

September Prayers

Back-to-school

God of life and love, we thank you for the new beginning that each day brings. We pray for the young people who will return to school, for those who are moving school, and those who are attending school for the first time. Eclipse anxiety with excitement, that education may be a truly liberating and joyful experience.

We pray for parents who breathe a deep sigh of late summer relief, and for parents who worry on their child's behalf. Awaken in them an awareness of the calling of parenthood, and encourage them through the highs and lows of their privileged ministry.

We pray for young people preparing to leave for university. Equip them with all that is needed on the road to independence. As their parents face a miniature grief, comfort them with the assurance of your presence with them and their children.

We pray for all who long for a new start. Reveal yourself to them as the God whose mercy is new every morning. You who have promised to restore the years the locusts have eaten, restore to us this day a deep love for you, a renewed desire to please you, a passion to receive the future you have planned for us.

Mk 1:21-39

Lord, in our busy world, where we rush through our days and hurry through our lives, teach us how to stop.

Lord, we fear stopping, facing who we are, when we are afraid to look in the mirror and be confronted by who we are, teach us how to stop.

For those who have heard nothing but small arms fire, airstrikes, missiles, for those who have heard the terrible noise of war, in Libya, in Israel, in Palestine, in places we hear little of, Lord may the guns stop.

Lord, in the noise of the media, in their attempts and ours, to divert blame and guilt away from ourselves and onto others, whether those others are hoodies or looters, or bankers or politicians, or Moslems or Anglicans or Baptists – Lord when we seek to divert blame away from ourselves and onto others, show us how to stop and learn who we are in relation to you.

Lord, in our rush to justify ourselves, advance ourselves, promote ourselves, show us how to stop, to look in the mirror, to see who we are.

Lord of the Sabbath, show us anew what it means to stop.

Move us again as a church, to be reoriented within your purposes, to be genuinely confronted with who you really are, and who we really are in relation to you.

And so, by your grace, make us ambassadors for Christ, heralds of the Gospel, and mediators of the love of Christ, in this place.

Harvest / Parable of the Sower:

Lord, it seems that throughout the whole history of the Christian church, the church has tried to announce good news for the poor and freedom for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, trying to proclaim the Lord's favour.

But after two thousand years, there is still no harvest. Children still starve, wars are still fought, power still corrupts, injustice still reigns.

And we want a harvest, we want to see progress, success, achievement, but we still wait for the harvest.

We long for justice, just as the people did for a thousand years. We want you to call time on suffering.

But Lord, free us from inauthentic solutions... Free us from seeing you as the wizard who waves a wand and fixes problems.

Show us how to be involved in what you are doing in the world. To discern you at work in the world.

Lord, we see children dying of preventable disease, free us from indifference and despair, open our eyes again to the calling you offer to us here and now, even as we cry for justice.

When we see wealthy and powerful people, seeing trade laws, making financial decisions to protect the powerful at the expense of the poor, save us from indifference and save us from despair. To hear your voice and your command as it comes to us in the world, here and now.

When we feel, within the church, that things could be so much better, that we have not achieved our potential,, when our lives contribute to the injustice of the world even as we ask for justice, open us again to your word, as it comes to us, in the world, here and now.

Sow your seed in our lives, in our church, in our world, and by your grace, open our eyes to the harvest you reap here and now, the secret growth of the seed, here and now, the evidence and the beauty and the freedom, of your kingdom coming, here and now.

Harvest Hymn To the tune of 'Love divine, all loves excelling'.

God of harvest, God of sharing,
God who meets us in our need.
Fill us with a love of caring,
Save us from our hidden greed.
Jesus gave away his glory
Help your people do the same,
Help your people live his story,
Sharing riches in his name.

God of harvest, God of sharing,
Gave a world for all to share.
Yet we burn our planet's riches,
For our comfort, without care.
Living lives that sicken creation,
Farms turned into barren land,
Hungry ones, made voiceless, helpless,
Bread is taken from their hand.

God of harvest, God of sharing,
Gave good news for us to share.
Gives, and helps us give to others,
Love and friendship, time and care.
By your Spirit, by our living,
Help us all your truth proclaim,
In our hearing, in our helping,
Offer love in Jesus' name.

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