

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE FOR CHRISTMAS EVE 2024

On this night of quietness and joy God calls us to be at peace: with God, with other nations, other races, others of all kinds, with each other. Tonight, we beseech God to pour out love and understanding on our troubled world, remembering those for whom peace is unknown and sorrow is the stuff of everyday life.

Dear God, the message of salvation is proclaimed tonight in the birth of your Son. Give us ears to hear the Good News and feet ready to run like the shepherds to tell others about your love found in a manger and hung on a cross.

Advent has been a time of waiting, of preparation. As Mary was prepared for the birth of Jesus, you have once more prepared us to celebrate his birth. Help us to be faithful as we prepare for your coming again.

Infant Jesus, as we gaze upon your small body with love, we stand at the Cross and look upon your body broken and your blood shed for us in love. Use our bodies as you did Mary's to house your Holy Spirit. Use our lips as you did hers in obedience to your will for our lives. Use our hands as you did hers to care for those around us. Use our feet as you did hers to follow where you lead.

Lord Jesus, we remember those in our midst who are sick, grieving, lonely, especially those we name before you now or in the silence of our hearts. Be with them and bring them healing, comfort, and your tender and gentle presence.

God of life, God of new life, by the birth of Jesus you have brought light into our darkness. Nothing will ever separate us from your love. You call us to serve the hungry, the poor, the lonely and the outcast. Show us how we can respond.

Lord Jesus, you were born into poverty and lived under oppression. Open our eyes to injustice, and inspire us to proclaim your reign.

Inspire this congregation to reach out beyond our walls, beyond our fears, beyond our past. Help us to welcome your future.

On this night of quietness and joy, we pray for those without shelter, food, family, or friends; for those who work long hours with little reward; for children who are abused or neglected and for the sick. We pray for all who suffer from discrimination and hopelessness. May the birth of the Christ child fill them with hope and love.

We stand in this silent and holy night free to begin again, forgiven and forgiving people, unafraid to proclaim you as Lord. May our hearts beat as one with you, Child of Bethlehem, as we go forth declaring your glory and your promise of peace in our hearts. Glory to you, and peace to all people on earth.

Amen.

We pray in the name of Jesus, our light, our life, and our hope, who taught us to pray:

The Lord's Prayer (Sung to the tune of *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*)
See insert