

# “In Cheerfulness:” A Prayer Inspired by Romans 12

by Grant Showalter-Swanson

Triune God,  
Provider of renewed life in Christ,  
Sanctifying us in the power of the Spirit,  
Thank you for community.

For the communities that you have brought together today -  
- in this space  
- in churches across the globe  
- in homes and in the streets  
- in the forests, mountains, deserts, and oceans.

Amidst these expansive communities  
You have fostered diverse gifts.  
One global and universal creation  
Made up of a proliferation  
of unique and contextual parts.

You have called us to live into the fullness of these gifts –  
In the richness of our individualities –  
As a community of God’s creation –  
In cheerfulness.

Not a cheap cheerfulness  
That promotes false facades,  
Obtuse optimism,  
And silent suffering.  
But a compassionate cheerfulness  
That allows us to engage the realities of our world  
In love:

To bless those who persecute us -  
To rejoice with those who rejoice -  
To weep with those who weep.

God,  
Known to us by the name of Love,  
Give us the strength and conviction  
To live and love in cheerfulness.

Cheerfulness which contributes  
to the tangible needs of this world:  
Feeds the hungry –

Satiates the thirsty –  
Houses the homeless –  
Provides for the poor –  
Humbles the powerful –  
Welcomes the strangers –  
Safeguards the refugees –  
Provides for the children –  
Advocates for –  
And Partners with –  
all of Creation.

For it is in this cheerfulness –  
Rooted in God's boundless love –  
That we,  
the community of creation,  
can overcome evil with good.

Amen.