

Prayers of the People- September 4, 2022

When you hear the words Loving God, please reply with Hear Our Prayer.

Heavenly Father,

Today as we contemplate creation and think about stories that humans have forged to make sense of our world, I think about the cycle of seasons in this creation of yours we call home. It is the beginning of September and here in Gabriola at least, September is the month where you notice shortened days, leaves changing colour, a crisp chill in the air on your morning walks. In the world you have created for me God, autumn was my favourite time; my birthday, school beginning, a fresh class of children, new challenges, but I also recognize that in the cycle of life, autumn is the time of things dying, and as humans, maybe a time to let go of what has always been with us. Last week we celebrated the life of Sandy and Ted, and in a week it will be the anniversary of Rick's death, and I'm sure I'm not alone in thinking of many losses we all struggle with. For many, we recognize we are in the autumn of our lives, necessitating that we let go of what is becoming more difficult. In our church life, letting go of the way we've always worshipped or done things may be part of our implementation plan as we move forward, fulfilling our covenant. After autumn comes a dormant, contemplative period, and then, thank you God for rebirth in spring, and the flourishing growth of summer. God, we are grateful for your creation, your seasons and we pray for you to help us have grace and gratitude as we deal with the losses we face today. Loving God, Hear our prayer.

The world continues to be a troubling place that needs our support, either through prayers, action or sometimes just financial help. We pray for all those in the Philippines who are facing devastating floods and homelessness. We pray for those in the Ukraine who are fighting a vicious war, and we pray for Europe as it faces a winter with food insecurity and a shortage of natural gas to provide heat. We pray for all those from people who face the devastation of fire, flood and extreme weather. We are weary, somewhat confused, and we seek your wisdom and your promise of hope as we cope with a new sinister creation story; one created by climate change and the havoc that accompanies it. Loving God, Hear our prayer.

We pray for the church in the world. Help us to see what our communities need, what your purpose for us is, and give us clarity as we struggle to find ways to become more relevant in our communities and continue to be the safe church family we are so grateful to belong to. We pray for all the people in our church and our community. As some of us cope without doctors, get frightened by stories of health care scarcity, be with all of us who depend on the people who provide health care. We pray for an easing of the Covid situation, but most of all we pray for wisdom and strength as we face adversity. We take a moment now, to offer our own prayers for people who need your comfort and strength, for places in the world where we know there is suffering.....pause..... Loving God, Hear our prayer.

Despite the difficulties this world presents we are blessed with you in our lives, friends, family, and a beautiful island to call home. Help us to remember our blessings, to share our good fortune by passing on the kindness, the concern and love we receive by loving our neighbors as Jesus taught us. We thank you for the hope you give us, and the path you prepare for us to follow.

Amen.