



TO ALL CONGREGATIONS IN THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA
DATE: 12 SEPTEMBER 2001

PRAYERS FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Greetings in Christ Jesus!

We have all been shocked and horrified by the attacks on the United States of America.

Today I sent the following letter to the Embassy of the United States of America in Canberra, to the various United States Consulates around the country, to our sister churches in the United States (Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian), and to the National Council of Churches in the United States of America. The text was also released to the media. It is as follows:

A MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

To our friends in the United States of America:

The Uniting Church in Australia wishes to express its deep sorrow and regret at the terrorist attacks on the people of the United States of America.

Our church is deeply grieved at the shocking series of events that has unfolded on Tuesday 11 September 2001, with the consequent loss of innocent lives and lingering suffering.

Words cannot express our deep sadness. Please be assured that though Australia is many thousands miles from the shores of the United States we unite with you in your grief and sorrow.

Please be assured of the prayers of the people of the Uniting Church in Australia. We mourn with you and as you move ahead through your grief we pray that we will share that journey with you.

We also remember that this series of events will affect many people around the world, including Australian citizens, and we obviously express our condolences for them and their families. As far as we are able we walk this difficult walk with you.

Yours in Christian love
Reverend Professor James Haire
President, The Uniting Church in Australia, National Assembly

Services and vigils, both within the Uniting Church and ecumenically, are being held around the nation.

At this time we come again to the heart of the Gospel: the presence of evil and depravity, our own sense of vulnerability, our moral outrage, the grace of God known to us in Jesus Christ, our

compassion for the bereaved and the suffering, our concern for justice, our discipleship, and our hope and certainty in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I offer this prayer for your use in the days ahead:

**Holy and Gracious God, Blessed Trinity,
in your Son you have taught us that nothing in life or death
is able to separate us from your love.**

**We pray for the people of the United States of America,
and all Australians, and people of other nations,
affected by the terrorism in America in these recent days.**

Comfort those who have lost loved ones.

Support the injured and those near death.

Inspire the emergency services.

Lighten the darkness of those who are near despair.

Rekindle hope in our lives.

In Christ's name, we pray,

Amen.

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James Haire", written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Reverend Professor James Haire
President
The Uniting Church in Australia, National Assembly