

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE, JANUARY 23, 2022

There is much wrong in our world at present. Let us still our bodies and our minds as we pray together and bring our concerns to the One, True, and Living God who hears and answers the prayers of his people.

When I say: "Open our ears, Lord", please respond with "and teach us to listen to you."

Open our ears, Lord - and teach us to listen to you.

Lord God Almighty, it is right to give you thanks and praise. So we begin by thanking you for the incredible number of blessings, privileges and opportunities that we enjoy here in Canmore and across Canada. Let us not forget that all good gifts come from you and let us also remember that while we enjoy so much, most of the world has only a small fraction of the blessings we enjoy. We are privileged indeed, and we thank you for your goodness. May your generosity to us be reflected in our generosity to others.

Open our ears, Lord - and teach us to listen to you.

We bring before you the present needs of our world. May a path to peace be found for Ukraine so that war will be prevented. We ask for your mercy and your help. And while our world continues to struggle with Covid, we pray that you will be pleased to quickly bring the pandemic to an end, sparing many lives in countries that have neither vaccines nor good health care. May we who have much be quick to help those who have little, as you have helped us.

Open our ears, Lord - and teach us to listen to you.

Father God, while we thank you for so many material benefits, we thank you most of all for salvation through faith in Jesus, and for the freedom to follow our faith and to proclaim it to others. We regret that our country has largely turned its back on you and your ways. So we pray that we may hear again your call to repentance and will turn back to the faith of our founders. We pray for your help and healing.

Open our ears, Lord - and teach us to listen to you

We thank you that we are part of your worldwide church, and we pray that you will broaden our knowledge and understanding of what you are doing around the world. Make us more aware of the needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ in other places. We pray particularly for those who are insulted and persecuted for their faith. Help them to stand firm and to bear faithful witness to Jesus. May your peace and joy sustain and encourage them.

Open our ears, Lord - and teach us to listen to you

Merciful Saviour, while we appreciate your great goodness to us, we also acknowledge that our present ways of living are unsustainable and have already done severe damage to the world you have created. As those who recognize you as Saviour and Lord, may we be among the first to change our ways and become good stewards of all that you have given us. We pray that you will open the eyes of

all nations to the urgent need to work together to ensure that our children and grandchildren may inherit a restored planet.

Open our ears, Lord - and teach us to listen to you.

Thank you for your gifts of mercy and grace, of joy and peace, but we recognize that these gifts can only be experienced in the absence unconstrained desire for more possessions, power, and privilege. We pray that we may be kept from these things and, as we walk in your ways, may your salvation become a reality around the world. We pray for countries that are ravaged by war like Yemen, Ethiopia, and Congo. We pray for failed states like Haiti, Somalia, Afghanistan, and Venezuela. We pray for the many nations whose rulers violently oppress their own citizens, places like Myanmar, Syria, and Belarus among many others. And we pray also for those places overwhelmed by natural disasters, most recently Tonga dealing with its violent volcanic eruption. We know that these things are not easily dealt with, and we continue to pray especially for our fellow believers in the Windward Isles as they continue to recover from the effects of their own eruption. In all these trying situations may their cries be heard and may help be given. We pray that you will quickly bring them relief. Open our ears, Lord - and teach us to listen to you.

Merciful God, we are saddened by the breakdown of marriages and family life in our society, by the number of single-parent families, and the astonishing rise in domestic violence. We bring before you the lies, anger, vitriolic hatred, and abuse that are so common in the social media. We acknowledge that these things are not what you want for the world. So we seek the aid of you Holy Spirit to keep our homes safe and supportive – places of refuge, rest and renewal that will sustain us through good times and bad. We pray too for help and healing for our damaged and hurting society. Open our ears, Lord - and teach us to listen to you.

We bring to your care all who are known to us who are suffering in body, mind, or estate. We ask that you will keep us alert to see how we can best help them, and we pray that you will walk with them in their distress and will quickly restore health and well-being to them. We pray particularly today for Marlis as she mourns the loss of her son. As the God of all comfort, may you be especially close to her and her family at this difficult time. Open our ears, Lord - and teach us to listen to you.

God our Father, we thank you that not even death can separate us from you and your love. We pray for those whose lives are drawing to a close. Grant that your presence will keep them strong in faith and secure in the hope of resurrection. When the time comes take them peacefully into your eternal presence. Open our ears, Lord - and teach us to listen to you.

Thank you, Lord God, that you speak to us in your written word and through your Son. Grant that we may, day by day, always walk in the light of your word and to the glory of Jesus Christ.

Merciful Father, please accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.