**Prayer of the Church – *Proper 20B***

*The Lord has called us to live not for ourselves but for God and for others. Therefore let us pray to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit in the confidence that if we draw near to God he will draw near to us and hear us.*

Heavenly Father: thank you for loving us sufficiently to catch us doing wrong, and to question us about our beliefs and behaviours. Open our hearts to receive your scrutiny gladly, knowing that you love to forgive us and restore us, for Jesus' sake.

*Lord, in your mercy:* ***hear our prayer.***

Continue to question your people about the things that matter - about our goals and visions, about our thoughts and actions, about our motives and beliefs. Expose our error, forgive us our sin, teach us the truth, and lead us along the way of Christ.

*Lord, in your mercy:* ***hear our prayer.***

Give your people grace and truth as we listen to each other, as we challenge one another, and as we support each other, especially in our own family, this congregation and the Lutheran Church of Australia. Direct us to understand and use your law and gospel properly, for unity and peace among us, and for the salvation of many.

*Lord, in your mercy:* ***hear our prayer.***

Protect the world from bitter envy and selfish ambition. Let the rule of law prevail over all disorder, terrorism, and evil. Reform all institutions which have distorted your good law, and bring our society to thank you for the proper direction of conscience, social manners and public law.

*Lord, in your mercy:* ***hear our prayer.***

Relieve those affected by violent weather and other natural disasters. Bring all people to use the good things of your creation properly, giving thanks to you, and working for the benefit of the poorest and weakest among us.

*Lord, in your mercy:* ***hear our prayer.***

Heavenly Father, draw us all to take refuge in Christ - when our conscience troubles us and when it doesn't. Help us not to seek greatness in ourselves but spur us on to serve others, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray.

**Amen.**