

Please stand or sit as is your custom for the Prayers of the People.

After the words Gracious Father, please answer with "Hear Our Prayer"
Heavenly Father,

In this time of Advent, as we patiently wait for the Christmas of Christ's arrival in the world, we honour all the Churches across our planet with whom we share the rituals of lighting Advent candles of Hope, Joy, Peace and Love. We thank you for our continuing faith in this Christmas story, and for the gift of your holy son in human form, born in a manger in Bethlehem. We pray for all these churches, the cathedrals with lofty choirs and sonorous pipe organs, small rooms with only a few worshippers, and our beautiful Christ Church Gabriola with its decorated window sills and pretty poinsettias, we all need your grace and your love, Gracious Father, Hear Our Prayer.

At this time of year we especially remember those whose lives are not as fortunate as our own. We pray for all those who have suffered losses through the many calamitous events that have been part of this past year, many attributable to climate change. We pray that despite the loss of homes, friends, and security, that these numerous individuals will find some hope, some peace and keep feeling the sustaining loyalty of your love and care, whatever the circumstances. We pray for their continued faith in the Christmas promise of Christ's arrival and that they might feel your constant love. Gracious Father, Hear Our Prayer.

Our world has many tensions; the ongoing drama between China and the United States, the difficulties in Britain over Brexit, the riots in Paris, France. It is a time when our leaders need courage and wisdom to deal with what is a confused and dangerous world. We pray that you might intercede with world leaders who need your message of faith, love, joy and peace. Gracious Father, Hear Our Prayer.

Today as we remember Disciples of Christ, let us remember to be disciples in our own community. Let us hold high the compassion of Christ Jesus as we do the work of the Church, to love our neighbor as our self, to read, listen and develop insight as we read the gospels, to be the hands and feet of Christ as we do our charitable giving, sing to the shut-ins, help young parents deal with anxiety in their children, feed the people who come to our Friday Lunch program, treat all with respect and live our lives with dignity. Gracious Father, Hear Our Prayer.

Although for many, Christmas is a time of joy, of gift-giving, of celebration not only of Christ's birth, but a time for families to celebrate together, for some, this Christmas and past Christmases are painful times when loneliness, the absence of a spouse, the estrangement between individuals that sometimes happens in families, makes Christmas more of a sad occasion than a happy one. We pray that you will be with all those who feel unhappy at this time, helping to envelop them in your love and assurance. We pray for all who are sick or who are awaiting medical treatment. We say their names aloud or in our heart. Gracious Father, Hear Our Prayer.

We thank you. We are grateful for your presence in our lives. We anticipate the arrival of Christmas with joy. We offer you our faith and love, Amen.