

Petition in support of an additional intake of 20,000 Afghan refugees



Dear sisters and brothers,

At a recent meeting, the Diocesan Council unanimously decided to add the name of the Anglican Church Southern Queensland to a petition from Australian Churches and Christians calling on the Federal Government to welcome a special intake of an additional 20,000 Afghan refugees and support the ongoing well-being of all Afghan refugees and their families.

On behalf of National Council of Churches in Australia, the General Secretary, Elizabeth Stone, writes:

"Dear Church Leaders

Bishop Philip Huggins and I wrote yesterday with a practical way that you and your Church, as well as your individual church members, can take action to support the vulnerable in Afghanistan. We believe this is a moment that calls for solidarity by the Australian Church as one.

[Today, we are asking your organisation to join Christians across Australia and sign the Christians United for Afghanistan Call.](#)

As the crisis unfolds, Christians from across the Church, alongside a wider public movement, are being moved to speak boldly to our national government leaders to provide urgent action for the well-being of Afghan refugees.

The call is simple:

We, the Australian Church, are calling on the Federal Government to welcome a special intake of an additional 20,000 Afghan refugees, and support the ongoing well-being of all Afghan refugees and their families.

This is a loud and urgent call from Christians across all walks of life and perspectives, united in concern for the well-being of the Afghan community.

We ask that you take the simple step to sign up your [Church/organisation] to this call today, and show solidarity for this important issue.

It is our hope that as we unite as the Church, and show our government that we believe we are called to reach out and care for the vulnerable, that they will respond with a just and compassionate commitment to help the most vulnerable Afghan refugees.

Together we can make a difference as the Australian Church."

I invite *anglican focus* readers to consider adding [your own individual name to the 'Christians United for Afghanistan' petition.](#)

Please join me in praying for the people of Afghanistan:

O God of mercy and of peace,
We hold before you the peoples of Afghanistan, many of whom feel abandoned and betrayed.
Be living bread to those who are hungry each day.
Be healing and wholeness to those who have no access to health care amidst the ravages of pandemic.
Be their true home to all who have been displaced.
Be open arms of loving acceptance to those who fear because of their gender, ethnicity, religious or political views.
Be peace to those engaged in armed conflict and those who live within its shadow.
Turn our hearts and minds to your ways of just and gentle peace,
open our eyes to see you in all acts of compassionate care,
strengthen our hearts to step out in solidarity with your suffering people and
hold us all in your unfailing love.
We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who emptied himself of all but love in order to bring
life in all its fullness. **Amen.**

(Service of Prayer and Lament for Afghanistan, St John's Cathedral, 22 August 2021)

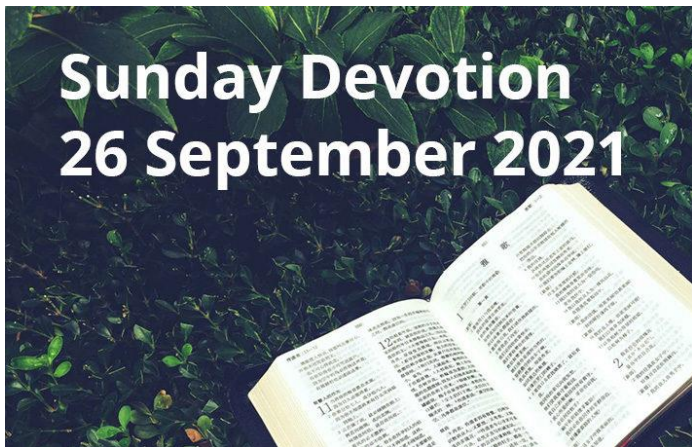
Yours in Christ,

The Most Rev'd Dr Phillip Aspinall AC
Archbishop of Brisbane

Sunday Devotions • Sunday 19 September 2021 • By Janet White

Sunday Devotion: 26 September 2021, Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Jesus is the preserver of our faith



“Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it?” ([Mark 9.50](#))

Main Readings: [Esther 7.1-6, 9-10; 9.20-22](#); [Psalm 124](#); [James 5.12-20](#); [Mark 9.38-50](#) [[Numbers 11.4-6, 10-16, 24-29](#); [Psalm 19.7-14](#)]

Supplementary Readings: [Psalm 98](#); [Mark 11. 27-33](#); [Esther 9.23-32](#); [Psalm 19.7-14](#); [James 3.13-4.7a](#)

During my confirmation service in my mid-30s, a prayer was read by the minister. He said that if we take the salt as Jesus Christ, the more we learn about

him then the saltier we become. While I had heard and read this scripture many times before, I had never thought about the salt being Jesus.

The minister's prayer confirmed for me how important faith in Jesus is. Just as salt has long been used as a preserver of meat, Jesus is the preserver of our faith. As people grow in faith, they become more salty.

“Salt is good” for the Christian and for those the Christian is supporting. For example, when a Christian is supporting a loved one in hospital, a salty faith helps the person to focus and pray. In order to become more “salty”, Christians need to read their Bible often and pray to Jesus.

Jesus is the preserver that strengthens our faith.