My God, My God,

Our words escape us.

There is only shock, and grief, and anger.

We thought we had left this behind in the past,

The 16th Street Baptist Church bombing and those four little girls

We continue to remember them.

But it has happened again.

Emmanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, their pastor and eight others,

Murdered in cold blood.

My God, My God,

We have failed to stop racism and hate.

We have failed Your call to justice.

Our failures result in death.

You created us all in Your image,

But God, those of us who are white

Have distorted Your image throughout history,

Making You into our image and justifying slavery,

Apartheid and racism. We have justified hate.

We have sinned greatly, and this sin lives on.

Those of us who are not white, especially those of us who are black

Have suffered.

For hundreds of years, we have suffered.

For hundreds of years, we have been murdered.

God of Justice,

You hear the blood of the murdered cry out from the earth.

You hear the cries of those who have lost mothers and fathers, siblings and friends,

Children, even babies—You hear their cries.

You know their names.

You demand justice.

You demand an end to violence and hate.

God of Justice,

Call us who are white to acknowledge racism.

Call us who are white to repent of white supremacy,

Call us who are in positions of power and privilege

To do the hard work of dismantling racism.

This is sin, that is systemic and at work around us.

The work is upon us,

To stop racism in our families, our workplaces

And God, yes, Your churches—

Among us who are white, racism exists within.

Help us to do justice there.

Jesus Christ, our Savior

You call us to repent and sin no more.  
Call us in power to repent and turn back to You

May we fully understand Your call for justice

And work to dismantle systemic racism and oppression.

May the work of the prophets begun long ago

Continue in the work You have given us to do.

We grieve with Emmanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church.

May our tears and prayers be in solidarity,

And may they move us to act in justice

To participate in Your beloved community.

So be it. So must we do.

Amen and Amen.