**A Prayer Service in Times of Natural Disaster**

**We Gather:**

As we stand in awe of the forces of nature that have overwhelmed us and our environment and so many people of our State in the past days and weeks, we place ourselves in the protection and care of our creator God. We light this candle, symbolising the promise of Jesus to be with us when we gather in his name.

Concerned and worried and anxious for the future, let us pause to quieten our minds and bodies so we can welcome our God into our hearts and hear and remember the reassurance of Jesus of God’s care for each one of us. (Pause)

**We Listen:** (Mt 6: 25-26, 31-33)

In Matthew’s gospel, Jesus reassures us of God’s care for us all:

I tell you not to worry about your life. Don't worry about having something to eat, drink, or wear. Isn't life more than food or clothing? **26**Look at the birds in the sky! They don't plant or harvest. They don't even store grain in barns. Yet your Father in heaven takes care of them. Aren't you worth more than birds?...... **31**Don't worry and ask yourselves, "Will we have anything to eat? Will we have anything to drink? Will we have any clothes to wear?" **32**Only people who don't know God are always worrying about such things. Your Father in heaven knows that you need all of these. **33**But more than anything else, put God's work first and do what he wants. Then the other things will be yours as well. Don't worry about tomorrow. It will take care of itself. You have enough to worry about today.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**We Respond:**

In our time of need and concern, let us turn to our God, trusting in the promise of Jesus that God does not abandon us when trouble strikes.

We pray for all who are suffering as a result of this disaster. That they will place their trust in the compassion of God. Lord hear us. **Be near to us, our God.**

We pray for God’s blessing on all those who are working to help others in this time. Lord hear us. **Be near to us, our God.**

We pray for the gift of wisdom, courage, resilience and leadership of those in government, authority and emergency services and for the welfare services of our country that will support us in this time. Lord hear us. **Be near to us, our God.**

We place before our God all who are fearful of the future: their security, their income, their place to live. Lord hear us. **Be near to us, our God.**

We remember those who have been injured and who have been killed in this disaster, their families and those who are caring for them. That they will find comfort in the promises of Jesus in their need. Lord hear us. **Be near to us, our God.**

We pray for the gift of patience and generosity and strength of mind as we face the long task of rebuilding our and others’ lives. Lord hear us. **Be near to us, our God.**

As people of hope and service, let us offer to each other reassurance and hope by offering each other a sign of peace.

**We Go:**

Assured and comforted by the promises of Jesus, let us go on our way with hope and courage and strength, to bring and be good news to all who are in need and distressed by these events. And may our God go with us:

God the Creator, who loves us all; Jesus our brother, who teaches us the Way; and the Spirit of Life, who is with us always.

Amen.