

Prayers of the People- December 25, 2022

Heavenly Father,

Today we picture the baby Jesus, wrapped in white linens, born in a humble place to a loving Mother and father. Jesus, your son, is your promise to the world, and the light in our darkness. We thank you for his birth, his wisdom, and his sacrifice that truly changed the world. Today, as we contemplate the role of the church, we pray that the light that came into the world that Christmas Day so many years ago will always shine brightly, guiding our path, giving us hope, and helping us to forgive, love, and cherish each other as we follow his path. Loving God, hear our prayer.

Your love shines in many of our faith leaders, and we pray for all of them as they bring us together in celebration of this special day. As we worship with Karen in her last service as our minister, we thank you for bringing her very special light to Christ Church Gabriola. Her strong faith, articulate sermons, loving presence, and forward thinking leadership have helped us develop into a church family that has energy, compassion, and connection with each other and in our relationship with you. Help her light to shine brightly with her new congregation and we pray that they treasure her as we have done. Loving God, hear our prayer.

Amidst all the gingerbread, Christmas tree, gifts, and well wishes of the typical Christmas season, we think of the many who are bereft this December 25. Be with each one of those who remember better Christmas' in the past and who mourn the loss of friends, families, and homes. We especially think of those in Ukraine who face enormous challenges in this winter cold. We pray for them, hoping that they might find some warmth and comfort from the millions of people, like us, who are praying for them. Loving God, hear our prayer.

Our world is in crisis and this Christmas as Canada faces weather challenges that have caused road accidents, power outages, and airport chaos, we are reminded of how fragile our comfort really is. We have been living with a pandemic that has changed the way we live, and is really not abating. We need a light at the end of what for many has been a very dark time, and we know our best hope is in you. We pray for wisdom to know what changes will make things better, the courage to take action, and the energy to follow through with well thought out plans. We need this for our everyday living in the world of climate change and scarce resources, and we need this for our church. Loving God, hear our prayer.

Today we think of all the people we have shared this special day with, and for some of us, it is time to consider, again, our many losses. Christmas for most of us, is a day to celebrate and enjoy family, but also to mourn those who are no longer with us. For some of us, it is another day of worry as we pray for those who are sick or lonely. Be with us and those who we pray for aloud or in our heart. Loving God, hear our prayer.

We thank you for your presence and we pray for your enduring and steadfast love.

Amen.