L’Église presbytérienne

au Canada

The Presbyterian Church

in Canada

**Prayer in Times of Disaster**

**Scriptures**

Psalm 46, 29, 63, 77:16 –19

Matthew 8 – Jesus stills the storm

Revelation 21 – A new heaven and new earth

Romans 8 – Who can separate us from the love of God?

**Prayer 1**

God of comfort, we pray today because we are not comfortable.

We are deeply shocked and grieved at the suffering we have witnessed and heard about.

And our grief is worsened, God, because we do not understand why such suffering occurs.

When we have no answers, we cling to you in faith,

trusting that in the fullness of time, you will bring understanding.

With you we ache for those who have been injured and for those who care for them;

for those who have died and those who loved them.

Show us what we can do now to alleviate suffering

and how in the future we can better respond to such events.

Forgive us, God, when we allow or support institutions, policies and cultural values that diminish the human spirit and increase the risk for disaster.

Encourage us to learn more about your planetary garden and how we might care for it to the benefit of all, not just the wealthy or corporations.

Finally, God, we pray that you will intervene in the lives of those who are affected in any way and help them pull their lives together once again.

Enable and empower us to be vehicles for your love by providing support and the necessities of life and hope.

We pray in the name of him who brought hope to our world, Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

**Prayer 2**

All things look to you, O God,

to give them life and sustenance.

Look in mercy and kindness on all people,

and hear our prayer for those whose lives and livelihoods

are threatened by drought (*or* flood, *or* fire *or* persecution, etc.).

Guide and bless the labour of people who give their talent and time to service those in need of any kind.

And let all enjoy the good gifts of your creation and life in peace.

With grateful hearts, we thank you for all your mercies and blessings.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, we pray.

**Amen.**

**Prayer 3**

Gracious God, you hold all souls in life;

neither the present, nor any powers,

nor anything else in all creation,

will separate us from your love that is in Christ.

Look in mercy on all who suffer or experience pain through *(the specific form of disaster may be named here).*

We remember especially this day the people of *(the specific location)*

Help the injured,

protect those in danger,

support the dying,

comfort the grieving,

and soothe the anxious.

Strengthen and guide doctors, nurses and all those who serve in emergency services *(specific services and profession may be named here)*

and all who bring comfort and relief.

And help us to serve and support with our deeds as well as our prayers.

In the name of Jesus, we pray.

**Amen.**

**Prayer 4**

God of earthquake, wind and fire,

tame the natural forces of chaos and destruction that defy control

and rock us by their fury.

Give us the wisdom to speak truthfully

and not call disasters your divine justice;

to rely on your loving kindness which knows no bounds or decay,

and trust your power, which in Jesus Christ, stilled storms,

raised the dead,

and silenced the destructive and frenzied powers.

**Amen.**

**Prayer 5: Prayer of Confession at Times of Devastation**

Creator God, we experience life and observe with awe the world you called into being. We are filled with gratitude and wonder at its beauty, and with fear and trembling when we forget the power of your creation.

In humility, in wonder, and in gratitude, we worship you and praise your perfection and confess our sins.

You call us to serve and care for others, but we lead a self-centred approach to life and disregard the well-being of others. We offer platitudes rather than deep care so we can get on with our own affairs. In our desire for comfort, we participate in systems that lead to famine, war and disaster. Forgive us, God. May we be reminded of your selfless act of sacrifice. All these things we pray in Jesus’ name.

**Amen.**