



SAMUEL DEWITT PROCTOR CONFERENCE, INC.

*With Vision...By Faith...Through Action
Strengthening Churches...Empowering Leaders...Transforming Communities*

The Flames Keep Burning A Litany of Praise and Protest Rev. Dr. Susan Smith

- L:** God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, God of Rahab and Ruth and Vashti, you who have stood with us from the beginning of time;
- P:** Lord, hear our prayer.
- L:** The arc of the universe may very well lean toward justice, but the arc is long and the struggle is never-ending;
- P:** Lord, hear our prayer.
- L:** Can you hear us, God? Can you hear your children crying? Can you hear your children with bowed knees and raised hands of praise and hope in Your sanctuaries, cry and protest the once again terror that befalls them in Your House?
- P:** From the murders of the Birmingham Four to those of the Emanuel Nine, we remember, we resist, we call upon Your Holy Name. With the church burnings of the old, those of the 1980s, and those of this time, we remember, we resist, we call upon Your Holy Name.
- L:** The blood of our children is in the streets, but You, Oh God, are our dwelling place.
- P:** Lord, in your mercy, hear us!
- L:** Can you feel the restlessness of those who seek justice? Do you hear the angry moans and can you taste the angry tears of frustration?
- P:** Lord, in your mercy, see us! Feel us!
- L:** From the beginning of time, we have known that we are fearfully and wonderfully made
- P:** We matter. All of us matter!
- L:** We know that to you, all of us are as magnificent as are the stars. When we look at the heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you put in place, we pause because we remember that you put us here as sure as you placed the stars in the heavens.
- P:** We matter. All of us matter.
- L:** The powers and principalities seek to sap our resolve, Lord. They want us to stop pushing for justice, but we will not!
- P:** We drink from the well of Your power. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength!
- L:** The powers and principalities want us to be quiet and to accept oppression. They want the wailing of the oppressed to stop.
- P:** We drink from the well of Your power. We who wait upon the Lord will keep moving and pushing for justice!
- L:** As the deer pants for streams of water, so do we pant for justice. We pant for mercy, love, justice, and dignity for all of us.
- P:** Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. We matter. All of us matter.
- L:** All of us matter; we are all your children. Black lives matter.
- ALL:** We will praise you even as we protest, as we mount up on wings as eagles and claim the victories for which we fight.