

Prayers for our World and the Church

including Prayer of Confession

15th December 2024

Ps 143:1 *Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my pleas for mercy!
In Your faithfulness answer me, in Your righteousness!*

We come now to a time of prayer, to acknowledge God's greatness, His perfection, to confess our imperfection, and to bring our requests to Him Who alone is able to effect lasting change, according to His purposes for the world and for us within it.

Adoration

God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Creator of all that is, we Your creatures dare to come before You only because You are merciful, faithful and righteous. From everlasting to everlasting, You alone are God, all-powerful, all-seeing, all-holy and altogether just! If we were to rely on Your justice, we would be lost, for we are fallen, warped by sin into self-centredness, so that of ourselves we would not seek You out.

Confession

But because You are all-loving, and graciously merciful, we are not destroyed. We look back upon our week and recognise the times when we have failed, when we have not been holy as You are holy, when we have sullied the Name of Jesus our Saviour, when we have put down another person, thinking less of them and more of ourselves, when we have given in to temptation. We are ashamed of our thoughts, words and deeds and freely confess them to You now.

Thanksgiving

Yet, we thank You that You have not abandoned us to our condition but rescued us from our sin. We thank You for the special grace of salvation, for the coming of Jesus as a babe, which we remember and celebrate at this season each year.

Jesus came as the Sinless Perfect Son of God and Son of Man to take our place and suffer the penalty which we deserved, dying in our stead so we could go free.

We thank You that You raised Him up on the third day, defeating death and sin, and beginning the restoration of what was Your perfect creation. We thank You that there will be an end to sin when Jesus returns in glory and institutes the new heaven and the new earth. Thereafter, we Your redeemed people and Your restored Creation will show forth Your glory without limit, forever and ever.

Supplication: The Wider World

In the wider world, we continue to pray for the nations and the peoples at war, in the Ukraine and the Middle East in particular. We pray for the unreported ministries of Your people on the fringes of the war zones, aiding the refugees and other victims of the fighting. We remember Lazlo and Eva Mihalyi preparing to rejoin their team in Eastern Europe. Strengthen them and prepare them for the work You have called them to with the churches in that region.

We pray also for our own nation where we are ashamed of the attacks against Jewish people and places, where we used to uphold a respectful and tolerant Australian way of life. We pray that all Australians would realise what is happening, and reject the anti-Semitism on display.

... and the wider Church

We pray also for Your people in churches throughout this land. Strengthen us, keep us faithful despite the changes that have overtaken us so quickly in recent times. We thank You for the preaching of Your Word and pray for Your Truth to be heard clearly, for Your wisdom to be restored to our nation in both public arenas and in private lives.

Supplication: Ashburton

Here in Ashburton we welcome and pray for Jordan as he preaches Your Word, and we pray for our own understanding as we listen. May we be transformed by the renewing of our minds so that Your living Word goes deep into our hearts. Holy Spirit, we pray that You would change us so that we live our lives more and more in conformity to Your Word.

Finally, we pray for ourselves in the service of the Kingdom. We look forward to the Carols on the Lawn this afternoon and pray for visitors to take in the true meaning of Christmas as we celebrate the coming of Jesus rather than the shopping and feasting which is so prominent. We thank You that we are a part of the work of spreading the Good News, and pray for similar events in other places to also bring the real Good News of Your grace and favour to people everywhere. As people think of gift-giving, we pray for a realization that You have given the greatest gift of all.

In Jesus Name we pray, Amen.