

Prayers Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> October

Father God as we come to you today we want to thank you for all your goodness to us your people. We thank you for the many things we take for granted every day, our health and our homes and families, for friends who care and the fellowship we experience with Christian friends. For the evidence of your creativity in the beauty we see in the changing seasons.

And yet we see and hear of so much suffering in our world whether by man's inhumanity to man, or by our selfishness in not caring for your world or natural disasters that leave us confused and we know that for many it is hard to be thankful because of their suffering.

In Psalm 88 v18 the psalmist talks about the 'darkness being my closest friend', and we know that for many this is a daily fact of life. And so we bring to you today those that we know who suffer.

**Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer**

**We pray for your church:**

We pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ who suffer because of their belief in you. Particularly today we pray for the Church of Iran members, Yasser Mossayebzadeh, (**moosey eb sade**) Saheb Fadaie and Mehdi Reza Omid (Youhan) who are facing 80 lashes each after being found guilty of drinking wine during a communion service, a gift we take so much for granted each week. All three men are converts from Islam.

We pray for all those who suffer persecution because of their faith in you and we ask that you will uphold O God all those who are persecuted or imprisoned for their beliefs. Be to them a light showing the way ahead, a rock giving them strength to stand; and a peace and the knowledge of your presence and grace.

We thank you for the staff team here and in the Hertford area, for our Bishops and Arch bishops Welby and Sentanu. For all of us whatever part we play whether seen or unseen. We thank you for Nick..... Taking our service today and we ask that you will bless and encourage him in all that he does.

We thank you especially at this time for the growth of TMM and their desire to meet to study your word. We pray for Tracy and the team, for wisdom, strength and encouragement and we pray that others may feel it in their hearts to join this growing work.

**Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer**

**We pray for our world:**

Each day we see and hear so much that leaves us feeling helpless in knowing what we can do. And yet we know that you are a God who sees and cares. Give us the will to do what we can whether by giving, serving practically or by our prayers.

We pray that you will transform the hearts of those who plan and do evil and we pray for those who serve on the frontline bringing practical help and hope to those in need.

A Christian Aid prayer:

O God, you bring hope out of emptiness, energy out of fear and new life out of grief and loss. So comfort all who have lost their homes through persecution, war, exile, or deliberate destruction. Give them security, a place to live, and neighbours they trust to be, with them, a new sign of peace to the world.

A Prayer for the People of Mosul from Samaritans Purse working in Northern Iraq:

Father of all creation, we cry out to you today for the people of Mosul. We pray for all civilians who are captive and who have suffered for so long. They have experienced so many horrific scenes and such violence. We pray today that you would bring them the freedom they desire and a passage to safety.

**Lord in your mercy,     Hear our prayer**

**We pray for ourselves:**

For those we know who may experience darkness and suffer because they are sick in body mind or spirit; we pray for all who are weighed down with the mystery of suffering. Reveal yourself to them as the God of love who bears all our sufferings.

Especially we remember.....

And in the quiet those known only to us.....

We pray for those who have died.....

And the anniversaries of those who have died at this time.....

Father we pray for all who have suffered deep loss, through death of a loved one, through desertion by parent, partner, friend or child. Come close to them in their sense of desolation and keep them from bitterness or despair. Bring them a sense of your nearness and your consolation. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Psalmist says in Psalm 18 ..... 'my God turns my darkness into light, with God's help I can advance against a troop and with my God I can scale a wall'

And we thank you as well Father for Jesus, who as it says in John, the darkness can never extinguish.

Father in heaven, you gave your Son Jesus Christ to suffering and death on the cross, and raised him to life in glory. Grant us a patient faith in time of darkness and strengthen our hearts with the knowledge of your faithful love, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Lord in your mercy,**

**Hear our prayer**

Let's close by praying for the person sitting next to us in the pew. Let us pray, as we heard in our first reading – that they will fight the good fight, that they will finish the race and that they will keep the faith.

Merciful Father

