



Dear Friends

Each year we celebrate Arbor Day or National Plant a Tree Day and I wonder what tree might be your favourite. Many years ago I used to walk in the forest near my home and found an old gnarled tree. It was not a thing of beauty nor did it provide shade but I found in that tree strength, tenacity, and endurance. It encouraged me to keep going and not to give up. It became my “hugging tree”. We too can show strength, tenacity and can endure whatever comes our way.

We used to sing a song in Primary School:

“Trees, trees, beautiful trees,  
plant them and help them grow,  
care is repaid by cool green shade, trees beautiful trees”

A quote by Torie Cooper reflected my own thoughts: - “I gaze upon them and see myself - bent, broken, and twisted in places. We all are. We sometimes struggle to grow in the harsh sun, fierce wind, and driving rain of life's challenges. To look upon ourselves and see the sweet beauty of our brokenness is to fully accept what is. Like our 'sister' the gnarled old gum tree, we are indeed so very beautiful and we are loved.”

The trees in the woodland where I live, have been a part of the Cumberland State Forest so are many years old. They give shelter to many birds, they give shade on a hot day, they stand tall during storms, however sometimes they are broken by the winds, and when branches fall, these become habitat for lizards and other small creatures.

Gracious God, we thank you that you use us too, even when we are broken. Help us to see the strength, endurance and beauty in each other, even in our brokenness. Help us to remember that we are precious and that you love us.  
Amen

In Christian Love and Service

Lyn

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[Bing Videos](#)

Beauty for brokenness  
Hope for despair  
Lord in the suffering  
This is our prayer  
Bread for the children  
Justice Joy Peace  
Sunrise to sunset  
Your Kingdom increase

Shelter for fragile lives  
Cures for their ills  
Work for the craftsman  
Trade for their skills  
Land for the dispossessed  
Rights for the weak  
Voices to plead the cause  
Of those who can't speak

God of the poor  
Friend of the weak  
Give us compassion we pray  
Melt our cold hearts  
Let tears fall like rain  
Come, change our love  
From a spark to a flame

Refuge from cruel wars  
Havens from fear  
Cities for sanctuary  
Freedoms to share  
Peace to the killing-fields  
Scorched earth to green  
Christ for the bitterness  
His cross for the pain

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Friend of the weak  
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Come, change our love  
From a spark to a flame

Rest for the ravaged earth  
Oceans and streams  
Plundered and poisoned  
Our future, our dreams  
Lord, end our madness  
Carelessness, greed  
Make us content with  
The things that we need

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Friend of the weak  
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Come, change our love  
From a spark to a flame

Lighten our darkness  
Breathe on this flame  
Until your justice burns  
Brightly again  
Until the nations  
Learn of Your ways  
Seek Your salvation  
And bring You their praise

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