



A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Readings and Prayers

Scriptures with prayers

'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' **Matthew 25:37-41**

God of all, where are your children?
Let us see God's children, who are far from home,
adrift in an open, overcrowded boat,
with no compass, no crew, no safety.

God of all, why is there crying?
Let us hear the cries of refugees
and respond with love
to those whose escape from danger
leads only to a journey into danger.

God of all, who is praying?
Let us pray for the young lives being lost,
for the families who are broken apart,
asking for comfort and for justice.

God of all, who is answering?
Let us see that You are in the boat,
alongside the members of your family.
May we, who bear your name,
answer with compassion for you.
Amen.

Merciful God,
We pray for all
whose desperation leads them to the sea,
to undertake perilous voyages,
often following dangerous journeys over land:
those escaping brutal wars,
those fleeing religious persecution,
those escaping climate disasters and economic ruin,
those looking for hope in a hopeless situation.
May we look beyond our own fears and concerns
to the needs of those who have nothing,
risk everything
and depend on the kindness of strangers.
May our hearts be opened,
our leaders be challenged
and our self-interest be called out,
in Jesus' name.

Amen.

'Deal with each other justly, do not oppress the refugee, the fatherless or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood. Journey in all the ways I command you, that all may go well with you.'
Jeremiah 7:6-7

Lord of the journey,
We ask for your protection
on all who have fled their homes.
Give them strength on their journeys
and grant that they may
find places of compassion at which to rest.
Ease their fear
as they throw in their lot with strangers
And keep alive their vision
of finding a secure and welcoming home.
Amen.

'Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'

Luke 10:36

Storytelling Lord, give us ears to hear,
and to not only be hearers but also doers of the word,
to not only ask who our neighbour is
but also ask how we might be a neighbour.
May we never ever pass by on the other side,
no matter what it costs us.
May we only ever be the one who shows mercy
to those robbed of all life held dear.
May we always go and do likewise.
So help us, God.

Amen.

'For you have been a refuge to the poor, a refuge to the needy in their distress, a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat. When the blast of the ruthless was like a winter rainstorm, the noise of aliens like heat in a dry place, you subdued the heat with the shade of clouds; the song of the ruthless was stilled.' **Isaiah 25:4-5**

Loving God,
protect all seeking refuge.
May the boundary lines be lifted
and fall once more in pleasant places.
Give fearful hearts reason to be glad,
weary souls cause to rejoice
and exhausted bodies a place to rest secure.
Lead us together on the path to life
as we share from your abundance
so all may know the fullness of joy.

Amen.

Prayers

Lord, who changed the story
from stranger to sibling,
equip us to change the story.
From frustration to freedom,
for those stuck in refugee camps.
From panic to peace,
for those separated from families.
From trafficking to safe passage,
for those on perilous journeys.
From despair to hope,
for hearts weary with grief.
From worry to hospitality,
for minds uncertain of change.
From crisis to opportunity,
for countries providing a home.
From foreigner to family,
as we were welcomed by you.
May we never miss meeting your gaze,
in the eyes of our sibling, the stranger.

Amen.

God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,
provide for all seeking refuge from famine.
God of Hagar, Joseph and Moses,
liberate all seeking refuge from slavery.
God of Esther, Naomi and Ruth,
strengthen all seeking refuge as families.
God of David, Elijah, and Jeremiah,
protect all seeking refuge from conflict.
God of Ezekiel, Ezra and Nehemiah,
comfort all who are longing for home.
God of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
journey with all seeking refuge today.
In the name of the One who was
both refuge and refugee.

Amen.

You are the God in whom we take refuge;
yet many have been cast off,
cast into the depths of the sea.

You are the God in whom we take refuge;
yet many have had to walk so far,
mourning for family and longing for home.

You are the God in whom we take refuge;
yet many are oppressed by conflict,
refused safe passage and the refuge they need.

You are the God in whom we take refuge:
so to you we bring our downcast souls,
disquieted by questions, we refuse to be silent.

Be our hope and our help
as we seek to provide the answers
of welcome and hospitality for all.

You are the God in whom we take refuge.

Amen.

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