

Prayer Letter January 2025.

Isaiah 60:1: Arise, shine; for your light has come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. We have just celebrated the coming of Jesus, the light of the world, into our midst. Here in Australia, many people are enjoying Christmas holidays. The weather is often hot and sunny. For us, on one level, it is not so easy to resonate with light coming into the dark and cold at this time of year.

When we look to the context in which Isaiah chapter 60 was written, we learn that the people of God have returned to Jerusalem, but the city is in ruins and people were living in poverty. They often were not welcomed, just as refugees find themselves not welcomed today in many countries, such as Australia.

Isaiah brings them a vision of light and hope so they can start to rebuild their city and their lives and so they can share God's light and hope with others. Sometimes it can be hard to see the light of Christ and feel the presence of God. We, too, need the assurance that God is with us, and that God will provide. That may not be in the way that we expect. This time of year - Epiphany reminds us that this light of God is still here with us and all people, bringing hope.

A New Year prayer: God of endings and beginnings,
we pray for all who are marking the end of another year.

We pray for those who long for this year to end.
Where there is brokenness, bring wholeness.
Where there is pain, bring healing.

We pray for those who look back on this year with gratitude.
Where community has offered support and encouragement to others.
Where life has been full of joy and wonder.

We pray for your world: Where there is war, may peace prevail.
Where there is injustice, may your righteousness come.
Where your creation is being destroyed, may it be restored.

We pray for all deacons and deaconesses around the world in all their various ministries.
May we feel united as one body, serving you.
May we all reflect Your hope, light and life everyday.

In the name of Jesus, the light of the world,
Amen.

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