snuffing out his cries of “I can’t breathe” with the camera rolling.

We cry out to you Almighty God, with unending flood of tears and broken hearts for Ahmaud Arbery, a 25-year-old Black man, jogging in his Georgia neighborhood; chased, shot down and killed by two white men, a father and son---not charged for 76 days

And, Loving, Merciful and Righteous God, we come to you in righteous indignation, intense anger, and unspeakable pain over the killing of Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old African-American woman, an emergency room technician, by Louisville, Kentucky policemen while sleeping in her bed.

These heartless deaths, like that of Emmett Till, 66 years ago; that of Rodney King over 30 years ago; and countless unarmed black people, were all killed by America’s original sin---systemic racism that is a stench in your nostrils, O Righteous God. We cry out to you, Lord, God, over the lack of concern for Black lives and stand squarely on your promise in Romans 12:19 – “Vengeance is mine, I will repay says the Lord.” We thank you for the multi-generational and multi-racial allies pleading our case before you and the authorities across the land.

God, we implore you now, be merciful to us --- step up and step in as only you can with your strong arms and cause those in leadership to stop calling for peace until they have worked to dismantle systemic injustice that snuffed out the lives of these and others of your precious children. Help us Lord, not to return to a post-pandemic “normal” mired in inequality and injustice. Guide us instead to frame a new normal of freedom and equality that affirms in the hard days ahead, that until Black lives matter --- then no lives will truly matter – for all your children matter to you. In your matchless name we pray. AMEN
A Prayer for Difference-Makers In Our Lives: Remembering Tom Skinner
Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, June 6, 2020, barbarawilliams-skinner.com

Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth, we praise you for your mighty power acts of power, and excellent greatness. Thank you for giving us leaders of excellent greatness in times past, who gave you first place in their lives and used their talent to better our world. We praise you for raising up Tom Skinner 78 years ago from humble beginnings, to become one of the most influential voices of the 20th century, even as we reflect on the many difference-makers in our lives.

With grateful hearts, we are reminded of your amazing grace in Tom Skinner’s own story of transformation from Harlem, New York gang life, to the life of one of the most powerful and passionate global messengers of Jesus’s sacrificial death and redeeming love. Lord, we praise you for empowering him, for over 30 years, to take the message of Christ’s love to every continent in the world and to more than 70 different countries. His anointed message spanned every age and cultural group as he spoke to children and young people with the same clarity that he spoke to mature adults. He spoke to white Americans with the same passion and intensity that he spoke to African Americans and Latino Americans.

You alone, Lord God, inspired Tom Skinner to advance the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven, where there is no violence, racial bigotry, or poverty. You alone, O Righteous God, raised up this global bridge builder and anointed messenger of reconciliation who dedicated his life breaking down walls dividing age, economic status, race, and religion.

In our plague-filled world today, afflicted by the virus of racial and systemic injustice, help us Lord, to reflect in our lives the lessons of those who profoundly impacted and inspired us. Empower us to seize this fleeting moment with our national conscience heightened by a spiral of police killings of unarmed Black American men and women. Move on our hearts right now that we might redouble our efforts as bridgebuilders, agents of God’s love, and advocates for justice, like the many amazing difference-makers in our lives. In the mighty and matchless name of the Lord, God Almighty. Amen.