

## Prayer for Peace, Hope and Justice

*O God why have you forsaken us?  
Do you not see the sea of suffering? Are you blind?  
Why is there so much pain and destruction in your world?  
Do you not hear the cries? Are you deaf ... even to our prayers?  
We cry out to you and there is no answer!  
We look for you, but you are nowhere to be found!  
It is midday and the sun has stopped shining.  
Things are not as they are meant to be!  
Things are not as you said they will be!  
Have you stopped loving? Have you stopped being God?*

God of Steadfast Love there are many – who nod affirmingly at these words of lament. Who say: “Alleluia finally a true word has been spoken about you.” And even if seldom spoken from lips, there are many who carry these feelings in their hearts...including our hearts at times.

Wherever and whoever these people are today – be they here among us or scattered world over – we ask that your life-giving-spirit hover gently over them / over us – as in the beginning with the promise of new life ... the promise of new life ... even out of nothing.

Some have been brought to lament through sudden grief. The death of a child. The death of a friend. The death of loving partner. And in that death, life itself has lost its life. Life has died and with it all trust in any creator of life. **Lord in your mercy...hear our prayer.**

Some have been brought to lament by witnessing the dehumanising horrors of war – others through the violence of poverty – and still others through the terror of abuse ... abuse not from an enemy, but abuse from a meant-to-be-loving partner. **Lord in your mercy...hear our prayer.**

Some have been brought to lament by bodies riddled with sickness. Illness that imprisons one to bed or to chair. Illness that storks their person with constant throbbing and attacks with debilitating pain. Conditions that confine. That stigmatise and separate. That exclude and isolate. **Lord in your mercy...hear our prayer.**

Some have been brought to lament through years of intimate disregard. The long lack of attention and appreciation and respect from those closest. Never hearing the words, I love you. Or you are special and wonderful and beautiful. And how can they believe if they have never heard? And how can they hear if they have never been told? **Lord in your mercy...hear our prayer.**

Some have been brought to lament through a history of systemic neglect. The unfairness of life written into laws that determine the lay of the land to be stacked against one for no other reason than a history of prejudice determining it to be so. That whichever direction one walks in – there is a headwind of discrimination to face and mountain of judgement to climb. Leaving one permanently exhausted. **Lord in your mercy...hear our prayer.**

God of steadfast loving, Jesus called you Father – tend to these your children who experience you as an absent parent.

Jesus said the children must be free to come to him – remove the stumbling blocks to knowing we are loved. Jesus said that with you everything is possible – be present with those for whom nothing seems possible. Jesus said no one can snatch my sheep out of my hand – but people get snatched every day...in their terror give them calm and courage.

You said behold I am creating all things anew – heal the despairing and depressed who don't believe anything meaningful will ever change.

We pray this prayer for all those who can't pray this prayer. Amen.