

Prayers of the People- December 24

Loving God,

On this, the most holy of all days, we think of that night thousands of years ago when shepherds were terrified by the appearance of angels who told them the good news of a Savior born in the city of David, We thank you, God, for the gift of your son and the joy, hope, peace, and love that he brings to all who accept him. We praise you with love and gratitude. Loving God, hear our prayer.

We know that as Mary and Joseph came to Bethlehem to be counted in the census, that it was, much like today, a very troubling time in Judea. There are so many parallels to that early Christian story and to where we find ourselves, in the year 2020 tonight. There was no room at the inn, Mary and Joseph were alone, although not quarantined or in a lockdown, but nonetheless, without the usual presence of midwives and family that normally support birth. Nonetheless, this was a holy time, a baby born who would shed light into a darkened world. With the birth of Jesus Christ the Christian church truly began. By being followers of Jesus we know there is hope for a better way of living in our world, there is joy in feeling connected to the divine, there is the peace that comes when you know you are the beloved child of God, loved unconditionally no matter what you do or think, and there is love, the love you feel for God, the love that Christ talked about when he said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all the soul, and with all thy mind. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. When your son Jesus Christ came into the world, he brought with him the promise of a fulfilled life, connected to a spirit of calmness, kindness, and compassion that is needed today as it was needed then. We pray for your Church. Loving God, hear our prayer

Over this pandemic we have prayed for the places in the world that need your help and tonight we pray for England with hopes that they can resolve their situation with the EU. We have prayed for frontline workers and tonight we pray for the doctors and nurses who so tirelessly work to minister to those with Covid even as they face the prospect of endangering their loved ones at home. We have prayed for our planet, for our community, and for all those in our Church community who are sick and grieving. Please shed the light of compassion on all those many who are suffering and lonely this Christmas. Loving God, hear our prayer.

Finally, we pray with thanks for what we have and with hope for the future. Thankful that we can be together, even if it on Zoom. Hopeful that a vaccine will help this crisis come to an end. And most of all hopeful that we have learned important lessons during this pandemic. To know what is important and what is not. To appreciate the kindness and care of strangers, to look out for each other and support our communities. We are all in this together. We pray for a stronger connection to your loving presence, Loving God, hear our prayer.

Amen