

Prayers of the People- April 11, 2020

Dear Heavenly Father,

As we witness the empty tomb this sunny Easter morning we thank you God for the gift of your son Jesus Christ. With his resurrection, we know that hope lives, that death has lost its sting, and that the message of life everlasting is one we can all celebrate. This Easter where we, as members of your Church, both here on the island and elsewhere in the world, cannot meet as we usually do, we nonetheless celebrate Easter's message that Christ is risen and the Holy Spirit triumphs. We celebrate that spring is a witness to the miracle of your love as trees bud, tulips flower, lambs are born. We come before you in celebration and gratitude, God of Mercy, Hear Our Prayer.

This is a time for renewal even as we face unprecedented challenges. Because we need to stay home, let this be a time for reflection, for building relationships not only with family, friends and neighbours as we visit via the telephone or online, but also with you. Help us to feel your presence and be reassured of your faithful love as we walk through the woods, sit in our gardens and on our decks, watch the sparkle of sunshine on the ocean, and marvel at the beauty of the world around us, even as we recognize the carnage of this viral war on our population. God of Mercy, Hear Our Prayer.

If ever there was a time where your comfort and love are needed it is now. So, we ask you, God of Mercy as we pray to be with the sick and infected to heal and help sustain bodies and spirit and contain the spread of infection. We pray for our vulnerable populations: God, provide our elderly and those suffering from chronic disease. Provide for the poor. We pray for the young and the strong: God, give them the necessary caution to keep them from unwittingly spreading this disease. Inspire them to help. We pray for our scientific community, leading the charge to understand the issue and communicate its gravity: God, give them knowledge, wisdom and a persuasive voice. We pray for those with mental health challenges who feel isolated, anxious and helpless: God, provide them with every necessary support. We pray for the homeless, unable to practice the protocols of social distancing in the shelter system: Protect them from disease and provide isolation shelter. Help international travelers stuck in foreign countries, God, help them get home safely and quickly. For workers in a variety of industries facing layoff and financial hardship: God, keep them from panic, and inspire your church to generously support them. For families with young children at home for the foreseeable future: God, help mothers and fathers to partner together creatively for the care and flourishing of their children. For single mothers and fathers, grow their networks of support. And most of all, to our heroes, our frontline workers, God keep them safe and healthy. Keep their families safe and healthy. Give them compassion for everyone in their care. We pray that they will have the equipment to keep them safe and free from anxiety. And for Christians in every neighbourhood, community and city: May the Holy Spirit inspire us to pray, to give, to love, to serve, and to proclaim Jesus Christ, our savior and Lord. God of Mercy, Hear Our Prayer

Lastly we pray for our family here at Christ Church Gabriola. We pray for Karen and her Mother. We pray for Pat Armstrong who is with her father who is dying. We pray for Hiromi as she mourns her beloved Richard. We pray for all of us who are anxious about the future, who are missing our family and friends, and we pray that you give us strength to face the challenging times ahead. We name those silently or aloud who especially need your prayers. God of Mercy, Hear Our Prayer

Easter is a time of renewal, hope and faith. Help us to keep this belief alive in our bodies and souls as we soldier on in the days ahead. Amen.