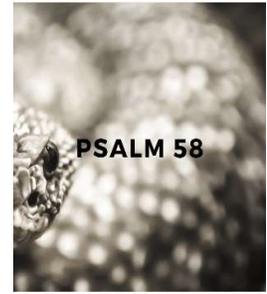




**ST NINIAN'S UNITING CHURCH**  
**SEPTEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup> 2025**  
**PRAYERS AND REFLECTION**  
**BASED ON PSALM 58**



For the director of music. To the tune of “Do Not Destroy.” Of David. A *miktam*

- <sup>1</sup> Do you rulers indeed speak justly? Do you judge people with equity?*
- <sup>2</sup> No, in your heart you devise injustice, and your hands mete out violence on the earth.*
- <sup>3</sup> Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward, spreading lies.*
- <sup>4</sup> Their venom is like the venom of a snake, like that of a cobra that has stopped its ears,*
- <sup>5</sup> that will not heed the tune of the charmer, however skillful the enchanter may be.*
- <sup>6</sup> Break the teeth in their mouths, O God; Lord, tear out the fangs of those lions!*
- <sup>7</sup> Let them vanish like water that flows away; when they draw the bow, let their arrows fall short.*
- <sup>8</sup> May they be like a slug that melts away as it moves along, like a stillborn child that never sees the sun.*
- <sup>9</sup> Before your pots can feel the heat of the thorns— whether they be green or dry—the wicked will be swept away.*
- <sup>10</sup> The righteous will be glad when they are avenged, when they dip their feet in the blood of the wicked.*
- <sup>11</sup> Then people will say, “Surely the righteous still are rewarded; surely there is a God who judges the earth.”*

### **QUIET TIME IN PRAYER**

Lord of peace and harmony, I sit with you in a time when the world is anything but peaceful where harmony and unity are very distant from each other – division is everywhere and in everything. In our time together I come to you with a humble heart seeking a peaceful time in your presence where harmony and unity come together. I pray that the Holy Spirit guides my thoughts and fills my hearts with peace that passes all understanding. May your love wash over me and quiet my mind so that I can connect deeply with you.

May I hear your whispering voice in a way that brings comfort to me so your wisdom can become known to me. May I be filled with a sense of serenity that allows me to share and reflect your peace through the words of the psalm today.

In this sacred time, may I draw closer to you, seeking your will and embracing the stillness you offer. Let your light shine within me and through me, empowering my heart to be a vessel of love and peace in a fractured world. Release me from my anxiety and let me know peace.

In your holy name I pray amen.

### **PRAYER POINTS OF THANKS**

- Thank you, Lord, for the life of friends, family, and neighbours,
- Thank you, Lord, for the seasons of each year and for the passing of yet another winter

- Thank you, Lord, for children, older and wiser people in the community, disciples, musicians, volunteers in the community and the church, maintenance workers, those who just love life because of your love and grace.

### **POINTS FOR A PRAYER OF PRAISE**

- For the opportunity to be anywhere with you
- For the scriptures which help us to understand you better and the world we share with each other
- For a variety of leaders in the church
- For a second chance

### **POINTS OF CONFESSION**

- Having a narrow perspective on what can be achieved
- Not seeing the rays of sunshine, only witnessing the dark shadows
- Not trusting that you know what you're doing and thinking I can go alone in the world
- Satisfaction in proving I'm right, and others are wrong

### **WORDS OF GRACE**

In asking your forgiveness I may know cleansing, renewal and a dislike of doing things against you. Jesus says when we confess our wrongdoing with an attitude to be sorry, we are forgiven. In Christ you are forgiven, thanks be to God, amen

### **REFLECTION**

Psalm 58 is a great reminder of the realities of justice and the consequences when we get things totally wrong. From the beginning we're confronted with the nature of injustice and the prevalence of deceit among those in power. Perhaps the following thoughts may resonate in a meaningful way for what we witness in the daily news reports.

David is addressing judges and rulers who were the perpetrators of injustices. In today's society, we have a responsibility to call to account the lawmakers and law keepers to be mindful that each decision they make or uphold will affect the lives of people in our widely diverse communities. When we see and hear people speaking up as advocates for those who are marginalized or stereotyped you are witnessing the meaning behind our psalm for today. When we become aware of corruption and injustice in our community and remain silent, we have allowed ourselves to become part of the problem.

One of the things about the Old Testament that always intrigues me is the use of imagery to say what words find difficult. Here David uses vivid imagery to describe just how destructive corruption and an absence of integrity can be. In a world where dishonesty has its own rewards, we are called to reflect on our own actions and motivations and our attempts not to follow the behaviour of others, but to remain faithful to our Christian values and belief systems.

Of course, we are very familiar with the value of remaining hopeful which comes out in this psalm despite its grim beginning. We are assured that God sees the truth and will ultimately bring justice to light. It's here that we can find our source of comfort and hope, especially when we feel overwhelmed

by the injustices surrounding us. We are encouraged to trust God's timing and willingness to put wrong things right.

On a personal level the psalm challenges us to take some time to reflect on our hearts, decisions and behaviours. Are we being honest with ourselves or taking the easier path and following the crowd? This psalm invites us to seek an inner renewal and strive for integrity in our daily lives.

As individuals interested our wellbeing, we can't ignore the fact that we are also part of a community. Today we are reminded that the actions of one can have a great impact on those around us. In our interconnected world, the injustice perpetrated by one group can affect entire communities. We are called to be stewards of justice and peace, ensuring that our actions contribute to the wellbeing of everyone.

What psalm 58 does for us is to invite us to confront the realities of our world while holding onto God's hope in God's ultimate justice. We're challenged to be part of a fresh start and to actively seek a life where the risen Christ sets our values and beliefs not just as individuals but inclusive of the community, He is our advocate and is where our hope, love and grace lies.

## **PRAYER POINTS OF INTERCESSION**

- For hearts, minds, and souls to be lifted up high above any corrupt and dishonest behaviour
- For justice to come to those who are marginalised and stereotyped
- For truth to be norm rather than the exception
- For Christ's everlasting love to be known by all people.

**'PLEASE DON'T DESTROY!' ©VR 2025**

In shadows deep where justice falters,  
Voices rise, the truth alters.  
A cry for mercy, a plea for the wise,  
In a world when righteousness often dies.

Do you speak with hearts of stone?  
While justice weeps and stands alone?  
Oh, may the scales of truth be found,  
When life's precious echoes resound.

Like serpents silence in their call,  
The wicked scheme to make us fall.  
Yet, remember, God sees all that's done,  
God's light will shine like rising sun.

In the courts of heaven, judgment waits,  
The righteous stand, while evil berates.  
When the dawn breaks and day unfolds,  
God's faithful love, a story told.

Let the just be lifted high,  
As justice flows, a river nigh.  
For in His hands, all wrongs are right,  
And darkness yields to hopeful light.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f5IGDKrWJis&list=Rdf5IGDKrWJis&start\\_radio=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f5IGDKrWJis&list=Rdf5IGDKrWJis&start_radio=1)

