

Statement of repentance to the city of Greater Bendigo

We the undersigned representatives of the church of Bendigo are conscious of the failure of the church to support the city in past times. We seek the forgiveness of God and the city for this failure.

We believe that the role of the church in the city is twofold: in our theological language that is to be both prophetic and priestly. The prophetic role is the one that most people see. It is where the church draws attention to matters that we believe are contrary to the will of God for our city. However in this role we have sometimes been judgemental, and have sometimes put our own cultural biases in place of the clear word of God seen in the Bible. For this we seek forgiveness. We resolve in the future to draw the attention of the city to those areas where God would have a specific word to give, but to do it in humility and gentleness wherever possible. We will exercise this without judgementalism and seek your assistance in this to draw to our attention where we fail in this matter.

The priestly role has been seriously neglected. This is the role whereby we are told to seek the peace and prosperity of the city (Jer 29:7). We are called to support those who have been given the authority to lead and prosper the city in all its aspects, civic, business, educational, cultural, ethnic, health and welfare, etc. We have been lax in not supporting the city in these areas and seek forgiveness for this. We resolve to support the city in these areas in the future and to pray for the peace and prosperity of the city of Greater Bendigo.

We would also seek to be instruments of reconciliation between all peoples of the city: indigenous people, ethnic people, people with mental illness, single parent families, youth and all people who feel marginalized by our society, while not compromising the word of God as seen in the Bible.

We bring this statement before all leaders and residents of the city of Greater Bendigo with the desire to serve all in the spirit of love and cooperation.