Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners:

We, the undersigned Gwinnett County clergy, community leaders, and residents, request that the Gwinnett Board of Commissioners adopt inclusive public prayer guidelines for meeting invocations.

The current practice allows individual County employees to give meeting invocations based on their own religious practices. The result has been a predominance of invocations containing language and content of one faith. During 2018, only 13 of 35 invocations (37%) could be considered non-denominational. No invocations highlighted any religion other than one faith. There is no set schedule for representatives from different faith traditions to offer the invocation, and no specific guidelines for the timing for these prayers. Lack of such schedules and guidelines results in the diverse residents of the county not being represented in the opening of public meetings and subjected to religious language that is exclusive and, potentially, isolating and spiritually abusive.

Without guidelines, Gwinnett County employees may inadvertently promote their individual faiths to the entire county at taxpayer expense. This blurs the line of separation between church and state. We ask you to honor the diversity of our county's residents and adopt inclusive invocation guidelines at public meetings. An example of guidelines designed to be used for non-denominational invocations can be viewed at Guidelines.

Signed,

Signature	*Name and Address*