Prayer Service for the Start of A New School Year

Opening Prayer:

**Leader:**
Gracious God,
We gather as a community open to Your word and Your works.
In the months ahead, during our time of seeking and learning together,
mold, shape, and transform us.

Give us a mind that engages with Your word and seeks to understand Your truth
in this complex world.
Give us ears to be attentive to Your voice in the world and to hear what we have
not heard before.
Give us eyes to see You in all of your children on this earth and to see our world
from new perspectives.
Give us a willing heart to be open to others and to nurture deep solidarity with the human community.

Readings from Scripture

**Reader:** A Reading from the Book of Wisdom: (Wisdom 6: 11-14)

Desire therefore my words; long for them and you shall be instructed.

Resplendent and unfading is Wisdom, and she is readily perceived by those who love her, and found by those who seek her.

She hastens to make herself known in anticipation of humans’ desire; they who watch for her at dawn shall not be disappointed, for they shall find her sitting by their gate.

**Reader:** A Reading from the Gospel of John: (John 8:12, 31-32)

Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Jesus then said to those Jews who believed in him, "If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."
PRAYER SERVICE

Reader: A Reading from the Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians,
(II Corinthians 8: 8, 10-14)

God is able to make every grace abundant for you, so that in all things,
always having all you need, you may have an abundance for every
good work.

The one who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will
supply and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your
righteousness.

You are being enriched in every way for all generosity, which through
us produces thanksgiving to God, for the administration of this public
service is not only supplying the needs of the holy ones but is also
overflowing in many acts of thanksgiving to God.

Reflection Questions:

- How can I practice openness this year to God’s truth and to all God’s
  children?
- In what ways can I move beyond my present way of thinking, looking,
  feeling, and being in this world to a richer and deeper way of understand-
  ing?

Prayers of Intercession:

Leader: Please respond: God of Truth, Hear Our Prayer
For a new year of possibilities and potential,

We pray to the Lord...

For the transformation of heart and mind that God call us to,

We pray to the Lord...

For the truth and wisdom God offers in abundance,

We pray to the Lord...

For new ways of seeing, hearing and responding to others,

We pray to the Lord...

For what else shall we pray? (spontaneous petitions)

Closing Prayer:

Leader: Let us Pray:
Be with us early and late, our God,
As we move through the days ahead.
Be with us to challenge us.
Be with us to guide us to learn what is difficult.
Be with us as we move from our places of comfort
To new expanses and new horizons.
Be with us as we discover and nurture solidarity with others.
Be with us, O God, early and late.

Amen.