

*On August 9, 2014, Michael Brown, an unarmed teen  
was shot by police in Ferguson, Missouri.*

## **A prayer following the grand jury decision in Ferguson, Missouri, - November 24, 2014**

God our Shelter, hold us under the shelter of your wings as we bow before  
you in grief and pain for the brokenness of our world.

Some years we wonder why the Advent texts that prepare us for your  
Coming One begin with judgment, not with hope. Not this year. This year,  
we struggle with juries and justice and judgment —

What is right? What is wrong? What is fair?

What can we do, with such fear and anger and longing,  
that can bind us together, rather than further tear apart  
the fabric of our common life?

We are all too aware of our flawed humanity, and we need the hope of  
Advent: the hope that once again, as long ago, You may show up among us  
in our cities, our neighbors, and ourselves —

in the midst of civic unrest and social disorder,  
around joyful family tables at Thanksgiving,  
in the angry streets: oh, show up in our midst!

A Stranger without privilege or place: Emmanuel, God with us.

We pray for our neighbors in Ferguson, in this hard season of judgment —  
for each of them is a child made in your image.

We pray for ourselves, that this hurt will not fade from our minds before  
our hearts are broken open with Your passion for mercy, justice, and love.

Restore our hope, our heart, our sense of the possibility of holiness in your  
creation.

Fill us, your wounded, willing people, with the expectation of the coming of  
the Prince of Peace, the hope that we might nurture the healing of the  
nations, and the willingness to bear the Christ-light, even in these Advent  
days of shadow, that the peaceable kingdom for which our ancestors  
yearned and prayed might one day, some day soon, dawn among us.

In the name of the Holy Child, the coming one, Jesus, we pray. Amen.

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