

# ST. PHILIP'S MILFORD PRAYER CIRCLE



## Prayers of Hope for God's Broken World

Tuesday, March 14, 2023

**“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”** (Psalm 46: 1)

*Let us centre our hearts and minds in preparation to pray for hope for God's broken world.*

Lord, we turn to you, knowing your power is infinitely stronger than our worries. Our doubts. Our struggles. The struggles of your broken world. Today and all days, Father, may we remember your promise, in Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

**ALL: Amen.**

**READER: Our Psalm today is number 34, we will read it responsively:**

- <sup>1</sup> I will extol the LORD at all times;  
**his praise will always be on my lips.**
- <sup>2</sup> I will glory in the LORD;  
**let the afflicted hear and rejoice.**
- <sup>3</sup> Glorify the LORD with me;  
**let us exalt his name together.**
- <sup>4</sup> I sought the LORD, and he answered me;  
**he delivered me from all my fears.**
- <sup>5</sup> Those who look to him are radiant;  
**their faces are never covered with shame.**
- <sup>6</sup> This poor man called, and the LORD heard him;  
**he saved him out of all his troubles.**
- <sup>7</sup> The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him,  
**and he delivers them.**
- <sup>8</sup> Taste and see that the LORD is good;  
**blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.**
- <sup>9</sup> Fear the LORD, you his holy people,  
**for those who fear him lack nothing.**
- <sup>10</sup> The lions may grow weak and hungry,  
**but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.**
- <sup>11</sup> Come, my children, listen to me;

**I will teach you the fear of the LORD.**

<sup>12</sup>Whoever of you loves life

**and desires to see many good days,**

<sup>13</sup>keep your tongue from evil

**and your lips from telling lies.**

<sup>14</sup>Turn from evil and do good;

**seek peace and pursue it.**

<sup>15</sup>The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous,

**and his ears are attentive to their cry;**

<sup>16</sup>but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil,

**to blot out their name from the earth.**

<sup>17</sup>The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them;

**he delivers them from all their troubles.**

<sup>18</sup>The LORD is close to the broken-hearted

**and saves those who are crushed in spirit.**

<sup>19</sup>The righteous person may have many troubles,

**but the LORD delivers him from them all;**

<sup>20</sup>he protects all his bones,

**not one of them will be broken.**

<sup>21</sup>Evil will slay the wicked;

**the foes of the righteous will be condemned.**

<sup>22</sup>The LORD will rescue his servants;

**no one who takes refuge in him will be condemned.**

**ALL** Hear us Lord, when we cry to you. Calm our bodies and minds with the peace which passes understanding, and make us radiant with the knowledge of your goodness, through Jesus Christ we ask this.

**AMEN**

**READER: Our Gospel today is from Matthew, Chapter 13, verses 36-43:**

**ALL: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field."

He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

"As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

This is the Gospel of Christ.

**ALL: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**READER: Lord, we uphold to you our prayers for Palestinian Christians:**

*Every week, Christians around the world join in prayer with Palestinian Christians, through the Wave of Prayers from Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center. These prayers were prepared to be shared with our community.*

Lord, we thank you for the courage and commitment of the Palestinian and Israeli women working to bring about peaceful and lasting change to their country now ravaged by violence.

Lord, in your mercy.....**Hear our Prayer**

**READER:** Lord, we pray for the families of those killed or injured recently in Huwara. We pray that calm and order may be restored by the Israeli authorities and that all the perpetrators of the violence may be held to account for their actions.

Lord, in your mercy.....**Hear our Prayer**

**READER:** Merciful Lord, we bring the family and friends of these three young children from Shuafat Camp before you. We pray for support and comfort for them as they mourn their devastating loss.

Lord, in your mercy.....**Hear our Prayer**

**READER:** Lord we pray that the Palestinian Authority will respect the right of other Palestinians to express their views without fear of censorship.

Lord, in your mercy.....**Hear our Prayer**

**READER:** Merciful and compassionate Lord, we cry out to you as we see the Israeli authorities loading heavier and heavier punitive measures on the backs of Palestinians.

Lord, in your mercy.....**Hear our Prayer**

**READER:** Lord we are saddened that a small art display in a London hospital reflecting the harsh realities of life in Gaza was removed. We pray for the children of Gaza who have only known terror, bombardment, poverty and deprivation for the past fifteen years under Israeli siege.

Lord, in your mercy.....**Hear our Prayer**

**ALL:           And we ask all this in the name of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.**

**AMEN**

**READER:     Lord, we uphold to you in prayer, the people of Myanmar:**

*Myanmar is a war-torn nation in the need of God's light. It is a country torn by natural and human-made disasters. The nation successfully elected a new government after half a century under brutal military rule, but military campaigns continue against many ethnic minorities—which make up 40 percent of the population. The Rohingya people are seeing their homes and villages destroyed, labelled a "refugee crisis" with thousands fleeing to nearby Bangladesh. Since 2011, hundreds of thousands have been displaced by the violence. Meanwhile, citizens are still recovering from the devastating effects of 2008's Cyclone Nargis, which destroyed livelihoods and killed 140,000 people, as well as more recent storms. As Myanmar struggles to rebuild and find peace, we pray for the Lord's mighty hand to bring healing and hope.*

**READER:** Lord of the heavens and the earth, we give you thanks and praise for the raising from the dead of your Son Jesus Christ, and for the never-ending love he offers us all. Grant, we pray, resurrection life to the nation and people of Myanmar, that sadness may turn into joy, aggression into amity, despair into hope, and anxiety into calm, that the people may be reconciled.

**ALL: Give peace in our time, O Lord**

**READER:** Send your Spirit, O Lord, to the people of Myanmar, that no matter what their ethnic background, their religion, their job or their status, calm heads may prevail during this time of tension. We pray that peace wins the day.

**ALL: Give peace in our time, O Lord**

**READER:** Grant wisdom and insight to the leaders of Myanmar, that they may see the common bond that makes us all your children, sisters and brothers to one another, in order that all that is done be for the common good.

**ALL: Give peace in our time, O Lord**

**READER:** We pray, Lord, that you set the feet of all to walk the way of respectful and nonviolent dialogue, and make the hands of all to labour towards constructive cooperation.

**ALL: Give peace in our time, O Lord**

**READER:** We pray especially for Archbishop Stephen Than Myint Oo, and the bishops and priests of the Anglican Church of the Province of Myanmar, as they guide at this time the people you have given them. May your Church be a blessing to the people of Myanmar.

**ALL: Give peace in our time, O Lord**

**ALL: All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, who bids us not to be afraid, and who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.**

**READER: Lord, we uphold to in prayer, children in foster care:**

*There are more children in foster care than there are foster families. There are more children awaiting adoption than there are adoptive families. There are more families in the system breaking apart than there are resources to help keep them together. We often approach overwhelming need with a commitment to try harder and do more. But what happens when we realize that our doubled-down efforts are not making half the impact that the kids in the community need us to make? It's at those times we realize we need something — or rather someone — who is much more powerful than we are to intervene. We humbly come to the God of the Universe and ask for guidance and strength for every person involved in the life of a child in foster care<sup>1</sup>.*

**READER:** Lord, we pray that all children in foster care may know they are loved by God and understand that He desires to be in relationship with them. We pray that these children experience a feeling of belonging in a foster family, a church community, or a group of friends within their community. We pray that you would lead them as they work through the hurt, that they have experienced in the past and are currently enduring.

Lord, in your mercy.....**Hear our Prayer**

**READER:** Lord, we pray that biological parents would have the strength they need to face their circumstances and that they always keep the best interests of their children in mind. We pray for the relationships between biological parents, foster parents, and the foster care system; that biological

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<sup>1</sup> Christian Alliance for Orphans

parents feel heard and that others are able to extend compassion. We pray for support to biological families to be equipped for reunification with their children.

Lord, in your mercy.....**Hear our Prayer**

**READER:** Lord, we pray for endurance and for strength for foster parents, as they invite children into their families. We pray that their communities would rise up and stand by these parents while encouraging and supporting their needs. We pray for peace and understanding in every relationship — with the foster children, with their biological children, with the biological families of the foster children, with social workers, and with their communities.

Lord, in your mercy.....**Hear our Prayer**

**READER:** Lord, we pray that potential adoptive parents listen to your direction as they pursue adoption. We pray that adoptive parents would seek your wisdom and the advice of other adoptive parents as they walk with their children through healing. We pray that communities and churches come around adoptive parents in support and encouragement.

Lord, in your mercy.....**Hear our Prayer**

**READER:** Lord, we pray for the safety and emotional well being of social workers as they come face to face with difficult situations. We pray that social workers and administrators would fight discouragement and burnout by continuously seeking and finding joy, hope, and peace. We pray they would have the eyes to see the specific needs of children in foster care and would take an active role in initiating repair of what is broken in families and in the foster care system.

Lord, in your mercy.....**Hear our Prayer**

**READER:** Lord, we pray that siblings are able to remain together while in foster care in safe and encouraging environments. We pray that more families will feel lead and prepared to adopt sibling groups. We pray for the children of foster parents respond to the needs to the kids that come in and out of their home with compassion and understanding.

Lord, in your mercy.....**Hear our Prayer**

**READER:** Lord, we pray that every youth who ages out of the foster care system will have the resources necessary to survive and to thrive as an adult living on their own. We pray that those youth would have a support system of adults in their community who will guide them through the process of aging out. We pray Lord, that you will reveal ways for the people and churches in their community to tangibly support these children who must age out of the foster care system.

Lord, we ask all this in the name of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

**ALL: AMEN.**

**READER: Lord, we uphold to you in prayer, all those seeking safety through asylum<sup>2</sup>:**

*There are many reasons why it might be too difficult or dangerous for people to stay in their own countries. People, children, flee from violence, war, hunger, extreme poverty, because of their beliefs, religion, sexual or gender orientation, possibly from the consequences of climate change or other natural disasters. For whatever the reason, they are God's people, to be protected and cared for.*

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.toronto.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Prayers-and-Worship-Resources-for-Refugee-Sunday.pdf>

God beyond borders, we bless you for strange places and different dreams, for the demands and diversity of a wider world, for the distance that lets us look back and re-evaluate, for new ground where the broken stems can take root, grow and blossom.

For this: **We thank you Lord.**

**READER:** Lord God, we bless you for the friendship of strangers, the richness of other cultures and the painful gift of freedom.

For this: **We thank you Lord.**

**READER:** Blessed are you, God beyond borders. But if we have overlooked the exiles in our midst, heightened their exclusion by our indifference, given our permission for a climate of fear, and tolerated a culture of violence.

For this: **We ask your forgiveness.**

**READER:** Lord, have mercy on us. God who takes side with justice, confront our prejudice; stretch our narrowness; sift out our laws and our lives with the penetrating insight of your Spirit until generosity is our only measure<sup>3</sup>.

**ALL: Amen.**

**READER:** God of our Wandering Ancestors, long have we known that your heart is with the refugee: that you were born into time in a family of refugees, fleeing violence in their homeland, who then gathered up their hungry child and fled into an alien country.

**READER:** Their cry, your cry, resounds through the ages: "Will you let me in?"

**READER:** Give us hearts that break open when our brothers and sisters turn to us with that same cry.

**READER:** Then surely all these things will follow: ears will no longer turn deaf to their voices. Eyes will see a moment for grace instead of a threat. Tongues will not be silenced but will instead advocate.

**READER:** And hands will reach out— working for peace in their homeland, working for justice in the lands where they seek safe haven.

**READER:** Lord, protect all refugees in their travels. May they find a friend in me and so make me worthy of the refuge I have found in you.

**ALL: Amen.**

**READER:** Lord, we remember before you the millions of people whose lives are more like yours than we can imagine or care to acknowledge: those who are without homes, who have been uprooted from their communities and countries, who have had to flee for their lives, who have left families and friends, who live precarious lives.

**READER:** Lord, we pray for your protection and care for those who suffer and must take refuge because of war, politics, natural disaster, status, race, gender, sexuality, and faith.

**READER:** Lord, we remember before you those separated from their families: children removed from their parents, siblings lost to one another, spouses and friends separated.

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<sup>3</sup> "Refugee Evensong" by Woolman House Community, Liverpool, England.

**READER:** Lord, we mourn and we are angered by the loss that marks the lives of so many: the loss of dignity, of respect, of security, of community, of family, and of stability. The loss of life of those just trying for a better future, for their family, for themselves.

**READER:** Lord, we pray for the people of this country and of the church, that we may not be indifferent or naïve, afraid or overwhelmed, discouraged or blind to hope and options to help or silent in the call for justice.

**READER:** Lord, you have made us citizens of your kingdom, open our hearts and our doors to receive the stranger, the widow and the orphan and all who are dear to you, and strengthen us to witness to the love of God for all people; and open our mouths to call for justice.

**ALL: We pray this in the name of Jesus, your son and our Saviour.**

**READER:** This *Immigrant Apostle's Creed*<sup>4</sup> was written by Rev. Jose Luis Casal, bringing to us a different point of view for a Creed we have recited for years.

I believe in Almighty God, who guided the people in exile and in exodus, the God of Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon, the God of foreigners and immigrants.

**READER:** I believe in Jesus Christ, a displaced Galilean, who was born away from his people and his home, who fled his country with his parents when his life was in danger.

**READER:** When he returned to his own country he suffered under the oppression of Pontius Pilate, the servant of a foreign power.

**READER:** Jesus was persecuted, beaten, tortured and unjustly condemned to death.

**READER:** But on the third day Jesus rose from the dead, not as a scorned foreigner but to offer us citizenship in God's kingdom.

**READER:** I believe in the Holy Spirit, the eternal immigrant from God's kingdom among us, who speaks all languages, lives in all countries, and reunites all races.

**READER:** I believe that the Church is the secure home for foreigners and for all believers.

**READER:** I believe that the communion of saints begins when we embrace all God's people in all their diversity.

**ALL: Amen.**

**READER: Lord, we uphold to you in prayer, those who have asked for our prayers;**

Almighty and everlasting God, the comfort of the sad and the strength of those who suffer, hear the prayers of your people who are ill, suffer, or are in any trouble. Grant to everyone in distress mercy, relief, and refreshment.

And we name, either silently or aloud, others we know who are in need of prayer....

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<sup>4</sup> <https://claytonfaulkner.com/2017/10/20/weekly-worship-thought-the-immigrant-apostles-creed/>

Loving God, we pray that you will comfort all who are suffering, lend skill to the hands of their healers, and bless the means used for their cure. Give them such confidence in the power of your grace, that even when they are afraid, they may put their whole trust in you. We ask this in the name of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

**ALL:**

**AMEN**

**READER: In closing, we are united in the Lord Jesus, who is the way, the truth, and the life, and who has taught us to pray, saying:**

**TOGETHER: Our Father, who art in heaven,**

**hallowed be thy name;**

**thy kingdom come;**

**thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;**

**and forgive us our trespasses**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us;**

**and lead us not into temptation,**

**but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever,**

**AMEN**