

## Prayers for 10 am St Mark's Eucharist 16 Aug 2020

*Let us pray*

As we continue to explore the theme of pilgrimage, our prayers today will reflect on our shared pilgrimage through life on this earth, and also on the inward pilgrimages we may choose to make individually or communally to the heart of our being.

We shall use the response:

*For your company on our journey*

*We give you thanks O God*

We will begin our reflections with some words by Michael Leunig, which will lead into a short shared silence:

‘May God lead us to the slow path  
To the joyous insights of the pilgrim  
Another way of knowing  
Another way of being.’

*Silence*

O God, Spirit of loving presence  
Sensed beneath our feet through the soil of the earth  
And voiced within our souls through the stillness of silence

*For your company on our journey*

*We give you thanks O God*

We ask for the grace of awareness of your presence with us on our daily pilgrimage through life – awareness of the immeasurable richness and generosity of love we experience through our families and friends, and through this community of St Mark's. We give thanks for the countless other communities and movements, worldwide and local, all working for the common good of the planet.

We pray for the Black Lives Matter movement, that all people, regardless of race, colour, sexual orientation or political views, may become a Kingdom community of love, celebrating difference and honouring the gifts each can offer to the other.

We give particular thanks for Sue, Sarah, Shan, and Cate – for their wise leadership and loving ministry during this testing journey through unprecedented times – and too, for the creative vision and technical expertise of many of the congregation, which has enabled our worship to continue online, and is now slowly enabling it to return to the church building.

O God, Spirit of loving presence  
Sensed beneath our feet through the soil of the earth  
And voiced within our souls through the stillness of silence

*For your company on the journey*

*We give you thanks O God*

‘We have forgotten who we are;  
Now the forests are dying, the creatures are disappearing, and humans are despairing  
We have forgotten who we are’.

May these words from a 30 year old United Nations environmental prayer stir us now as pilgrims on the earth at this seminal moment in history, to seek urgently the gift of remembering, and the strength and courage to acknowledge and act upon our shared responsibility for the renewal of life on our beautiful precious planet.

May we and all of humanity learn to live more simply and sustainably so that our forests, waters, soil, and plant and animal life may simply survive, and in time be nurtured back to fullness of life.

We pray for courage to sustain hope in the face of despair, to act with integrity in the face of political dissembling, and to seek wisdom and grace in all our actions taken to redress the balance between the earth and its human inhabitants.

O God, ever present Spirit of forgiveness and renewal  
Sensed beneath our feet through the soil of the earth  
And voiced within our souls through the stillness of silence

*For your company on the journey  
We give you thanks O God*

‘May the time be not distant  
When nation shall not lift up sword against nation  
Neither shall they learn war any more’

As we hear these words, our hearts yearn for the spread of peace and justice over the earth and for the earth.

We pray for everyone and everything caught up in the terrifying and indiscriminate cruelty of war.

We pray for all who are homeless: for the millions of refugees and asylum seekers fleeing war, persecution, or the effects of the climate crisis, all longing for a place to call home.

We pray for the people of Beirut suffering from the devastation wrought to their city, entirely through human corruption and greed.

As we mourn humankind’s continued inhumanity, both to humankind and to other life on the planet, we will hold a minute of silence in which to articulate in our hearts the prayers that sometimes cannot be put into words.

*Silence*

O God, Spirit of love ever present within the tragic sufferings of our world  
Still sensed beneath our feet through soil polluted by greed  
And still voiced within our souls through the clamour of warfare.

*For your company on the journey  
We give you thanks O God*

We pray for all who are unwell or suffering in mind, body or spirit. We remember all who are seriously ill with Covid-19 and for those recovering, left with long-term debilitating effects.

We pray with huge gratitude for the doctors, nurses, health workers and all who put themselves at risk for the sake of others.

May the fertile soil of human kindness in which the seeds of love and care have blossomed over the past 6 months continue to spread and flourish into the distant future, growing into gardens of healing, wholeness and beauty for generations to come.

We continue to hold in our prayers:

David, Mary, Lee, Patty, Stephen

and we pray for those who are unwell, mourning, or recovering from illness or accident:

Bas, Charlotte and her family, Ian and Anne, JCW, John, Kathleen, Liz, Lynda, Mary, Naomi, Pauline, Richard, Ted.

We remember those who have died recently in this community and beyond, thinking especially of:

Alan, Ruth, Simon, and in remembrance of all those we love but no longer see.

We pray for those who grieve the loss of their loved ones as companions on their earthly pilgrimage.

May they find comfort in your healing presence O God

Sensed in the solidity of the earth

And in the stillness of their hearts

*For your company on our journey*

*We give you thanks O God*

To conclude, the full prayer by Michael Leunig with which we began:

We pray for another way of being:  
another way of knowing.

Across the difficult terrain of our existence  
we have attempted to build a highway  
and in so doing have lost our footpath.

God lead us to our footpath:

lead us there where in simplicity

we may move at the speed of natural creatures  
and feel the earth's love beneath our feet.

Lead us there where step-by-step we may feel  
the movement of creation in our hearts.

And lead us there where side-by-side  
we may feel the embrace of the common soul.

Nothing can be loved at speed.

God lead us to the slow path

To the joyous insights of the pilgrim

Another way of knowing

Another way of being.