

This is the prayer I wrote with my daughter Jennifer who speaks both Ukrainian and Russian and is hearing from friends what people are thinking both sides of the border.

Eternal God,

We hold before you

the peoples of Ukraine and of Russia.

We pray for those who are in despair today

because they see their homeland invaded

and those they love in danger.

Bind up their hearts, O God,

and give them strength to care for one another.

We pray for those who are in despair today

because their children on national service

have been placed in the front of the Russian advance.

Bind up their hearts, O God,

and give them certainty in your love.

We pray for our own and other nations,

expressing their concern,

but finding it hard to turn that concern

into anything that really helps.

Take from us all, O God,

any desire to lord it over others,

and make us ready to sacrifice what is easy

for the sake of what is good,

so that your lordship over us might be

a witness to the world.

In the name of Jesus the Prince of Peace,

Amen

S Haward and J McColm, 25th February 2022

Also a prayer of confession, also from last Sunday:

Holy and perfect God, we come to you this morning with the suffering of many people on our minds. We pray for our sisters and brothers in Ukraine and will pray for them again.

But we also come to ask your forgiveness. For we did not get to this sad day by accident, but because the worship of property and pleasure and power has taken the place which should belong to you and has corrupted many who would never themselves pick up a weapon or make war on their neighbour.

You have indeed made laws to guide and help us live at peace with one another and the breaking of some has led to the breaking of them all and to the taking away of life in the horror of war.

So Lord fill us with compassion and a desire to see right done in Ukraine yes indeed, but save us this morning from the nasty smell of self-righteousness. Cleanse our society and our world of wrong things, yes indeed Lord, but start we pray with us, for we need it too.

We confess before you, heavenly Father, that there is no health in us and it is only in the merciful love that Jesus showed that you can bear to have us in your sight. So from the depths of our hearts, we thank you for that love and for your forgiveness O Lord and pledge ourselves in friendship to you.

In his precious name we pray, Amen.

S Haward, 27th February 2022