Dear Ones in Christ,

I greet you in the name of the One who is Love. Let us quieten our hearts to hear God’s word for us today.

Today’s Lectionary psalm in Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23

1 Praise the LORD! O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever. 2 Who can utter the mighty doings of the LORD, or declare all his praise? 3 Happy are those who observe justice, who do righteousness at all times. 4 Remember me, O LORD, when you show favor to your people; help me when you deliver them; 5 that I may see the prosperity of your chosen ones, that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation, that I may glory in your heritage. 6 Both we and our ancestors have sinned; we have committed iniquity, have done wickedly... 19 They made a calf at Horeb and worshiped a cast image. 20 They exchanged the glory of God for the image of an ox that eats grass. 21 They forgot God, their Savior, who had done great things in Egypt, 22 wondrous works in the land of Ham, and awesome deeds by the Red Sea. 23 Therefore he said he would destroy them —  had not Moses, his chosen one,      stood in the breach before him, to turn away his wrath from destroying them.

This psalm is a confession of national sin. The psalmist gives praise to the LORD then asks to be remember and to be helped before going into the confession beginning with verse 6.

The confession begins: “Both we and our ancestors have sinned; we have committed iniquity, have done wickedly.” This confession also applies to our nation. We and our ancestors have sinned in more ways than we can count. We, as a people, twisted Scriptures to justify slaughtering people and taking their land. We, as a nation, justified slavery and even being members of the KKK. Even today, people have taken sacred Scriptures out of context to justify separating families, holding children in cages, killing innocent people on public streets while protecting the assailants, and upholding those who lie to stay in power.

How easily we can read about the Israelites thinking of their sins as people and as a nation, yet if this psalm were updated none of us would be innocent. As people asked then and how why, the psalmist simply says, “They forgot God, their Savior...”

Where have we as a nation forgot God? No, it’s not about not having prayer in school or standing when saying the pledge of allegiance or having the Ten Commandments posted in every building. These things have merely become our modern day gods as excuses for putting nationalism before the one true God.

Let us take a long hard honest look at ourselves as a nation. It’s not about all the political things we can mention. It’s about the lack of morality to treat all people equality as children of God, and trying to justify our nationalism, white supremacy, bigotry, and hate.

Let us confess our sins together...

Please join me in prayer: O LORD of all nations, of all peoples, of all the earth, we confess the sinfulness of our nation, and have forgotten you. Hear our prayers...(Let us confess our national sins aloud). Forgive us, O Holy One, and please do not destroy us. In Christ’s name, we pray. Amen.