# ­­Prayers by Rev. Jon Humphries

A Flourishing Society: Your Faith, Your Voice, Your Vote

Federal Election 2016

## A Place of Flourishing

Christ,

Bringer of the wellbeing and abundance of God,

May we help our nation to be a place of flourishing.

A place where people thrive

A place of freedom,

A place of shelter from the storms of life

A place of respect for creation

A place of economic justice

A place where all are homed

A place of unity in diversity

A place of community focused democracy

A place where all people lead a decent life

May your commonwealth,

The place of flourishing,

Be worked out here as it is in heaven.

Amen.



## A Bigger Place of Flourishing

### (A big prayer for a big ideal)

A better world, Christ,

It is what you call us to

It is what you ask from us

It is what you work for.

May we help our nation to work for a better world,

May we help our nation to be a place of flourishing

A place where people thrive, in all places.

A place that provides for everyone all that is necessary for life and dignity

A place where your call to love one's neighbour is given real and workable expression

A place of justice where First Peoples flourish as they once did

A place of freedom from wrongful or harmful incarceration

A place of shelter from the storms of conflict and violence

a haven for those who seek asylum and refuge from dangerous homelands

a place of care and welcome for those who suffer oppression and persecution

A place where the weak and vulnerable are supported

and uplifted into safety and wellness

A place of respect for creation where the natural environment is not merely a resource

for the benefit of human beings,

not costed and exploited

but treasured and preserved

A place of economic justice

that does not entrench and reward greed and acquisitiveness

A place of 'common-wealth' to be shared

not pockets of wealth to be hoarded

A place where all have a roof over their head

and do not struggle to afford the necessities of life

A place where people can establish a home

and build connections with loved ones and their community

A place of diversity and respect

where difference is embraced and celebrated,

A place of community-focused democracy

which works to aid, not exploit

A place where every person can access clean water, sufficient food,

education, good health and resilient and harmonious communities

A place where policies of governments work for the common good for all

not simply the good for some

A place where human rights are respected

and where hope for peace and justice is worked out in the practice of government

A place where resources are not just focused on our large population centres,

but fairly and effectively shared amongst all people

A place where people find meaningful employment

or dignity in unemployment if work is not available.

You call us to work for a better world, a place of flourishing.

May we work for flourishing in this place

In our voting

In our politics and processes

In our communities and governments

In our family and workplaces

And in all aspects of our living.

This we pray, following the way that Jesus showed us how to.

Amen.



## In Your Household, God

God,

Keeper of the house of humanity

In your household people flourish.

In your household people are safe.

In your household people are secure.

In your household people are cared for and valued.

In your household people flourish.

In your household we are called to share all we have with those most in need.

In your household we are called to share concern for the vulnerable and disenfranchised.

In your household we are called to work for a system of cooperation, justice and equity.

In your household we are called to be characterised by love and marked by generosity.

In your household we are hosted by the Christ at a communion of humanity.

In your household we are gifted by the Spirit wisdom to make a difference.

In your household we are imagined in to creative ways to work for the common good.

In your household we are part of the commonwealth of creation,

The bearers of your hospitality,

The servants of all who enter.

May we work with you to bring your household into being in our nation.

This we pray with you.

Amen.



## Keep Us Grounded Lord

Keep us grounded, Jesus,

Grounded in the values of the reign of God:

Grounded in your love,

Given to us, not only to have and hold,

But to give and share

With each other,

Even our enemy,

And especially those most in need of it in our world.

May our love be like your love,

Grounded in social justice, peace, and grace

Grounded in mercy and forgiveness

Grounded in hospitality, inclusion, connectedness and compassion

Grounded in the world and our lives

Grounded in the way of Christ

Grounded in Christ's challenge to authorities and powers to find this better way

Grounded in Christ's call for the transformation of our communities.

May we live your love

And into the ground of our living

Our values and opinions

Our daily interactions with others

Our life as communities

Our politics and advocacy

Keep us grounded, Lord,

Grounded in your love made so well known to us in Jesus.

May it be always so.

Amen.



## Faith and Politics

Christ who cared,

Political Lord,

Who took faith and politics to the cross and beyond,

May we never separate or divorce our faith from our politics,

For surely faith that does not work to shape society is dead or dying,

And politics devoid of faith is perilously at risk of corruption and petty self-interest ,

Or short-sighted, self-focused aims and objectives to the detriment of all.

May we enrich not impoverish our community life

with the values and guiding principles of our faith.

May your call to justice always move us outside of our comfort zone,

Out into the world to work for positive change and the bringing of the common good.

May our lives ever be integrated

where the public and private give authentic expression to your gospel,

Not just in word

Not just in deed

But in faithful, loving and sacrificial service

Which advocates, resists, politicks and protests

Until the poor have good news

The ethically blind can see

Those trapped by oppressive and damaging systems are set free

And the news of your salvation not only speaks of life after death,

but our love into death,

That your commonwealth of heaven,

May be on earth as you came to bring it into being.

May your will be done in us as it should be in society.

This we pray for you.

Amen.



## For Our Politicians

Christ,

The one who leads,

The one we follow

The one who commissions us into ministry

We pray for our political leaders.

Open their hearts that they may have compassion

Open their minds that they may think outside the squares and boundaries

of demarcations and sides.

Open their hands so that power is not held, but shared and used for all.

Expand their selves that they may strive for long-term betterment of this land.

Deepen their thinking, that they might be filled with the responsibility of office

and have reserves beyond the superficial and trivial.

Enrich their character that they may not be overcome

by the temptation of moral bankruptcy.

Fill them with wisdom that they may overcome ignorance.

Empower them with vision to see beyond self-interest and the next election,

towards a better future for the nation.

Widen their world, so that we might stand as a country,

as effective global citizens,

working for the common good.

Christ,

The one who leads,

The one we follow

The one who commissions us into ministry

We pray for our political leaders.

That they may find and be their best.

This we pray.

Amen.



## Freedom from Incarceration

God of all times,

We seek to pray into being justice for First Peoples.

History has led us to this point,

And much of history is lamentable,

a history of pain and hurt for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Many of us have yet to truly learn of the depth of their suffering

Many of us are yet to truly know their struggles, past and present.

But, history has led us to this present.

It is in our hands,

We have power to write marks on paper

Which choose the way forward for our nation,

Select leaders who might do the right thing,

Support a call for positive change,

And work to heal our brokenness.

God of all times,

We seek to pray into being justice for First Peoples,

For we are called in Christ to work for our common good.

Guide us to walk in the way of reconciliation,

That it might guide us towards action which brings rightness into reality.

Guide us,

Grow us,

Change and transform us,

That we might work together for a better future for all,

Where your communion of love,

Is expressed in a commonwealth of good for everyone.

God of all times,

This we seek to pray.

Amen.



## Shelter from the Storm

Dare we open our hearts' minds, Jesus,

And expose ourselves, in compassion, to the plight of the vulnerable?

Dare we risk becoming aware of the truth by shedding the delusions   
of the spin and propaganda of politics?

Dare we listen to the stories of those whose lives are so damaged by chaos and crisis,   
and risk becoming vulnerable and called to change?

Dare we pray for the protecting of refugees and asylum seekers, knowing that you may   
call us to be a part of the answer to such prayer?

Dare we walk with you on your cross-way to a point of no-return, where we cross the   
threshold of action into the workings of your commonwealth of love and grace?

Dare we not, Christ?

Dare we, who claim to follow you, choose to stand by while others suffer?

Dare we not step in as your Word calls us to,

Your Word

Which calls us to the reality of loving our neighbour

Which calls us to offer all aid within our power to the hurting and afflicted?

For, not to do so perhaps places us outside your community

And places our souls are risk.

So, move us, into the space of your compassionate justice,

Where grace and love are not just ideas or concepts,

But actions and workings which change the world for the better.

Move us through our prayer to walk your way in real and transformative ways

Move us out from our private places to speak into the public sphere

That your Word of Justice is here in this land,

Now and always.

Amen.



## For the Sake of the Planet

God of Creation,

We stand on holy ground.

We are interconnected to all things in ways beyond our understanding.

The earth is not ours to do with as we please.

Greed is not good,

And the planet pays the toll for our selfish, short-sighted ways.

May it not be too late to undo the damage we have done.

May we work for sustainable and responsible development,

Which enhances and cooperates with nature.

May we take responsibility for action as individuals and as communities.

May we not be adversaries of our planet’s wellbeing

May your Church continue to call itself and our corporations and country to account

May we strive to get the best from our politicians

May they act for environmental justice.

May we each go deeper to examine the patterns of our living and consuming \

that we might live in harmony with the ecology of creation.

We give thanks for the wisdom of First Peoples,

who walked well on this land for longer than we can remember.

May we learn from them

So that the way of Christ is not simply a religion,

But a harmonious being with all created by the Word.

Thus provoked we pray,

That you might lead us along the right path

And that we might repent of our destructive living

as we are reconciled to you, to each other and to all of creation.

May it be so.

Amen.



## Taxation for a Flourishing Society

Spirit of wisdom and change,

In this Commonwealth of Australia,

May we work to live into Jesus' vision of the commonwealth of God

What we have is not ours, but yours.

Greed is not good,

Justice for every person is.

All for one should be one for all.

The economically powerful should work for economic justice for all,

Not simply in token acts of charity,

but in the search for systemic justice and the reform of our economic systems.

May we each play our part in working for the common good.

May those who have more be helped to share with those who have not enough.

May justice follow our choices.

May our stewardship of the wealth that we hold, be used for more than ourselves.

May your way take root in this nation and guide us to right living.

This we hope for.

This we vote for.

For this we pray.

Amen.



## Affordable Housing for All

Christ,

The Son of Man who had no place to lay your head,

In your father's house there are many rooms

And you are preparing us for a place we are yet to experience.

Home for us all,

But many in our land have no room, no house, no home.

This we can change.

If we should choose.

The truth is hard to face.

We often care more for our pets than we do for the vulnerable and homeless.

We spend too easily on frivolities and too sparingly on justice.

So no one should be homeless.

Everyone should have access to affordable housing.

For we have it in our political and economic power to make this so.

May we, as individuals and as communities, take action for change.

May we advocate, campaign strive to be a hospitable nation,

A place where all are homed and can afford to live with dignity.

May we set agendas for our politicians and governments

That align with your way and shape their thinking and choosing.

May our prayers become policies

And change come for the benefit of all.

May this be fully so.

Amen.



## Embracing Our Diversity

Lord of All,

Let us learn the way of Jesus

How can we claim to love you and not love our neighbour?

How can we read the stories of your life and your consistent connection with people of different backgrounds and not think that these apply to us?

How can we ignore that Scripture consistently names peoples outside the community of faith as virtuous and righteous?

Help us to go beyond tolerance, into respect and understanding for people and their ways which may be different to our own.

Help us to remember that in naming others as 'stranger' we inherently identify with our own 'strangeness'.

Help us, Christ of community, to treat others better than we expect to be treated ourselves.

Help us to cross the boundaries of race, creed, culture, faith, age and gender

reaching out to build bridges of connectedness,

forged in understanding and commonality.

Give us the grace to disagree without hostility,

To be different without judgement ,

To be diverse, but yet united.

Drive out our fears, for fear has no place in a community of love.

May this nation work harder than it ever has before to be a place,

Where the first peoples and subsequent peoples unite

Under a vision of a flourishing Australia of justice and respect.

Show us how to lead our leaders into your vision,

That we might be united in your will.

This we pray.

Amen.



## Saving Our Democracy

Word of God,

Voice of freedom and free will,

We pray for our nation.

We lament the erosion of our democracy.

We lament the erosion of human rights.

We lament the threats to a flourishing civil society,

from groups who would seek to disrupt through fear

and governments who would entrench their power through fear,

We lament the developing threats to a free press.

We resist any shrinking to the freedom of Information.

May our nation stand for what is truly right, not simply what it justifies as right.

Empower our voices to call out the good in our society

And our leaders to a hope for peace and justice,

A flourishing society

which is strongest when our governments

respect citizens,

uphold human rights,

support rightful liberties,

enable participation for all in the processes of our democracy.

and the directions for our nation

May we honour free speech, but in a context of mutual respect.

May this be a place where the voices of prophets are heard and heeded,

not stifled and silenced.

Pull our governments constantly away from the brink of control,

where they seek to hold all power in our name and interest

and work for our best but with no consultation or accountability.

May respect blossom between individuals and communities in debates and discussions,

in the houses of government,

the streets and towns,

our homes and offices.

May the voices of the people be heard and encouraged in this land,

Whether through voting or protesting,

In the media or street corner

That we may all join in seeking wisdom,

In the Spirit of unity and for the common good.

This we give voice to in prayer.

Amen.



## Thriving Communities Beyond the Urban Fringe

God of all places,

We pray for all people,

But, as you walk with a bias to the poor and marginalised in the person of Jesus,

We remember those who are marginalised by distance and location.

Those who have reduced opportunities because they do not dwell in the hubs of population.

In this wide land and in prayer we remember them.

In compassion we hear their needs,

And we seek to understanding the effects of isolation, lack of services, loneliness, the absence of health care, the cost of living, climate change, population drift, workforce migration, commercialisation, the challenge of technology, the pressure of competition, the tangles of red tape, the speed of change and all that goes to make life harder.

In this wide land, in prayer we remember that prayer, in and of itself, is not the only answer.

Move us to action,

That we might do what we can,

Sharing our resources,

Or joining in advocacy to uphold their needs to our political leaders and governments.

In this global world and in a country with so much,

May the disadvantage of distance, not be a disabler of life for those beyond the urban fringe.

In prayer we heed your call,

To work for the common good of all people in this commonwealth we call Australia.

Amen. May it be so.

## From Poverty to Fullness of Life

God of Justice,

In Christ who cared,

You have a preferential option for the poor,

You seek justice in the world,

You challenge self-interest and acquisitiveness,

And call us to follow you in this way.

You lift us from ourselves and restore us to our potential.

May we work for communities which embody this for all.

We pray for

clean water,

essential services,

sufficient food,

equitable education,

good health,

and amenities

All of which promote dignity, self-esteem and self-care.

May we as a society work to build resilient and harmonious communities,

where all have a place and are welcome,

where all are interested in and work for each other’s wellbeing.

where all can discover pathways into a fulfilling life.

May we lead our leaders to improve the systems and processes of our society,

So that no one is marginalised,

No one is disenfranchised by institutions,

And everyone can find meaningful employment

Or dignity in unemployment if work is not available.

May we become ever more generous as a nation,

Sharing our wealth, power, influence and resources to eradicate poverty,

Not only from Australia, but the world.

May we be agents of change, not simply spectators.

May we drive and steer this towards justice,

Following your lead,

Living your way.

So may it be.

Amen



## A Decent Life

God of meaning and purpose,

In Jesus you call us to follow you in this way.

In hearing your Word we seek an ideal,

But pray that it may become a reality.

Our hope and prayer is that every person may have a decent life.

We pray for economic justice for all.

In a world of rampant capitalism,

And ever increasing consumerism,

Where the rich are getting richer

And the poor find little improvement in their standard of living,

Our systems are addictive.

They become ideological juggernauts

Which almost have a life of their own.

The want of possessions possesses us more and more

Acquisitiveness sabotages societies, relationships and wellbeing.

Help us understand that something is wrong.

Help us step back to look at ourselves and our world,

From your perspective,

Even just a little,

That we might catch a better glimpse of the truth that Christ calls us to.

In glimpsing, may we see a better way.

In seeing, may we pray for your assistance.

In praying, may we be moved into working to bring change,

Change towards better economic policy

Change towards better social policy

Change to a better society where all, not just the wealthy,

Might have a decent life,

Where might do more than subsist and survive,

But grow and flourish.

Christ,

Pray in us to help us make it so.

Amen.