

There is a time to be born and a time to die.
And this is a time to be born.
So we turn to you, God of our life,
 God of all our years,
 God of our beginnings, and our new beginnings.

Our times are in your hand.
Hear us as we pray.

For those of us who feel ourselves past the prime of our lives, remind us of the gifts we hold in our hands, waiting to be used.

For those of us whose lives are bound solely by obedience, liberate us into the freedom of the gospel.

For those of us who are shaped by cynicism, give us new birth into the innocence of children.

For those of us bound by our fear, break those bond with courage and trust.

For those of us whose guilt or shame has become the prison in which we find home, release us by the generosity of your forgiveness .

For those of us who value our own control, show us the vulnerability of the life you were willing to live *for us*.

We dare to pray that you will do for us and among us and through us what this world needs for *its* newness.

Give us the power to hear you, to take the newness you give, to move from the warmth of the womb where we are inclined to stay, and into real life.

We pray not only for ourselves, but for

 The people we love, who need healing and hope.

 And the world *you* love, that needs healing and hope.

There is a time to be born. Help us to know deeply and powerfully, that it is now. Call us to be part of your work of birthing a new world.

We pray in the name and spirit and words of Jesus, who taught us to pray in one voice:
Our Father...

Amen.

(Adapted from a prayer by Walter Brueggemann)