

Prayers for Helene Anniversary

1. ***This prayer from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is intended to help Presbyterians remember and continue their mourning.*** <https://pcusa.org/news-storytelling/news/2025/8/29/prayer-disaster-assistance-marks-20th-anniversary-hurricane-katrina>

Holy and almighty God,

Draw near to all of us for whom the painful memories of Hurricane Katrina do not feel as if they occurred 20 years ago. We still mourn the thousands of lives lost directly and indirectly from the horrors of this storm. We still mourn the displacement of families and friends, the destruction of our communities and neighborhoods, and the suffering and trauma experienced by too many of your beloved people.

As we remember the failures of our levees, the delay and denial of help and resources, the violence and cruelty that unfolded in those unbearably hot days as floodwaters rose and nightmares gave way to a new dawn, look tenderly upon all the unveiled wounds of our humanity and gather the pieces of our shattered trust in the people and systems that shape our world.

Hear our prayer, O God. Do not forsake us. As the prophet Isaiah proclaims: “You will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.” Restore within us our care for our neighbors and restore our ability to behold the dignity of all people, particularly those peoples still displaced and in search of refuge and safety today. Repair all that remains unhealed and broken — the realities of poverty, racism, environmental degradation, distrust — and repair all that continues to harm and prevent the restoration of what has been lost and destroyed since Hurricane Katrina.

God of rebirth and God of wholeness, we remember with gratitude the labor of all whose compassion and love were evident in the rebuilding of each damaged home, the plates of shared meals turning once strangers into friends, and the unfolding story of hope rising out of chaos. Holy Spirit, revive us as we commemorate this tragic moment in our lives. Strengthen our commitment to bear witness to those whose lives have been ravaged by disasters, whether it happened 20 years ago or just yesterday. May we accompany one another through our darkest days, just as you accompany us. Restore our faith in the magnitude of your grace and the healing mercy of even our human efforts to repair what has been broken. Allow us to join you in restoring streets with dwellings to reflect your enduring love and abiding spirit.

In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

The Rev. Kathy Lee-Cornell is PDA Associate for National Disaster Response.

2. <https://pcusa.org/disaster-assistance/how-help/pray/hurricane>

Holy One, whose desire for all peoples is wholeness, life abundant, and peace:

Hear us as we pray in sorrow for lives lost and communities shattered by earthquakes and aftershocks

As your servant Elijah fled for his life into the wilderness and found bread for the journey, may survivors of this disaster find, in the outpouring of their neighbors' care, shelter, sustenance and companionship in the midst of horrors.

In the sheer silence that follows

When the cries for help are stilled and
the cameras and the news cycle have moved on to
another tragedy,

Calling us to bear witness
Calling us to remember
Calling us to bring ourselves to
A ministry of prayerful presence and potent generosity.
Let us have an answer when your voice inquires, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"
Let us answer with our prayers

Let us answer with generous gifts
Let us join together, an international community of healing,
To rebuild, to restore, and in time, to rejoice
That in a world that suffers, Light still shines,
And darkness and dust shall not overcome it.
In the name of the Human One we pray, Amen.
*Prayer written by Laurie A. Kraus, Coordinator, Presbyterian Disaster
Assistance, following the April 2015 earthquake in Nepal.*

3. Prayer for the 20th Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina

O God, whose command of time transcends our limited measuring of days into years:
as we remember Hurricane Katrina, the levee breaches, and the challenging aftermath
as we remember what was lost—
the lives cut short, the futures we thought we would have,
and the physical world that was destroyed or changed—
Let us also remember that you were with us:
with us on the roof, while displaced,
as we struggled to move forward,
to make decisions, to discern what to do next.
With each step, we received your grace
and in the urgency around us, we became vessels of that grace,
opening our hearts to the needs placed before us.
As we recall how near your presence was then,
move us to behold the many ways your Spirit continues
to work among us now.
On this anniversary, grant us courage to recommit ourselves
to an equitable future for our region.
Give us honesty to face the needs still before us,
and strength to meet them willingly,
so that together we may shape a thriving and joyful home
for all who, in countless ways and for all time,
call New Orleans their own.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.
- [The Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana](#)

4. **Prayer on the 15th Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina**

https://myemail.constantcontact.com/A-Prayer-on-the-15th-Anniversary-of-Hurricane-Katrina.html?soid=1102142480661&aid=zCk7XKcep_0

Holy and Mighty God,
you who spun the planets into motion
and who moved over the waters of chaos at creation,
we remember today how the waters of Hurricane Katrina overwhelmed our city 15 years ago.

We remember and we lift up to you not only the thousands of lives lost during the hurricane and in the days and weeks that followed,
but also the countless more lives who were displaced and scattered,
those who were injured and traumatized
and still bear the scars left by the storm.
Bind up these wounds and bring your healing touch as we grieve –
the dead, the lost, and the vestiges of our cultures and heritage that exist now only in memory and story.

God of resurrection,
our story reminds us of your greater story for all of creation –
that you never leave us in the depths of the tomb,
desperate and without hope,
but are continually raising us to new life,
one of a future and of abundance.

We thank you for your presence and signs of hope;
in the resiliency and grit of the people of New Orleans
in unbreakable spirit of the city
in the families that have returned and rebuilt their lives
in the many volunteers who showed up year after year, reminding us that we had not been abandoned.

We thank you for the mysterious ways your will is worked out
even in the darkest of circumstances,
and we are grateful for ways the storm changed us for the better,
showing us what love of neighbor looks like in action,
and reminding us always to never take for granted your good gifts.

God of peace and grace,
continue to guide and guard us into the future you have planned for us.
Help us to remember to always care for one another
as siblings, friends, and neighbors,
Help us to follow in your ways
to build a better city and a better society where we all can thrive,
regardless of race, class, gender, or religion.
Help us to care for the earth you have given us,
to be better stewards of the land and waters,

and to preserve the delicate balance between our human activity and the wild nature of creation.

We pray all these things, in the name of your Son, our Savior, who lives and reigns with you, and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

—*Reverend Sarah Chancellor-Watson*