

Intercessory Prayer for Sunday 30th August, 2020

God of love, justice and hope we bring our prayers before you this morning.

Our world is in trouble and we grieve. Each day we hear of further suffering of your people. Lives lost and damaged from a world pandemic, lives lost and damaged by fierce storms, fires and horrific explosions, lives lost and damaged by vicious attacks, by sudden terrible accidents, by suicide when hope is lost, of lives damaged and lost through our efforts to save them from drugs. Our world is in trouble and we grieve when people are denied their freedom, as time to meet the climate change deadline runs out, when governments rule for their own well being rather than the common good. We grieve.

But you are a God of hope and we also rejoice. We rejoice for the lives of researchers and doctors who work tirelessly to bring a vaccine to rid us of the virus, for the medical teams who put their own lives at risk to save the lives of others, we rejoice for those emergency service workers and police who rescue people from the rubble, for our Uniting Church that campaigns for social justice and delivers social welfare to many, even the social outcasts and we rejoice for people like John Falzon who strive for equality and social justice and for Greta Thunberg who continues to demonstrate for action on climate change. We give thanks for these people who bring hope and we ask your blessing upon them.

Like Moses our lives are subject to the upheaval of sudden change. Through these troubled times guide us to a better place as you guided the Israelites out of despair to the Promised Land. Be with those many organisations and individuals and with us as we struggle to make our world a better place.

We sorrow with the families in our neighbour states who have lost their elderly family members during this pandemic. We feel for them as they were unable to be with their loved ones in their precious last days. We struggle with those unable to cross borders whether for work or health. We are distressed that so many health workers have succumbed to the virus. We hold in prayer the collective suffering of all these people.

We pray for the young whose aspirations have been put on hold, we pray for those who have lost their livelihoods, for families under stress leading to depression and sometimes family violence.

We pray for those heavily burdened with the management and governance of controlling this pandemic. May they discern and choose wisely remembering always that lives matter and that inequality has added to the burden of this pandemic. Be with them as they bare the weight of their enormous responsibility.

We pray for all whose lives have been marked by tragedy, whether by accident or a deliberate act. We think especially of our New Zealand neighbours in Christchurch whose family members and friends were so viciously attacked. How can we forgive? May knowing that you are with them in their pain give them strength to continue to love, to trust to hope and forgive.

God of compassion and grace, we pray for all those who, through age and infirmity, find themselves imprisoned within the loneliness of home, watching a world outside that once had their full involvement, increasingly pass them by. Be with and bless them along with their families and carers. May they know that they are loved, still precious in Your sight.

We pray for our Presbytery and our Synod as they strive to assist congregations work through these unsettling times and for their concern for the future of Your church. We pray for our neighboring congregations, especially O'Connor and St Margaret's that they, along with us may find a path forward that is acceptable to You.

Save us O God from living in the past, and from resting on the work and witness of others. Let us catch a new vision and make a new beginning, that we may faithfully serve you in this Presbytery and in our world today.

We pray for ourselves: for those among us who are experiencing ill health, We pray for those experiencing sadness as they grieve for loved ones or family members whose lives have been turned upside down. We pray for those uncertain about their health, awaiting results of tests. Bring healing and peace to their lives.

Let's take a moment of quiet to remember all these people

And a prayer from John Birch

God of wholeness, God of Grace,
To a world that searches
you are a lamp that shines,
to a world that is hungry
you are food that sustains,
to a world that suffers

you are hope of release,
to a world that is broken
you are one who restores,
to a world full of hate
you are love that forgives,
to a world that denies
you are truth that endures.
To you we bring our thanks and praise

We end with the Lord's Prayer

Our father in heaven
Hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,

Now and for ever. Amen.

On earth as in heaven,
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver
us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours