

# Together We Pray

SUNDAY 3 March 2024 - Third Sunday in Lent

Readings: Exodus 20:1-17; 1 Cor 1:18-25; John 2:13-22

*Let us pray for the church and for the world, giving thanks for God's goodness.*

O God, most holy and beloved,  
our Companion, our Guide upon the way,  
tāku whetū mārama i te pō / our bright evening star.

This Lent, let us encourage one another and build up life in Jesus' name. We pray for this diocese, its people and parishes; for those preparing for baptism and confirmation; and for those serving through leadership, especially Bishop Justin. We give thanks for the Rev Anashuya Fletcher, newly chosen to become assistant bishop, and we pray for her and her husband Paul and family at this transition time. We think of others taking on new roles and work, and new opportunities.

This season, we pray for those looking for forgiveness, for those misled by false gods; all who are hungry and in need,\*\* and all who seek God, more loving and real than they have known.

We have wounded your love. **O God, heal us.**  
We stumble in the darkness. **Light of the world transfigure us.**  
We forget that we are your home. **Spirit of God, dwell in us. [nzpb]**

Send us, we pray, as the light into a broken world, to love intentionally,  
to forgive frequently, and to walk gently and clear-eyed upon this good earth.\*

God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for regions devastated by violence and war in Ukraine, Russia, Gaza, Israel, the Congo, and in our own neighbourhoods and towns. We give thanks for habitats restored and people who use their experiences to help others. By simply acknowledging with a nod or kind word, may we show our faith, and make someone's day. In this new school year, we pray for the children, that their learning and play may be nurturing and safe, and their friendships sustaining. We pray for teachers in every field, for parents and their whanau. We pray for wise decisions in Aotearoa.

A Lenten Blessing:  
May you heal, from the things you don't talk about.  
May you find peace, with the things you bottle inside.  
May you forgive yourself, for what you have done and failed to do.  
May the Holy One surround and carry you today and every day.\*

God of mercy, **hear our prayer.** Amen.

*Sources: NRSV Bible; NZ Prayer Book; \*Bishop Deon K. Johnson; \*\*Prayers of the Church of England; NEB Starr.*