

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING & PASTORAL CONCERN

O God, we experience your greatness in the beauty, variety and wonder of our created world. We experience the presence of Jesus Christ in gifts of healing, in actions of love and in glimpses of grace. We experience your Spirit among us in our moments of faith, and in the energy and courage we are given to do your service.

We acknowledge your presence among us, yet you know, seeing into our souls, deeper than we ourselves can see, that all is not well with us or with our world.

We live in a world of injustice, conflict and brokenness, a world in which so many of us are anxious, afraid, fearful or depressed.

A world in which it is hard to know what tomorrow will bring.

We long for light, but sometimes see only hostility, hatred and violence.

We long for peace but there are those whose lust and greed for power and control oppresses humankind.

We seek justice but often find intolerance, racism and discrimination.

Yet we hang onto the trust that you, O God, are the source of justice and mercy, your faithfulness and loving kindness are without end, and we believe your presence abides with us and with our world always.

Help us to remember this because otherwise we would sometimes be overwhelmed as we look around us.

People suffering, needing healing or lives lost because of an overwhelming and terrifying pandemic. People dying of malnutrition and neglect because of the cruelty of others.

So many maimed or killed by weapons of war and acts of hostility.

Even in our own land of plenty there is hunger and homelessness, people struggling to keep their heads above water.

Because we recognize that honest prayer can change us, we pray for openness to understanding and generous hearts, and for your Spirit to move through us, helping us to reach out in whatever ways we are able.

We pray for compassion and sensitivity; a willingness to act in whatever ways we are able. And we pray for wisdom to discern what is genuine and true from the falsity and hypocrisy which permeates our society.

Loving God, we take a moment in silence to name before you the concerns of our hearts - for our loved ones and friends and neighbours . . .

But also for those we do not know, but whose tragedies we see on our TV screens, read of in our news bulletins . . .

And for our own worries and concerns we pray, placing them in your strong and loving hands . . .

Grant us more zeal to love one another, and a deeper commitment to live as followers of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen