

Prayers of the People - 22/03/2019

Great God of Salvation, we come to You now at a time of crisis for our community, our nation, our world. We have thought in this time of worship about how You broke down barriers of culture and prejudice in Your early Church as it began to grow. Rev Jan has urged us to discern from those stories, set in a different time and a different world, how we can be a transforming community of faith today. Be with us, Great God, as we set our minds on transformation.

Ah, but today, Lord, TODAY! Today we face a threat to our whole way of life from a ravaging disease which knows no barriers of culture or race. Help us to reach out across our social barriers to support each other as people, as human beings, in these dire times. And like the early church, as led by Peter, help us to discern the Spirit moving among us in this time of great change.

We ask Your blessing and guidance on our leaders and experts as we face the world-wide threat of the Coronavirus pandemic. Calm our fear, O God, of the silent invisible threat which confronts each and every one of us. In Psalm 91 we are encouraged to seek shelter in Your presence as the Almighty Deliverer from deadly pestilence. In resonance with this ancient cry we pray for Your calming presence among us at this time of mounting uncertainty.

Be with all our leaders in the Christian Church at this time, and in particular the leaders of our Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT, Simon and Jane. Be with us here at Eastwood, our Ministers and Pastors, our Church Council and our Office and all who work in Your Service here in the Eastwood community. May the Spirit guide us, support us and strengthen us in the difficult days ahead. Be with all of us as we work together as Your people, reaching out across the new social barrier of isolation to support and comfort each other.

Be with all those working to combat the crisis which is upon us at this time:

- Our National, State and Local governments and their leaders;
- Our medical community of doctors, nurses, support workers, counsellors and many others;
- Our research experts in their efforts to understand the pandemic and develop a vaccine;
- Our exemplars at all levels, showing us how to behave in a loving and supportive way in a time of great challenge;

Finally, we turn to you, Dear God, as to our loving divine parent. We remember before You those of **our dear ones, our friends and people we know who need help, comfort and protection** at this time:

- They may be mourning and sad
- They may be sick and ailing
- They may be travelling
- They may be facing a personal life crisis
- They may be depressed and anxious
- They may be setting out on a new life adventure

Be with them in your loving grace.

We name them now privately before you, dear God, in a few moments of personal silent prayer:

SILENT TIME

We end our prayers today, bonded together in meditation, in the words that Jesus gave us:

Our Father in heaven

Hallowed be your name

Your kingdom come

Your will be done on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial

And deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.