

Forgiveness heals the pain in our hearts, setting us free to worship our Lord in wholeness.

The season of Lent is a time to reflect on where we are in our relationship with God – a time to reflect on what we might have said or done to others causing hurt, or our own hurt caused by what others have said or done to us. It is a time to deal with and heal these hurts, that we may come before God afresh.

In recent months I have been thinking about forgiveness, how necessary it is in any relationship and how fundamental it is to our faith journey as disciples of Christ. It causes pain when we know we have said or done something wrong or unkind to others. It can also be hard to forgive our pain caused by someone else's careless words or action. If we continue to hold onto that hurt it may lead to resentment and anger, which in turn puts us on the defensive, negatively impacting our relationships. Learning about and deciding to forgive is part of our growth as humans and as Christians we are instructed to forgive others as God forgives us.

In the gospels of Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:1-4 we see the origin of The Lord's Prayer, now a staple in our liturgical diet. A liturgy feeding unity within the church. There cannot be true unity without forgiveness and mercifully for us, our God is forgiving. As He forgives us, so we must forgive others – over and over and over.....

A prayer:

Father God, forgive us when we speak without thinking about the impact of our words. Forgive us too for holding on to grievances when we have been wronged. May we take to our hearts the closing words (v32.) from Ephesians 4 where Paul writes about the importance of unity in the Body of Christ,  
*"be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you"*

We ask pray in the name of Your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

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