

Prayer For the Nation

Let us join together in giving thanks to God for the blessings of Scotland, its beauty, resources and people, its freedoms, privileges and Christian heritage.

Almighty and Eternal God, we thank you for our nation and the privilege of belonging to it. In the beauty of its mountains and lochs, its sea coasts and islands we see your creative hand. The resources of its cities and villages declare your wisdom and generosity.

We rejoice in the diversity of languages and cultures that through the centuries have shaped and enriched our national life. We celebrate the strengths you have imparted to our national character: a sense of community, love of family and friends, loyalty, thriftiness, resourcefulness, perseverance and diligence.

For centuries you have blessed our land. By the light of your Spirit, the Bible has been the source of our greatest blessings, privileges, freedoms and opportunities. We thank you for all whose lives have been transformed by the Good News of Jesus and who, in turn, have shared it with others both at home and overseas.

Lord in your mercy receive our praise

But, for all its beauty, our country has a dark side too. In recent decades there has been an assault on our Christian heritage, which has resulted in social exclusion, rising crime, family breakdown and a collapse of Church attendance. Let us humbly seek God's forgiveness for our national rebellion and disobedience.

Lord God of our fathers, we humbly entreat you to look upon us with mercy. With embarrassment and shame we acknowledge before you our national failures. We are guilty of sinning against example, privilege and knowledge. We have squandered the heritage you have given us. We have fractured and marred the Body of Christ by our divisions and contrariness. We have called good what your Word says is wrong and we have treated as worthless what you esteem as of highest worth.

Almighty God, you who gave your only Son, Jesus Christ, to deliver us from sin, pardon all our offences. Absolve us from all wickedness. Deliver us from waywardness and folly. Give us strength to resist the appeal of self-interest. Grant us the highest happiness of all, that of glorifying and enjoying you, the God of all grace.

Lord, in your grace pardon our sins

In Scotland many lives are blighted by sickness, suffering and sorrow; poverty, injustice and deprivation.

Loving Father, we give thanks for our Lord Jesus Christ who saw human need with a clarity that exceeds our poor observation and was moved with compassion by what he saw. Look, we pray, with mercy on all who suffer in body, mind and spirit. Come with your healing, renewing and liberating love. Give hope to all who feel despair and powerlessness. Comfort those who are distressed. Equip all who seek to care for the needs of others, especially your fellow workers who do so in your Name. Make broken lives whole, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lord, in your love heal our land

Let us pray for the growth of Christ's Church, that through the proclamation of God's Word his Kingdom may come and his will be done in Scotland.

Lord of radiance and truth; teach us to tremble at the thought of the light of Christ being extinguished in our land. Leave us not in darkness but once again shine on us with your love. Bless all who love Jesus and desire to share his Good News with others. Raise up people gifted by your Spirit to proclaim your Word with winsomeness and power. May all who teach it have confidence in its authority, sufficiency and clarity. Grant all who hear its joyful sound a receptive spirit. Create a praying Church that pleads with you for an outpouring of your reviving grace. Be glorified, Lord, by making Scotland a nation under God.

Lord, in your mercy hear our prayers

Finally, we say together a prayer of John Knox, seeking God's grace to be faithful.

Enlarge our faith, O merciful Father, that we may not swerve at any time from your heavenly Word, but increase in us hope and love, with a careful obedience of your commandments : that no hardness of heart, no hypocrisy, no desire of the eyes, nor enticements of the world draw us away from your obedience. Through the merits of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ our only Saviour. Amen.