



*Prayer by Pastor Bob Stevens at Children's
Memorial Flag Raising Ceremony, County of
Lehigh Office of Children and Youth Services*

**Almighty God, in love you have created all the people of the world
and through you all the families of the earth are blessed.**

**We give you thanks for the gift of families
as well as for friends and colleagues
who support, nurture and care for us throughout our lives.**

**We gather today mindful of children who have not been given this basic care,
and children who have suffered abuse
at the hands of those who should have been their protectors.**

**We offer our prayers in memory of Jaliel, Zameer and Arnette
for their relatives and friends who grieve their loss,
as well as for those unnamed who are victims of abuse and neglect
who even now struggle to cope and work to overcome their situations.**

**Loving God, we also gather because we are thankful for the inspiring examples
of so many families who have overcome challenges and been reunified.**

**We also are thankful for professional support,
and for family members and friends who support them as well.**

**We pray that you bless the staff of Children and Youth Services
and the Child Advocacy Center,
and all those who work for the well-being of children in our community.**

**Empower us all as we commit ourselves to changing the systems
as well as treating the symptoms in our work; and bless the children, we pray.**

Amen.

*The Rev. Bob Stevens, Zion's 'Liberty Bell' U.C.C.
April 28, 2016*