



ST. PAUL'S

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

PROCLAIMING CHRIST IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

Prayers of the Parish, Christmas Day, December 25, 2020

The single most important action we take as Christians is to pray for each other and our world. Each week in Grace Notes, we prepare "Prayers of the Parish" for you to include in your daily prayers and devotions during the week. These prayers are meant to encourage and inspire all of us to "rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances" as St. Paul urges in his first letter to the Church of Thessalonica (1 Thes 5:16-18) so that Jesus may come alive in us to heal, mend and transform the world around us according to God's will. The Prayers of the Parish are like Prayers of the People in that we pray for the Universal Church, the nation, world, God's creation, local community, the sick and suffering, and the departed. Whereas the Prayers of the People are suited for our Sunday liturgy with participation by the whole assembly, the Prayers of the Parish are designed for daily, individual practice, and as such, include more detail and specific intercessions and thanksgivings.

As always, you may submit prayer requests to be included in both the Prayers of the Parish as well as for the Sunday Prayers of the People by emailing Carter Johann (cjohann@stpaulsrva.org). Please provide any feedback, questions or concerns to the Rev. Gwynn Crichton (gcrichton@stpaulsrva.org).

We give thanks to God...

...for the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, into our hearts and world. Fill us this day with joy, understanding and grace, that we may tell out the wonder of your love come down at Christmas in our actions, lives and love for your creation.

...for the community of St. Paul's, the Diocese of Virginia and our bishops Susan, Jennifer and Porter, and the Episcopal Church and Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, that together as Christ's Body we may be hope incarnate in a hurting world this Christmastide.

...for the holy work of all the healthcare workers, support staff, public-health officials, doctors, nurses, and scientists who are working for the health and relief of individuals and communities around the world, that they would be instruments of God's healing power.

...for the winter and its hidden gifts of darkness and dormancy.

...the generosity of all who have made a financial pledge for 2021 to support and sustain *ChurchTogether* so that as One Body, St. Paul's may faithfully proclaim Christ to the heart of the city through our worship and ministries.

We pray for God's mercy and healing for...

...for the local community in Richmond; for the efficient distribution of the vaccine to health care workers in the greater Richmond area hospitals and clinics; for all who are unemployed or underemployed; for all facing the possibility of eviction at the end of the month; for the inmates and staff in local prisons and jails; for GRTC bus drivers; for small business and restaurant owners; for all police, fire and rescue workers; for all public servants.

...for the nation and world; for the rapid and effective distribution of the covid-19 vaccine to the most vulnerable populations; for a peaceful and orderly transfer of power in the White House; for the Holy Land, Jerusalem and the People of Bethlehem; for all war-torn regions of the world, especially Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Mexico and Ethiopia, and for all refugees and asylum-seekers.

...according to the diocesan cycle of prayer: for all of those Baptized in Christ.

...according to the Anglican cycle of prayer: for Christians in other denominations and the work of the ecumenical movement; His Holiness Pope Francis, Bishop of Rome; His All Holiness Archbishop Bartholomew of Constantinople, New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch; the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches; Bishop Ivan M Abrahams, General Secretary World Methodist Council; The Reverend Chris Ferguson, General Secretary of the World Communion of Reformed Churches according to the Anglican cycle of prayer.

...for those who are sick in body, mind and spirit and those who care for them, including the poor, the cold and hungry, the lonely and isolated, those suffering due to the pandemic physically, financially, emotionally and psychologically, for the mentally ill; for those afflicted by addiction.

...for the earth, sea and skies that we have polluted and degraded through our heedless exploitation of natural resources.

...for all for whom prayer has been requested by members of St. Paul's, especially Margo Greene; Linda Armstrong; Randy Waddell; Matt Birkenmeier, Joni and Mark Dray's daughter-in-law's brother; Ellen Kahle, Joni and Mark Dray's daughter-in-law's mother; the residents of the Virginia Home; Jennifer Waring; David Hilbert, brother of Chris Hilbert; Dave Welch, brother-in-law of Marti Truman; for GRTC bus drivers.

...for eternal peace of the departed, especially Sam Coley; the more than 1,736,000 people who have died from covid-19 around the world to date, 326,000 of which died in the United States; those who have died due to violence and warfare, including the more than 60 people murdered in Richmond this year.