



Spirit Inspired
Worship

Prayers For Those ...

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A colleague in ministry, Rev. Dr. Andrew Kukla recently wrote a prayer which has stuck with me. He calls it a prayer for those who left the church. I'd subtitle it: those we ran off from the church.

"In Acts 20 Paul gets to preaching so long a young man – Eutychus – fell asleep... fell out the window he was sitting in... and fell 3 stories to his death. Paul literally bores him to death. A friend of mine was looking at this as a story about the all the people who are "done with church" and that inspired my own 'prayer for those who left the church'.

God of new wine... and old wineskins, we pray for those...

...who have fallen away from the church,

...who rejected faith traditions,

...who are done with organized religion.

We pray for them, oh God, because we are worried about them...

...worried that we were why they are none and done.

...worried that we were more a tomb than a place of abundant life,

...worried that we alienated folks with our righteous hand-wringing,

Worried that we were so beset by worry...

....there was no Gospel to be found here.

God of Sparrow – God of floral fields –

...bury our worry in the tomb we must no longer be,

...spark our imagination and flame up our desire for your goodness,

...that our halls and hearts may be filled with a yearning to connect,

Free of shame and anxiety,

Free of cookie-cutter membership,

Free of existential wrangling to be all things...

And in that freedom may we find trust again...faith that builds us up,

Trust that where words fail your Word is still at work,

Trust that circuitous journeys find promised lands,

Trust that we are enough... you are enough... and it is good.

Oh God of all yesterdays, todays, and tomorrows,

of elder brothers and prodigals,

of unnamed statues and ordained counsels,

of tabernacle, temple, and wandering Arameans...

God may we be ok that you are at work beyond the ways we understand.

May we be grateful that you are at work beyond the ways that work for us.

And may your peace – which passes understanding, be with us always. Amen.