

### A prayerful response to COVID19

Support for each other whilst social interaction is discouraged and looking after ourselves whilst isolating

I heard some great advice on BBC news yesterday, a visiting Doctor suggested that we all need to do three things every day

- **Something for the mind** – anxiety can be crippling, if you have worries write them down, journaling can be a good way of monitoring our emotions and enabling us to recognise how they change.
- **Something for the body** – exercise is essential for our wellbeing, if you are not showing any symptoms you can still walk and enjoy this stunning part of the world. If you are fortunate enough to have a garden get into it, prune, trim or simply enjoy! There are many simple armchair exercises that the elderly and infirm can enjoy.
- **Something for the heart** – contact a friend or family member, it is essential to speak to others, emails and texts can only go so far! If you have a computer, tablet or smart phone there are many ways to video call, there is no medicine like seeing the smile of a loved one for lifting our spirits.

As Christians we would add a fourth **Something for the soul!**

As a circuit we are committed to engendering a spirit of connectedness, there will be weekly resources such as 'thought for the week' and prayerful reflections, these will be distributed via the website, email and facebook, so if you know someone who is unable to access this media please consider printing things off and popping through their door.

Let us continue to look out for each other, pray for those who are anxious and share the Love of God in a spirit of 'Holy Calm'.

Below are a number of prayers from different sources for your use.

Love and Peace,

Jane (Deacon Jane Mills)

#### **A Prayer by the President of the Methodist Conference:**

Loving God

If we are ill, strengthen us

If we are tired: Fortify our spirits

If we are anxious: Help us to consider the lilies of the field and the birds of the air.

Help us not to stockpile treasures from supermarkets in the barns of our larders!

Don't let fear cause us to overlook the needs of others more vulnerable than ourselves

Fix our eyes on your story and our hearts on your grace

Help us always to hold fast to the good and see the good in others.

And remember there is just one world, one hope,

One everlasting love, with baskets of bread for everyone.

In Jesus we make our prayer,

The one who suffered, died and was raised to new life,

In whom we trust, these days and all days. Amen

### **Prayers from World Vision**

Pray for people who are infected with COVID-19 or facing quarantine.

Jesus, during Your ministry on Earth You showed Your power and caring by healing people of all ages and stations of life from physical, mental, and spiritual ailments. Be present now to people who need Your loving touch because of COVID-19. May they feel Your power of healing through the care of doctors and nurses. Take away the fear, anxiety, and feelings of isolation from people receiving treatment or under quarantine. Give them a sense of purpose in pursuing health and protecting others from exposure to the disease. Protect their families and friends and bring peace to all who love them.

Pray for people at higher risk of developing the disease.

Dear Lord, we lift to You our concern for people who are more likely than others to become severely ill from COVID-19 — the elderly and people with chronic health conditions. Protect them from harm and be their comfort in this time of uncertainty.

Pray for medical professionals, caregivers, researchers, and leaders responsible for decisions about fighting the new coronavirus.

Father, we seek Your wisdom daily. Be with people making decisions that affect the lives and futures of our families, communities, countries, and the wider world. Inspire and invigorate people developing better tests to diagnose the virus, vaccines to prevent it, and protocols and communication to eliminate the disease's spread. May truth and empathy be the touchstones of people setting policies for our protection.

*He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, as you help us by your prayers ... 2 Corinthians 1:10-11 NIV*

### **A prayer during times of COVID-19 by the Right Rev. Richard Bott, The United Church of Canada**

In this time of COVID-19, we pray:

When we aren't sure, God, help us be calm;  
when information comes from all sides, correct and not, help us to discern;  
when fear makes it hard to breathe, and anxiety seems to be the order of the day, slow us down, God;  
help us to reach out with our hearts, when we can't touch with our hands;  
help us to be socially connected, when we have to be socially distant;  
help us to love as perfectly as we can, knowing that "perfect love casts out all fear."

For the doctors, we pray,  
for the nurses, we pray,  
for the technicians and the janitors, the aides and the caregivers, we pray,  
for the researchers and theorists, the epidemiologists and investigators, we pray,  
for those who are sick, and those who are grieving, we pray,  
for all who are affected, all around the world...  
we pray for safety, for health, for wholeness.

May we feed the hungry,  
give drink to the thirsty,  
clothe the naked and house those without homes;  
may we walk with those who feel they are alone,  
and may we do all that we can to heal the sick—  
in spite of the epidemic,  
in spite of the fear.  
Help us, O God, that we might help each other.

In the love of the Creator,  
in the name of the Healer,  
in the life of the Holy Spirit that is in all and with all, we pray.  
May it be so.

### **Prayers from the Presbyterian Church**

Lord, in your mercy you healed those suffering in body, mind or spirit. We cry out to you now on behalf of those infected by the coronavirus. Heal the sick, and bind up the broken-hearted who grieve those felled by this illness.

As both infection and fear spread, we ask for courage and protection for healthcare workers risking their own well-being for the sake of others. We pray wisdom for government officials and those in decision-making positions. May they rightly discern what needs to be done to treat those already infected and prevent others from falling sick.

We know there are those in quarantine, afraid they might be exposed to illness, wondering when they will return to their normal lives, anxious about what might happen next. Comfort them with your peace that passes understanding and grant them patience during this liminal and frightening season.

Lord of all, we are intimately connected to one another no matter where we reside on the earth, and so we plead for healing, good healthcare, relief and wholeness for our siblings in China and in all the places where this virus has made its appearance. May our collective care, effort, resources and love bring an end to this epidemic. Amen.

### **Prayers from the Church of England**

Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress.  
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may rejoice in your comfort, knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord Jesus Christ, you taught us to love our neighbour,  
and to care for those in need as if we were caring for you.  
In this time of anxiety, give us strength to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick,  
and to assure the isolated of our love, and your love,  
for your name's sake. **Amen.**

God of compassion, be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.  
In their loneliness, be their consolation;  
in their anxiety, be their hope;  
in their darkness, be their light;  
through him who suffered alone on the cross, but reigns with you in glory,  
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Gracious God,  
give skill, sympathy and resilience to all who are caring for the sick,  
and your wisdom to those searching for a cure.  
Strengthen them with your Spirit, that through their work many will be restored to health;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **A child's prayer for when a friend is ill**

Dear God, (*name of friend*) is ill.  
They are not allowed to go to school or come over to play.  
I'm sad because I miss them.  
They must be feeling miserable and lonely as well.  
Please be close to them.  
Please be with the people who are looking after them.  
Please help them to get better and to know that you love them.  
**Amen.**

## **Intercessions**

Let us pray to God, who alone makes us dwell in safety:

For all who are affected by coronavirus, through illness or isolation or anxiety,  
that they may find relief and recovery: Lord, hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For those who are guiding our nation at this time, and shaping national policies,  
that they may make wise decisions: Lord, hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For doctors, nurses and medical researchers,  
that through their skill and insights many will be restored to health:  
Lord, hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For the vulnerable and the fearful, for the gravely ill and the dying,  
that they may know your comfort and peace: Lord, hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,  
to the mercy and protection of God. Merciful Father,  
**accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Let us pray to the Lord, who is our refuge and stronghold.

For the health and well-being of our nation,  
that all who are fearful and anxious may be at peace and free from worry:  
Lord, hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For the isolated and housebound,  
that we may be alert to their needs, and care for them in their vulnerability:  
Lord, hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For our homes and families, our schools and young people,  
and all in any kind of need or distress:  
Lord, hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For a blessing on our local community,  
that our neighbourhoods may be places of trust and friendship,  
where all are known and cared for:  
Lord, hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,  
to the mercy and protection of God.  
Merciful Father,  
**accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

We are not people of fear: we are people of courage.

We are not people who protect our own safety:  
we are people who protect our neighbours' safety.

We are not people of greed: we are people of generosity.

We are your people God, giving and loving,  
wherever we are, whatever it costs, for as long as it takes, wherever you call us.

*Barbara Glasson, President of the Methodist Conference*