

Saturday 16 March 2019

“...at Thy feet, in the bonds of love we meet...”

Dear friends,

We are in shock and grief over the events in Christchurch.

Yesterday our Christchurch campus went into lockdown with the rest of the city’s schools and tertiary providers, and we gathered in Auckland and Christchurch to pray for the victims, responders, and for the city. As for many around the country, there were tears.

Tomorrow, Christians will gather in churches across the country faced with many questions, among which are, how do we embody Christ’s call to love our Muslim neighbours who are suffering in the aftermath of such terror, and how do we give voice in prayer to the grief that we and all New Zealanders are feeling?

In Scripture we have powerful sources of lament to draw on – cries from the hearts of God’s people such as Psalms 10, 46, 57, 86 or 61: “from the ends of the earth I call to you, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the foe.”

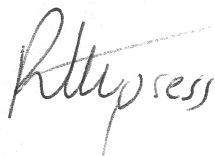
As we reach out to our Muslim neighbours to offer comfort, support and hands of peace, and as we seek as a nation to find words to draw us together, we also have in our national anthem a deeply appropriate prayer that every New Zealander can own. Its words – “Men of every creed and race, gather here before Thy face”, and “at Thy feet, in the bonds of love we meet” – take on powerful meaning at times like this.

These events have changed us as a nation, and one task for Christian leaders is to draw on the resources of the Gospel to speak of sorrow and suffering, love of neighbour, evil and brokenness, the common worth and dignity of all people, and in time, of reconciliation and hope.

To that end, we have gathered a few quotes and links to helpful resources in addition to the Psalms above. We will post these on our website: www.laidlaw.ac.nz/15march

“Hear our voices, we entreat, God defend New Zealand.”

Ngā mihi nui,



Dr Roshan Allpress
National Principal/CEO