

A PRAYER FOR GREENWOOD, SC
The Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting
January 31, 2014
Pastor Phil Thrailkill: Main Street UMC

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we thank you for Greenwood, for lakes and rivers and rolling hills,
a town whose wealth was built of steam locomotives and humming looms,
whose faith and character was forged on Sundays in a hundred churches.
We thank you for the smokestacks and mill villages
which stand as reminders of days now gone and never to return.
But so much was lost when the old ways died
and with them the jobs and the loyalties and sometimes even the care.
It's hard for many in our town, O Lord,
those with little wealth and many worries and fears,
in single parent homes and surrounded by drugs and violence.
On this evening of celebration and of hope for a renewed prosperity,
grant us a fresh vision of the place we love:
a city where initiative is rewarded, where entrepreneurs thrive,
and where good jobs are created for people of all and any abilities.
We thank you for the strengths we have in health care,
in our schools and colleges,
in fine government leaders,
and in the rich webs of kinship and friendship that knit us together.
We are concerned about the moral strength of our nation, our state,
ourselves, and this town where we work and play, live and die.
Men and women treat each other like playthings, and our appetites rule us.
Restore to us a vision of the dignity of every person, the necessity of self-control,
and the common good that lies beyond personal success.
Make us a place where children grow and flourish,
where nationalities and cultures enrich one another,
where new families are formed, divorces are rare,
and the elderly and their wisdom are not forgotten.
You have shown your love to us most clearly in Jesus Christ,
but we cannot have the dream we desire
unless the love he showed for God and neighbor becomes our own.
You have placed us here, and to you we turn for the life and future of this place.
Pour out your creative and compassionate Spirit upon us all,
and may this evening be marked as a new beginning and a civic rebirth.
Have mercy upon us all, and turn your blessed face in our direction. Amen.