

Prayers of the People from Betty

Heavenly Father,

It is not Christ Church Gabriola with its beautiful white walls, simple cross and stained glass windows in which we worship today, but a simple place where we call on you to share your grace and wisdom with us. While we take the necessary precaution to not gather together where viruses can spread easily, help us to find the place in our world where we most feel connected to the divine. We pray to the Holy Spirit and share with you our gratitude, our love and our worries. We know that whether it is a favourite log to sit on as we breathe in ocean air and vistas, or the place on our walk where forest opens to a meadow of wildflowers, or even the deck chair on our veranda where we listen to birdsong, this can be our church, our place to worship you and pray. While we are required to be alone, let us use this time to thank you for your ever present love for us and for the world, and to ask your blessing on all of us here and in all the many places where your presence is needed.

A prayer sent us from the Diocese of New Westminster seems especially fitting for, and so we pray: Merciful God, in the stillness of our souls we listen for your voice to know again that you are God. Quiet our restless hearts with the knowledge that you are near us, keeping watch over your own. Rekindle our faith and light the lamp of hope within our hearts. Then take us by the hand into each day that lies ahead, for where you lead we can confidently go with Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Merciful God, we are facing unprecedented times and it has left many of us saddened, fearful, and confused. We pray that you will be with the many who are sick, and those whose loved ones have died in this pandemic. As countries strive to contain this virus, may you gift our leaders with foresight, knowledge and the ability to mobilize resources to where they are needed most. Please be with those who are on cruise ships, or away from home or uncertain about whether or not travel is safe, and be with the families who are unable to visit their loved ones, or come home. We pray that you will help people be patient, cope with quarantine and the loneliness and claustrophobia that may accompany that.

Although we are facing difficult times, it is also a time for us to be filled with gratitude. Let us appreciate the value of family and good neighbours and a caring community that does not take chances with our health. Help us to recognize that there may be others in need and not be afraid to reach out a helping hand. During this time, support and strengthen all those who reach out in love, concern and prayer for the sick and distressed. In their concerns and fears, may they know your peace. In their faithful serving, may they know your steadfast love. May they not grow weary or faint-hearted.

In this week's scripture readings we hear of thirst. First the thirst of the Israelites who complained about Moses who had brought them out of Egypt with no water in sight, and how the lord was able to have water come out of the rock, and then in John, about Jesus who talks to the Samaritan woman at the well about the Living Water. Help us to drink of the living water and to worship God in spirit and truth so that we might be sustained by the holy gifts of the one who gave us life. Heavenly Father, we thank you and ask for your blessing as we face our world. Help us to be grateful and hopeful in these troubled times, and be with us, now and forever,

Amen.