

September 2007



These prayers were part of the Micah Challenge Worship Service, held as our region's leaders meet for the APEC Summit in Sydney.

Dear Lord,

Thank You for allowing us to be able to meet here together tonight, especially without fear of persecution. Allow us all to be mindful as we listen with willing ears and open hearts of those Christians in places such as Asia and Africa who do not have the same freedom.

We pray especially for the structures of our world today. We know that when you created the world your system was one of justice, mercy, humility and love but that it is not so today. We are grateful that the governments of our world are beginning to acknowledge their faults and remedy these for the people of our world who need this most.

In light of our changing global world, we commit to you the leaders that are attending APEC this week. We pray especially that you would keep them safe, as well as ensuring the safety of the people who have been charged with providing for them while they are in Sydney.

Please guide them to co-operation and understanding in their talks, and inspire their purposes to be of you. Let the decisions that they make be of sound judgment, of godly intention such that they can effect real change, now and into the future.

We pray that our leaders may leave Sydney confident in the knowledge that they have acted justly, humbly and with love and that they have used the time wisely that you have given them.

Amen

Dear Lord,

As we remember the leaders of the world and the steps that they are taking help us not to forget ourselves. We too have let you down and for this we are sorry.

Help us as Christ's church in this world to act justly, with love and by showing mercy to all as we continue our walk with you. We are your ambassadors; help us not to take this for granted and to be diligent in day to day life to be Christ like: faithful ministers of your truth and love. Help us to remember that if we want to change the world that we should start with our selves.

Tonight Lord be with Neil and Shane as they bring us your message. Help them to teach your word with truth and sincerity as to bring glory to you. And be with us as we listen, open our minds and hearts to your message.

We also put to you your church that meets together in this county and overseas. May they also continue to grow in you, helping one another to remain strong. Be with the people who minister to these churches, missionaries, aid organizations, local pastors and elders. Give them your spirit to teach with passion and truth.

And last of all Lord we thank you for Jesus. We are eternally grateful for your sacrifice that has granted life to all who believe.

Please join with me in saying the Lords prayer as we finish:

Our Father, who is in heaven,
Hallowed be your Name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom,
and the power and the glory,
now and forever.

Amen

Heavenly Father, here we gather, the flotsam and jetsam washed up on these shores of the Pacific and Indian Oceans over the centuries. We have joined the original residents, our Aboriginal sisters and brothers, and we now form this nation we know as Australia. We come from all the nations of the world. We are really just one, big, global family but we've divided ourselves up into these nation states, with Prime Ministers and Presidents in abundance. The leaders of 21 of these nation states are about to gather in our city of Sydney. Hear our prayers for them today.

Lord it is You who created this great Pacific Ocean, from which APEC takes its name. You know the names of the countries and their leaders who will be here in our city to deliberate on matters which will affect 2.6 billion people. Lord we lift each one up to you now:

Prime Minister John Howard – Australia – 21 million citizens
President Vladimir Putin – Russia – 143 million citizens
President Hu Jintao – China – 1.3 billion citizens
Prime Minister Shinzo Abe – Japan – 127.4 million citizens
President George Bush – USA – 301.1 million citizens
Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah – Brunei – 374,500 citizens
Prime Minister Stephen Harper – Canada – 33.3 million citizens
President Michelle Bachelet – Chile – 16.2 million citizens
Chief Executive Donald Tsang – Hong Kong – 6.9 million citizens
President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono – Indonesia – 234.6 million citizens
Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi – Malaysia – 24.8 million citizens
President Felipe Calderon – Mexico – 108.7 million citizens
Prime Minister Helen Clark – New Zealand – 4.1 million citizens
Prime Minister Michael Somare – PNG – 5.8 million citizens
President Alan Garcia – Peru – 28.6 million citizens
President Gloria Arroyo – Philippines – 91 million citizens
Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong – Singapore – 4.5 million citizens
President Roh Moo-hyun – South Korea – 49 million citizens
President Chen Shui-bian – Taiwan – 22.8 million citizens
Interim Prime Minister Surayut Chulanon – Thailand – 65 million citizens
Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung – Vietnam – 85.2 million citizens

Heavenly Father you know each one of these 3 women and 18 men. They represent 60% of our world's GDP. They are extraordinarily influential. You know what you require of them. By the power of your Holy Spirit, break through with the message of Acting Justly, Loving Mercy and Walking Humbly with You. Guide them in their decisions over the next few days.

Lord, five of our world's six biggest standing armies are arrayed around this Asia-Pacific region. Four of our world's eight declared nuclear powers are here. Lord, in your mercy, keep our region from war. Help these leaders to reach negotiated positions which will not imperil their citizens.

Lord, around this APEC table, we will have six of the world's 10 biggest carbon emitting countries. Lord help our leaders to find a just way forward which will save our planet from destruction.

Lord we pray for renewed commitment to the Doha round of trade negotiations. We pray for the the reduction of trade barriers which may help developing countries lift more of their citizens out of extreme poverty.

Lord, we are only 21 million citizens in this country and perhaps a few hundred here today. We are surely infinitesimal in the larger scheme of things, and yet Your Word tells us You are here with us, even as we pray to you. Here our prayers o Lord, as we put our trust in Your faithfulness.

Your message to us rings out down the years.

ACT JUSTLY, LOVE MERCY WALK HUMBLY WITH ME.

Lord, please show us what this means for us and how to carry out your commands in our very affluent Australian world in 2007.

We have heard Your Word explained to us today. We affirm that your mercy is sure from generation to generation. You have no time for the proud. Your heart is indeed for the lowly, those who are marginalized, disempowered, on the edges of life. Your heart is to fill the hungry with good things and send away the rich with knowledge of their emptiness.

Lord we know we are the rich and we are in danger of being sent away. Lord, we stress when there's 3% inflation while our sisters and brothers in Zimbabwe live with 12,000% rates and 3-4,000 people dying of AIDS each week. 5 million of our citizens have not fled our country but this is the modern story of Zimbabwe. We love to come home to Australia - to our hospitals and schools that are open and where the nurses and teachers are paid on time. Lord, guard us from smugness and prompt us continually to advocate for and support those who suffer injustice.

Lord we hear your snort of anger as the news reaches us of the people's suffering in the slums of Kibera and Korogocho in Nairobi, Kenya while former President Daniel Arap Moi has siphoned off \$5 billion to overseas accounts.

We understand that you ask some hard choices from us. Help us to understand our own emptiness without Your Holy Spirit to guide us. Help us to depend on You, on Your Word Jesus Christ and Your Spirit – Triune God – forever in relationship and inviting us into relationship with You.

Lord in our own faith communities, help the leaders you have given us, bishops, priests, pastors, elders, teachers, to not forget your heart for the poor. Guide them to teach us from Your Word. Use them to prick our affluence bubbles – the worlds we create around ourselves to shield us from the ugliness of poverty and despair.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers this day as we cry out to you.
Amen.