

Prayers of Intercession Sunday 31st December 2023

For our prayers of intercession this morning, I thought we could use some words of an old hymn to help guide our thoughts, so let us pray:

*Another year is dawning!
Dear Master, let it be,
in working or in waiting,
another year for thee;*

Loving God, as we approach another New Year, (and as we have already prayed), we re-dedicate our lives to you, and in whatever situations the New Year brings us, whatever changes may lay ahead – in working or in waiting - we pray that you will help us to keep our focus on you and your will for our lives.

*Another year of mercies,
of faithfulness and grace;
another year of gladness
in the shining of thy face;*

In a world of turmoil, of wars, of refugees fleeing persecution, of economic uncertainty and the challenge of climate crisis, we sometimes struggle to see evidence of mercy, faithfulness or grace. But, Lord God, it is in these situations more than ever, we need to hold on to our faith, and declare anew that you are a God of mercy, a God of faithfulness, and above all, a God of grace, and that however desperate the situation you still love the world and all its people. We pray for the governments and leaders of the world, that they will seek to further your will and purposes and not their own narrow interests.

*Another year of progress,
another year of praise,
another year of proving
thy presence all the days.*

Lord, in an ever-changing world – sometimes for the better, sometimes for the worse, we pray that as a church we might be a church of progress, moving forwards, not content with standing still or looking back. We pray that in our worship we will find new ways of drawing closer to you and closer to each other. And that we can look forward to another year of praising you and knowing your presence with us in our worship and fellowship.

*Another year of service,
of witness for thy love;
another year of training
for holier work above.*

Lord, we thank you for the work that goes on in this church serving you and witnessing to your love: the Thursday drop-in, the International Friendship centre, the Monday 'Stay and Play', the Wednesday Sparklers, Sprouts on a Sunday meeting out the back as we meet in here. We pray for all those who attend these groups, that we can help meet at least some of their needs, and that they do indeed see your love at work. We pray for all the helpers and leaders of these groups and we give thanks for all that they do in your service. Grant them fresh enthusiasm for your work and strengthen them.

*Another year is dawning!
Dear Master, let it be
on earth, or else in heaven,
another year for thee.*

Finally, we pray for ourselves. We pray for those among us for whom this has been a difficult year, through bereavement, illness, family or money problems. We pray that the New Year will bring wholeness and healing to their situation. We pray for those where the New Year will bring change, we pray for strength and guidance. We pray for those in our fellowship caring for loved ones and we pray for those who are finding life difficult in whatever way. We pray that they will experience your loving hand upon them. And we pray that as a church fellowship we can do everything we can to ease their pain. We ask all these prayers in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ who taught us when praying to say:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.