

Sunday 21st February – First Sunday of Lent

Prayers written by Yvonne Toms

Let us pray for the church and for the world and let us thank God for his goodness.

Lord God on this first Sunday in Lent, we remember the trials and temptations of your son Jesus Christ in His journey through the wilderness, and how he triumphed over all. In our prayers we think of the difficult journeys in life encountered by so many people in the world. We pray that in their different times of need, they may find discernment to see their way ahead, and strength to overcome whatever problems they face. We pray that faith may be deepened in this period of Lent, and all may walk in the light of the Lord.

We remember all those who have helped and inspired us on our Christian journey: for the experiences that have led us to know you and to love you. Help us to be able to look at ourselves, and to recognise the need for your presence in our daily lives. As we join in this service today, may we experience a real sense of belonging to you and to each other. Bind us together, Lord, so that we can travel along life's journey helping and supporting one another, overcoming together all the trials and temptations which confront us in our daily lives. Help us to be Christ's united body to heal and reconcile, help us to share Christ's life with everyone.

Holy Lord, you made water a sign of your kingdom. Through the waters you saved Noah and his family. Through your Son, you promised forgiveness to those who are baptized. By the gift of the Spirit, we are inheritors of eternal life. When our lives are shaken by the storms and droughts of this world, remember your promise and bring us to life in you. Holy God, you make and remake us in your image; renew us now through the power of your Spirit that we may live our lives with integrity, not clinging to the ways of the world but choosing the way of your truth.

We pray for our community, our country and our world as we continue to face the Coronavirus pandemic. We pray for the sick and all who care for them, for the delivery of the vaccine programme, for the bereaved, for our health and community services, for families and individuals in isolation or shielding. We pray for all who are trying to keep essential services going including supermarket workers and suppliers. We pray for children and parents at home and children who will still be attending school provision. We pray for all who are missing activities which have been suspended. We pray for all who are in financial difficulties due to the pandemic including businesses, the unemployed and those worried about the future of their jobs and for all struggling to

support their families. We pray for those in central and local government making tough decisions and for all voluntary and community initiatives: May we all seek to serve those who are suffering, searching continually for actions and strategies which will be for the good of all, especially for the weakest and most vulnerable.

Lord we pray for the created world – your creation which is in our care. We pray for brothers and sisters who suffer from storms and droughts intensified by climate change. We pray for all species that suffer. We pray for world leaders delegated to make decisions for life. We pray that the web of life may be mended through courageous actions to limit carbon emissions. We pray for right actions for adaptation and mitigation to help our already suffering earth community. We pray that love and wisdom might inspire our actions as individuals and communities so that with integrity we may look into the eyes of brothers and sisters and truthfully say, we are doing our part to care for them and the future of the children. May your love transform us and our world with new steps toward life.

Lord, we thank you that you continue to reach out into the life of the world; that in our deepest uncertainty you bring the certainty of your love; in the place of deepest darkness, you bring your light and into our lives you bring your forgiveness and healing. We pray for all who suffer in mind, body or spirit. From our own community we pray for Jan Banks, Margaret Wilding, Ken Cathcart, Dorothy Lawrence, Hazel Chapman, Roger Le Page, Andrew, John Leaworthy, Pat Bolton and Roy Copsey.

Lord bind up our wounds and bring us back to the foot of the cross.

Loving Father, we thank you that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Whether we live or die we are yours and yours eternally. We remember before God those who have died and we pray that God's love will surround all who mourn them, now and always. We remember especially today the family and friends of Geoffrey Newbery, Vera Beckwith and Jean Harman. From our Memorial Book, we give thanks for the lives of Georgina Waughman, Derek Elston and Catherine Bishop.

Gracious God, as we remember before you those who have died, surround us and all who mourn with your strong compassion. Be gentle with us in our grief, protect us from despair, and give us grace to persevere and face the future with hope in Jesus Christ our risen Lord.

Lord God our Father as we go out into the world today we remember that your Son was tempted by the forces of evil but chose faithfulness rather than popularity, service instead of fame, sacrifice instead of power.

Let nothing disturb you, Let nothing frighten you, All things are passing away:
God never changes. Patience obtains all things Whoever has God lacks nothing;
God alone suffices.
Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour
Jesus Christ, Amen.