



Prayer & Worship Resources NZ Council of Christian Social Services 2019¹

1. A Prayer for Justice: (From the New Zealand Prayer Book p.141)

God our Creator,
E te Atua tō mātou Kai-hanga,
when you speak there is light and life,
ka tīaho te māramatanga me te ora, i āu kupu kōrero,
when you act there is justice and love;
ka tīmata āu mahi, ka mau te tika me te aroha;
grant that your love may be present in what we do together ,
meatia kia ū tonu ki a mātou
tōu aroha i roto i tēnei mahi – mahitahi.
so that what we say and what we do
Whakakī ā mātou whakaaro ā mātou mahi katoa,
may be filled with your Holy Spirit. AMEN.
e tōu Wairua Tapu. AMINE.

2. A Prayer of Stillness:

In a time of stillness, at the beginning of this day, we place in God's presence
All this day who will struggle
All who seek help
All who need help but don't seek it
All who offer what little they have that others might have more
All who encourage others to seek help
All those who offer help
All those who wish to help but don't know how
All those who seek to change unjust structures
All those who know something must change but don't know what or how
All who struggle to see that unjust structures need to be changed
All this we place in your presence today God
In your great compassion – for in you we have hope.
(*Stillness*), AMEN.

3. A prayer for Justice and Peace (Based on a section of the Lord's Prayer: (Prayers for Thursday NZPB p 125)

Our Father,
give us today our daily bread.
E tō mātou Matua,
hōmai ki a mātou āiane
he taro mā mātou mō tēnei rā.

God of seed and growth and harvest,
creator of need, creator of satisfaction;
give us, we pray, our daily bread,
sufficient and assured for all.
Give us also, we pray, the bread of life,

¹ This was taken and adapted from the NZCCSS 50th Anniversary and International Day of Justice. <https://nzccss.org.nz/>

and we shall have a care to feed the hungry,
and to seek for peace and justice in the world.
Help us, then, to remember and to know
that you are our life today and every day;
you are the food we need, now and for ever. Amen

4. A Prayer for the Least: (adapted from Neil Paynter Holy Ground)

God, who calls us by our name, in whose image we are made
Come in from the cold, make your home in our hearts.

God, who does not pass us by, who hears the cries of the poor.
Come in from the cold, make your home in our hearts.

God, who has given us unique talents and skills and gifts to share
Come in from the cold, make your home in our hearts.

Jesus of no fixed address, come into this house, your home.
Make your home in our hearts.

Take refuge and shelter with us here – your feet must be tired, your heart must be heavy.
Make your home in our hearts.

Sit down with us, Lord. Tell us your stories, open our eyes to you.
Make your home in our hearts.

5. A Prayer for each other: (adapted from NZCCSS)

Atua o te Aroha. God of compassion, who's love and faithfulness never waiver, guide us to see those around us through your eyes of compassion and with your heart of love.
Aroha tētahi ki tētahi – Let us Look after each other

Atua o te Aroha. Jesus, the servant, who washed his disciples' feet, who said the first shall be last and the last, first, help us to serve others with patience, kindness, gentleness and humility.
Aroha tētahi ki tētahi – Let us Look after each other

Atua o te Aroha. Jehovah-Rapha – the God Who Heals – heal us of pride and anger and help us to take your healing hands to the people around us, our families and whanau, our neighbours, our world.
Aroha tētahi ki tētahi – Let us Look after each other

Atua o te Aroha. Jesus, the refugee from Herod, the rabboni with no safe home in his own land, our compassion gets jaded and fear disables us when we see the endless streams of people hurting, lonely and with nowhere to go.
Aroha tētahi ki tētahi – Let us Look after each other

Atua o te Aroha. Jesus the lover of children, who took them on your knee and blessed them, help us to cherish, nourish and care for our children, the children in this church, in our neighbourhood, and those who are scared, unsafe or have difficult behaviours.
Aroha tētahi ki tētahi – Let us Look after each other

Atua o te Aroha. Jehovah Jireh – God Our Provider. Thank you for providing us with all the goodness in this world and the next. Thank you for providing your only Son as a Living Sacrifice for the fallen state of humankind. Thank you for providing your Holy and Life-giving Spirit to enable us to do your will. Help us every day to be more like you, loving sacrificially, caring whole-heartedly, giving unstintingly, and spreading your shalom to others.
Aroha tētahi ki tētahi – Let us Look after each other

6. An alternative Creed of Social Service (from the Anglican Care Network adapted from Mike Riddell (2008)):

Because all people are created in the image of God (Gen 1:26) and have their beginning and end in God, we believe:

All people have worth and dignity, and are to be treated with respect. We seek to recognise the handiwork of God within each person.

Because human beings are a mixture of the dust of the earth and the breath of God (Gen 2:7) we believe:

There should be no devaluing of either the physical or spiritual circumstances of human life, but that people in the totality of their existence must be addressed. What God has joined, let no one separate.

Because God has made us to be in relationship with one another and share responsibility for the welfare of all (Gen 4:9, 19) we believe:

We cannot turn away from those in suffering or need, but must in compassion recognise our belonging to the one family of God, and hence our responsibility for others.

Because the human community has united together in separation from and in defiance of God (Gen 11:1-9) we believe:

The corporate structures of human life are flawed, resulting in alienation, injustice and oppression.

Because God is loving and just (Deut 32:4), and hears the cry of those who suffer (Ps 12.5), we believe:

God is the protector of the poor and defenceless, and the community of God is witness to this.

Because God is merciful and compassionate toward a humanity lost and alienated through sin (Psalm 103:8-14) we believe:

God has chosen to enter the structures of human existence through Jesus Christ, through him making known the divine love and forgiveness, and through his reconciled in relationship with their Creator. We acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and the unique hope of humanity.

Because Christ has called us to follow in his footsteps (Mk 8:34-36) and bestowed on the community of faith the continuation of his mission (Jn 20:21) we believe:

We have a responsibility to make concrete the love of God within our own history and surrounding, declaring in word and deed the purposes and character of God.

Because Jesus has called us to love our neighbours (Mk 22:39) and defined our neighbours as those in need (Lk 10:25-37) we believe:

Obedience to Christ requires of us the practical and self-sacrificing love of people in need, whatever their belief or condition.

7. Some Beatitudes reworked: (adapted from Dallas Willard. You may like to use this rewrite and attempt to rewrite your own beatitudes using the world around you and our cultural context as a reference point.)

Blessed are the physically repulsive,
Blessed are those who smell bad; the twisted, misshapen, deformed,
The too big, too little, too loud; the bald, the fat, and the old—
For they are riotously celebrated in the party of Jesus
Blessed are the seriously crushed ones: the flunkouts and dropouts and burnouts,
The broke and broken; the brain damaged and incurably ill,
The barren and the pregnant too many times or at the wrong time,
The overemployed, the underemployed and the unemployed, as well as the unemployable,
The swindled, the shoved aside, the replaced,
The lonely, incompetent, and foolish,
The emotionally starved or emotionally dead...
Blessed are the spiritual zeros—the spiritually bankrupt, deprived and deficient,
The spiritual beggars, those without a wisp of 'religion'—
When the kingdom of the heavens comes upon them.

8. An inspirational quote: Lilla Watson (Activist, Artist, Academic, Indigenous Australian)

“If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”

If interested, here is a Social Services (Justice) video that links to this quote. (Jolyon and Kate, 2013)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7SgMVU7stA>

9. A Final Blessing:

Go as far as dare, for you cannot go beyond the reach of God
Give as extravagantly as you are able, for cannot spend the riches of God
Care as lavishly as you are able, for you cannot exhaust the love of God
Keep journeying, for God will always be with you.

10. A Franciscan Blessing:

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, and war, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and turn their pain to joy.

And may God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world, so that you can do what others claim cannot be done. Amen.