

“Because you are God’s child you not only need him, but he needs you.”

O Loving God, parent of us all, thank you for birthing us into this world. Thank you, that as the disciple John said, “See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are.” And if we really stop to think about what that means, we should be so thankful, so awed, so humbled. Because it means that just as we love and care for and want the best for our children, so you love and care for and want the best for us. Just as loving parents help, teach, guide and comfort their children, so you want to help, teach, guide and comfort us. Just as loving parents would sacrifice anything for their children, so you, in fact, sacrificed yourself for us. And help us also to remember that just as parents must sometimes allow their children to experience scrapes and tumbles, disappointments and failures in order to help them grow and mature, so sometimes you must allow us to face difficulties we would rather not. Forgive us when we think we got here on our own, when we think we have accomplished things on our own, when we are determined to do things on our own. Lord, we confess that we can sometimes be rather rebellious children. When we don’t want to follow your ways, when we want to act independently, when we do things and acts in ways that do disservice to our family name – Christ, Christian. Help us to remember, that just as parents need their children – to share together in love, joy, laughter, friendship, and all that life offers, so you want to share in that with us. Yes, Lord, may we acknowledge that you have a need, not only to love, but to be loved. And so may we love you more deeply, more intentionally, with all our hearts and minds and souls. And with our actions, as we seek to share your love with those who do not know you. With those who don’t yet feel your love. With those who need our love.

And when we think of giving love, we know that praying for others is an expression of love. We pray Lord, for the rescue efforts in Thailand. For the boys, their coach, their parents, and for those working so hard and diligently and sacrificially to bring them to safety. Thank you for those who have been rescued so far this day, and we pray for patience and success that the rest may come home by day’s end. Thank you for the efforts of people and nations around the world, not looking at ethnicity or religion, but looking at shared humanity, and the desire to come together, to help, and to preserve the life of those young boys. Lord, there are others we wish to pray for. You have heard those on our prayer list, but hear us now as people in this congregation lift aloud the names for whom we ask your blessing.