

Prayers of the People

(with gratitude to our intercessor this week, Kathy Sweet)

Let us offer our prayers to God the Father, and to Jesus, our Servant King who rides a donkey.

God, our Father, in this world of chaos, we pray to You with Hope. You are our Hope, Lord. We remember that you have always stepped into the midst of our chaos and you step into it with us now. We remember that exact moment when you gave Moses the Ten Commandments. We remember manna, the burning bush, the parting of the sea. We remember wine that came from water, 10 lepers who were healed. We remember you hanging on a cross, because you love us. And most of all we remember that you rose from the grave, you're alive! And as you have been throughout history, you are present with us in the midst of our current world-wide chaos. We need You, Lord.

We pray for the leaders of the world, remembering especially Justin Trudeau. Grant him strength, courage and wisdom, Lord, as he leads Canada through the pandemic. Grant him times of rest and renewal, encouragement and hope.

We pray for Christians everywhere, remembering today those in the Province of the Indian Ocean and Bishop James, the People of Durham Region and Bishop Riscylla, the homeless, under-housed and North House.

At Ascension we pray for Jack and Mary Roberts, Ian and Morag Rowan, Cathy and Bruce Ryckman, and Denis and Philippa Schmiegelow. We pray for Ruthanne and Phil and our Wardens.

Lord in Your mercy, Hear our prayer.

Lord, you took on the role of a servant when you rode a donkey into Jerusalem, and when you washed the disciple's feet. You showed us that we too should be servants. Lord, right now there are so many people in the world, and right here in Port Perry, who are risking their lives to serve us; store clerks, garbage collectors, bus drivers, cleaners, factory workers. These are the people who are often invisible to us. We often don't think of them or thank them. These people each took a job that under normal circumstances is pretty low risk. Yet suddenly in the midst of a pandemic their work is life-threatening for them. And yet, they keep working; to serve us. We know that each one of them is precious to You, Lord. And

suddenly we can see how much we've always needed them. God of Mercy, protect them.

Lord in Your mercy, Hear our prayer.

Jesus, our Chief Medical Officer of Health we acknowledge you as our supreme healer, and the One in charge of all healers. Lord, doctors and nurses, paramedics, lab, x-ray and respiratory techs, social and youth workers, and all healthcare workers need your help.

When the work won't end, and they are overwhelmed and exhausted, when it's the middle of the night and the darkness closes in, when it's more busy than they've ever seen it and then more patients come, when it's too crowded and noisy to think, when they're too hot and sweaty in gown mask and gloves, help them Lord, to perceive that they are not alone, and that You are right there with them.

Grant them strength that comes directly from you. Grant them wisdom. Grant them hope in the midst of hopelessness. Grant them cold water to drink, and healthy food. Help them to not snap at each other, grant them moments of lightness and humour to carry them through.

Lord, You fed 5,000 with a loaf of bread and two fish. By your miracle, Lord, when healthcare workers need a mask, a gown, some random piece of medical equipment, an IV bag, a piece of tape; when they reach out their hand, O Lord, by your miracle, put what they need right there. Grant them every single thing they need right when they need it.

Lord, grant them times of rest, help them to sleep deeply, and wake up refreshed and re-energized. Protect them from depression and PTSD.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

Jesus, our Family Doctor, we pray for the sick, needy and desperate of the world. We pray for those with Covid 19 and their families. Lord we pray that when they are alone and scared, you will reveal yourself to them so that they may not feel quite so alone and frightened. Surround each one with your warm, comforting, healing Light.

And we pray for those who are ill with something other than Covid 19, asking that they do not get forgotten or ignored in a health care system stretched to the limit. Grant them the care they need.

We remember especially Alice, Catherine + Megan, Christina, David, Eric, Jack, Joyce, Kerry, Lorna, Mateo, Michael, Millie, Bill, Deb, Pat, Ruthanne, Rachael, Amelia, and anyone else on our hearts named now.

Lord we pray for those feeling afraid and anxious. We pray especially for children and youth. And we ask you to guard the whole world against the ravages of PTSD.

Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

God Our Comfort, we pray for those souls throughout the world who have died, and those who face imminent death, and we pray for those who will face death in the coming days or weeks. We pray for their families.

God of mercy, comfort the dying when their loved ones can't come close, wash your great love over them in a warm blanket of comfort, Lord. Allow our prayers to surround them like a hug, and bring them gently to you in heaven for eternity.

We remember especially Catherine Midgley's cousin, Ruth Sheppard. Rest eternal grant unto her, O Lord. And let light perpetual shine upon her. May her soul and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

Lord God, it is so easy for us to get so distracted with pandemic news and statistics that we forget that every minute of every day, in the midst of tragedy and change and chaos, you pour out blessings upon us, if we choose to see them. Help us to remember to look for your blessings, Lord, and be grateful. Not that we pretend all is well when it definitely is not, but to notice and be grateful for the little blessings: the giggles of a child, the sound of birdsong, the sky paintings of purples and pink at dawn and dusk, the yummy crunch of a crisp apple. We are truly grateful, Lord. Like rainbows, these gifts show us that you have not forgotten your world.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

Jesus, our King who rides a donkey, show Your Ascension People how we, too, can serve from right here where we are. **Amen.**