

The City Church, New York

The Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession – Sunday January 14, 2007

On this day in 1747, John Wesley was riding on to Bristol, having preached in a town where a mob had been stirred up against him with what he called a “double entendre which a modest person cannot well repeat.” But he wrote in his journal that “as I preached on ‘the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ’, many of the mob” came to listen and “attention sat on the face of every hearer.”

Let us pray.

Sovereign Lord:

The experience of our brother, John, reminds us that Your name divides people. To some of us, the name of Jesus is precious and means our salvation – as the angel told Joseph it would. We gladly affirm with our brother, Paul, that we’re not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it’s God’s power unto salvation for all who believe. But we do know that, to others, Your name is an offense. And it’s been an offense from the beginning. We’re grateful to You that, by Your grace alone, we respond to the Gospel with thanksgiving and praise. We pray that, by Your grace, those who have not done so will see their way clear to embrace Your mercy and live in Your peace.

We pray for the preaching of Your Word – here among us and wherever else it’s preached. Thank You that it never goes forth to no purpose, but accomplishes what You intend. Thank You for the preaching of Your grace which characterizes the ministry in this pulpit. Give us ears to hear Your word and willing hearts to obey as You bring Your kingdom to fruition. Give us all that we need to be Your good and faithful servants.

We ask that all the sick of our congregation be given strength to endure their afflictions according to Your perfect will. May all who tend to their needs be given the ability to do so. Help any who need employment to find work. Help those in conflicts with family or friends to resolve their problems through patient understanding and self-denying love.

We pray for our President, for our lawmakers and judges, and for all who are charged with carrying out the work of the many departments of government – federal, state and local. May wisdom and intelligence trump all self-serving self-interest and prejudice and may mercy always temper justice, that Your will be lived out in this world.

Thank You for answering all our prayers as we now add these words You taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen