

Call to Prayer: New Year's Day 2022

'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.' (John 1: 5)

As we reach the end of a year and turn towards the year that is to come, the dark shadow of Covid-19 still lies over us and the community of which we are a part. There is no part of our society that has not been impacted and no part of our community that has not suffered. We have endured much and struggled with the abiding uncertainty that still clouds our vision of the year ahead.

Nevertheless, no matter how abiding the uncertainty and the darkness of the shadow, the Gospel affirms that: 'the darkness did not overcome it'. The darkness has not overcome the 'light that shines in the darkness'. The Gospel affirmation is especially resonant at this time for it affirms that at no point is the light of the Word come from God consumed by darkness. We know and affirm by faith that the 'Word became flesh and lived among us'. (John 1: 14)

In the year that is to come, the light of God abides and no darkness will consume it. We ask the One who is the light of the world to give us light that we may walk safely, even where darkness abides: 'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.' We pray:

Light of the World,
May you arise and shine even in the face of darkness:
We come as those who have dwelt in the shadows
And shared in the suffering and uncertainty of these times.
Abide with us and shed your light amongst us
That we might know your abiding presence.
Lord, in your mercy
Hear our prayer.

Light of the World,
May you arise and shine even in the face of darkness;
We come as those who have sought your light

In the year that is now past.
We give thanks that you have led us safe thus far
And that you shall lead us home.
Lord, in your mercy
Hear our prayer.

Light of the World,
May you arise and shine even in the face of darkness:
We come as those who journey on towards the horizon
Where light shall surely break and the darkness be vanquished.
We pray for the bereaved and for the bereft
And ask that you would draw near to them in your compassion.
Lord, in your mercy
Hear our prayer.

Light of the World,
May you arise and shine even in the face of darkness:
We come as those who now step forth
Into the year that is to come.
We ask of you light for the days that lie ahead
And, once more, the knowledge of your abiding presence.
Lord, in your mercy
Hear our prayer.

Signed by:

- Lord Wallace, Moderator of the General Assembly, Church of Scotland
- Most Rev. Leo Cushley, Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh, Roman Catholic Church
- Most Rev. Mark Strange, Primus, on behalf of the College of Bishops, Scottish Episcopal Church
- Rev. Dr David Miller, Moderator, United Free Church of Scotland
- Rev. Neil MacMillan, Moderator, Free Church of Scotland
- Rev. Paul Whittle, Moderator, United Reformed Church (Scotland)
- Rev. Martin Hodson, General Director, Baptist Union of Scotland
- Rev. Mark Slaney, District Chair, Methodist Church (Scotland)

- Rev. Thomas R. Wilson, Chair, Congregational Federation in Scotland
- Lt. Col. Carol Bailey, Secretary for Scotland, Salvation Army
- Adwoa Bittle, Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
- Rev. Ruth Turner, District Superintendent, British Isles North District, Church of the Nazarene
- Pastor Chris Gbenle, Provincial Pastor, Province of Scotland, Redeemed Christian Church of God
- Bishop Francis Alao, Church of God (Scotland)/Minority Ethnic Churches Together in Scotland (MECTIS)
- Rev Fred Drummond, Director, Evangelical Alliance (Scotland)