**Prayers for Peace, Hope & Justice**

"The Flight from Egypt" illustrated by a picture – an aeroplane with particular passengers on board, Mary, Joseph, the baby, the three wise men – and Pontius, he was the pilot.

Like that child, I absorbed what I was taught and found some comfort in thinking that I was part of the flame. At a time of significant crisis in our family I attended a prayer meeting where we encouraged to praise God. I couldn't. My mom quietly said we praise God IN not FOR every circumstances. That released me and I was able to forgive and focus on caring for my nieces and comforting my parents during a time of grief that I was not able to fully appreciate.

The Genesis story of the Tower of Babel discloses the human tendency to **hubris** (blinding overconfidence that invites destruction) distinct from **arrogance** which is just plain offensiveness.

George Bernard Shaw's play Pygmalion was initially meant as a critique of the way language is used to justify class division. (The film turned it into an unlikely romance – rather than heed the call to unite.) Eliza Doolittle singing "Words, words, words. I'm so sick of words …

As we approach Youth Day this week, we remind ourselves that it was language that sparked a revolution that had been smouldering for centuries when the ruling class attempted to force black children to study through the medium of Afrikaans – one would imagine to better serve their "God-ordained" masters.

Amidst the staggering arrogance of the Trumpian regime, I came across a book written by one Helga Müller, a refugee from SA, entitled "DJR Trump. Prince of Peace. The Christ".

We need serious help.

Gracious, humble God
Rich in mercy, always ready to forgive.
Ever willing to transform and heal
We approach you in humble submission.

We admit that we find security in certainty.
We play master in our need to control and be right.
We are tone deaf to the suffering of those close enough to touch.
We rest in complacency and do not interrogate the language used to convey complex truths that invite us to ruminate, to seek, to embody the mysteries of our faith.

Grant us peace to accept the world as it is, not as we would want it.
Grant us courage to act justly and speak truth to power.
Grant us wisdom to discern what is true and what is not.
So that we may be transformed to reflect the light which streams from your eternal presence.
For you are God and we are yours. Amen.