

Prayers of the People- November 29, 2020

Heavenly Father,

Today, I think of all the Churches, and not just the Christian Churches but the temples, the synagogues, the mosques and even the living rooms of people who routinely worship together and seek a relationship with the divine. Precious God, be with all of those who are missing the familiar rituals, the fellowship, and the holiness of sacred spaces, whatever faith practice they live. Help us all to adjust to the new reality of worship in private spaces, somewhat alone. Help our Churches reach out to their scattered congregations through Zoom and telephone calls and the very seldom but necessary pastoral visit. As we begin the season of Advent make us grateful for what we can do together, and help us to learn to do Christmas meaningfully, if differently during this time. Gracious God, Hear our prayer.

It is a strange time and we feel the distress of the whole world uncomfortably disturbing us. We pray for those who have more difficult circumstances than we do here on Gabriola. We pray for your comforting hand, and most of all for your message of hope, the light in our darkness. As we prepare for the celebration of the birth of Christ, we are so thankful for his presence, for his life on earth that enabled him to teach us how to live a good life, and for the Holy Spirit that we sense all around us, even in these troubled times. We pray that each of us finds the time to seek the peace that comes from contemplation and prayer where we can show our gratitude for our many gifts, and pray for those who are in need. Gracious God, Hear Our Prayer

As the pandemic rages, I want to especially single out the many health care workers who must be tired, dispirited, and scared. I think of the doctors, nurses, care aides, and other support workers who see patient after patient with Covid. We know that they are at risk for the disease, at risk for burnout, at risk for unmanageable despair and anger over a situation where thoughtless human behavior puts so many people's lives at risk. Many of us might have a loved one as an essential worker either in a hospital or in another field and we take a minute to think of them, to offer a prayer for their mental and physical health, to pray for a resolution to this dilemma. Gracious God, Hear Our Prayer

Closer to home, we are filled with gratitude for what we have. Although we cannot see many people during the current "health orders", many of us have neighbours who care for us and keep in contact, we have a community that for the most part wears masks and keep us protected, we have the ocean, the woods and the fresh air that keeps our lungs and heart healthy, and we have our families and friends, including our Church family who care for each other and keep us focused on the love and caring that Christ ordained when he said, Love thy neighbor as thyself." As we begin to prepare for the Christmas season let us remember what gifts we have, and what gifts we can share with others as we work to make this a planet with a future and with love for every one of its inhabitants, love without stigma and divisiveness. Gracious God, Hear Our Prayer,

We send special prayers to Ted and Sandy, to the Grays, to Vanessa and Rick, to Mollie, and to all others who may be lonely, or sick, or in special need of your comfort. We take a moment now for us to offer our individual prayers for people experiencing grief or illness. Gracious God, Hear our prayer

Finally, we end with thankfulness. Thank you for being in our life, for the light you shine that helps us through the dark days, for the steadfastness of your love. Keep us humble, kind and patient. Gracious God, Hear our prayer.

