

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING & PASTORAL CONCERN

Ever-living and ever-loving God, we have arrived at Easter. But it doesn't feel like Easter. We have arrived at what's supposed to be the mountain-top, but it still feels like we're near the bottom climbing upwards. We're looking for some new faith when we're steeped in doubt. We're looking for some new hope when we're struggling not to drown closer to despair. We're looking to grow in love even as we're isolated and stuck and withdrawn from the concrete humanity around us because that's the way of embodied love open for us right now.

Hear us as we pray to you in search of faith and hope and love to carry us through this Easter season which is also the season of Covid-19...

We continue to pray for all those on the front lines of the battle in hospitals, care homes, and all those providing essential services, exposed and vulnerable, overworked and exhausted...

We continue to pray for those who have lost work and business, for whom the future is uncertain...

We pray for those institutions, which include churches, whose future is uncertain as they do not have the resources necessary to survive this season longer term...

We pray for those with family who are sick, those who are elderly or have just given birth, those who cannot see a loved one and care for them as they need it...

We pray for those who are lonely, those who are bored, those who were already in crisis before this season and are now closer to the edge...

We pray for those who are stuck in homes and spaces that are not warm and loving, where there is fear and abuse and terror...

We pray for those grieving their dead, and who cannot gather and organize for a funeral...

How can Easter be something real, O God, when we are so immersed in Good Friday? How can resurrection be possible when crucifixion is all around us?... May you work in us and around us what we cannot, O God... May you heal and transform what is sick and broken right now... May you open up doors that are closed, build bridges over the walls and chasms and link hearts past the physical separation... May we honour this time by waiting upon it in quiet trust, trust that we can be part of the change in our world we want to see...

Finally, we offer special prayer requests, O God... For Barbara Thomas and others, who have lost friends and family to Covid-19... For Barbara, friend of Aloma Williams, grieving her brother Harold who has died... And we also take a moment in silence, to name before you, O God, all those we are carrying in our hearts in a personal way at this time...

We are praying for healing, O God... We are praying for resurrection and new life... We are praying for growth and blessing... And we are praying for a deeper experience of peace... And we make this our prayer, in Jesus' name... Amen.