

Hi everyone,

Earlier today we met outside the church on the lawn. It was wonderful to gather after such a long time. As part of our time together we explored Psalm 123. As you read it, ask yourself,

- Who is God? What is God like?
- What attitude am I invited to adopt towards God?

### **Psalm 123**

I lift up my eyes to you,  
You who sit enthroned in the heavens!  
As the eyes of a dog  
look to the hand of its owner—  
as the eyes of attendants  
look to the hand of those they serve—  
so our eyes look to you, YHWH,  
Until you show us your mercy!  
Have mercy on us, YHWH, have mercy!  
We have endured so much contempt.  
We have endured far too much  
ridicule from the wealthy,  
To much contempt from the arrogant!

The desired response to this Psalm is renewed trust, gratitude, and love for God. Someone brought their dog this morning and we reflected on how a good dog owner loves their dog and is attentive to their needs. When you go to a restaurant, you assume and expect that the attendant will meet your needs. This Psalm invites us to adopt the same attitude towards God.

At the end of our time together someone gave some love and attention to the dog. God is like that. How this person interacted with the dog is a picture of God's tenderness and loving care and faithfulness towards us. You can count on it!

But we also reflected on the reality of bad dog owners leaving dogs suspicious of people. Perhaps your past makes God seem anything but tender, loving, caring, or faithful. Our image of God is crucial. It develops over time and cannot simply be changed. Hopefully this Psalm can be an invitation to reflect on your image of God. May God increasingly become someone you can lift up your eyes to because you can trust in God's mercy, tenderness, loving care and faithfulness.

Among other things, we used the following prayer:

## A Litany for the Healing and Restoration of our Church

(From the Anglican Diocese of Rupert's Land, 2017)

Holy Creator, in whom all things in heaven and earth have their being,

**Have mercy on us.**

Risen Christ, through whom the whole creation is reconciled to God,

**Have mercy on us.**

Life-giving Spirit, whose love and truth fills the world and searches the depths of our lives,

**Have mercy on us.**

Blessed Trinity, source of both unity and diversity,

**Have mercy on us.**

From our failure to recognize and respect the revelation of your truth and love in the First Peoples of this land,

**Saviour, forgive and heal us.**

From our participation in the systematic oppression of indigenous sovereignty, language, culture and spirituality,

**Saviour, forgive and heal us.**

From our role in the Indian Residential Schools designed to eliminate the unique society, wisdom and beauty of the indigenous peoples of this land,

**Saviour, forgive and heal us.**

From our complicit tolerance of the decimation of Indigenous family structures leaving children vulnerable to abuses of every kind,

**Saviour, forgive and heal us.**

From our continued acceptance of unjust legal, educational, health and social structures that continue to oppress and destroy the lives of many indigenous people,

**Saviour, forgive and heal us.**

O God, we pray for the gifts of your grace and your love which never gives up on us and is forever faithful. Inspire our minds with a vision of the reconciliation of your kingdom in this time and place.

**Hear us, O Christ.**

Touch our eyes, that we may see the sacredness in all creation.

**Hear us, O Christ.**

Touch our ears, that we may hear from every mouth of every peoples the hunger for hope and stories of refreshment.

**Hear us, O Christ.**

Touch our lips, that we may speak of the beauty of every tongue and dialect proclaiming the wonderful works of God.

**Hear us, O Christ.**

Touch our hearts, that we may discern your mission in which you call us to be immersed, particularly in partnership with the First Peoples of this land.

**Hear us, O Christ.**

Touch our minds that we may witness to your Good News in our neighbourhoods, communities, and all parts of the world.

**Hear us, O Christ.**

Touch our hands, that we may forever shun violence and embrace the work you give us to do.

**Hear us, O Christ.**

Draw your Church together, O Lord, into one great company of disciples, together following our Lord Jesus Christ into every walk of life, together serving you in your mission in the world, and together witnessing to your love on every continent and island of your creation. **Amen.**