



# City of Ipswich

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### **Mayor Maekawa's speech at 32nd Prayer for Peace Concert**

Good evening and thank you for joining us today for the 32nd Prayer for Peace Concert.

Seventy-nine years have passed since the end of the Second World War. If I may begin by sharing my own experience, I was born shortly after the war came to a close, and with my mother and father, withdrew from Taiwan the following year. My parents faced tremendous hardships, having lost everything they had owned and returned to Japan with nothing. But because we had been in Taiwan, we were fortunate enough to be spared the agonies of battle, and our only knowledge of World War II is what we learned from video recordings and past documents. For the majority of you younger than me, I imagine the war must be even more a thing of the distant past, a thing of history books.

If we take a look around the world, however, there is still no end in sight to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Our neighboring countries are also making conspicuous moves to develop nuclear weapons, reinforce their missile capabilities, and rapidly expand their military power. Not a day goes by without news of war, regional conflict, or terrorism somewhere in the world.

The peace we enjoy in Japan today is precious and priceless, and it is delicately sustained by the invisible efforts of innumerable people. I believe it is crucial that we commit ourselves to keeping up these all-out efforts already being made.

Today, we invite Nerima resident Mr. Kato Nobuyasu to share his story. Mr. Kato was six years old when he experienced the Great Tokyo Air Raid. He will tell us about his memories of the day of the bombing, and how he escaped during the raid. I hope his story will give you an opportunity to think about war.

We also have letters from the Haidan District in Beijing, China, and the City of Ipswich in Australia with which Nerima has fostered friendships for over 30 years. Mutual exchanges between municipalities at the grassroots level are significant contributors to peace. I hope to continue the efforts to foster international exchange where the leading roles are played by you, the residents, including the children.

Finally, for the concert, we present the tenor singer Mr. Nishimura Satoshi. Please enjoy Mr. Nishimura's emotional, elegant singing.





**Mayor Teresa Harding**

City of Ipswich  
Queensland, Australia

**32<sup>nd</sup> NERIMA PRAYER FOR PEACE CONCERT  
1 AUGUST 2024**

**PEACE MESSAGE FROM MAYOR TERESA HARDING  
CITY OF IPSWICH, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA**

Mayor Akio Maekawa, senior leaders and the Nerima community, it is my pleasure as the Mayor of the City of Ipswich to send a peace message to the people of Nerima City.

Our world has faced many new challenges in the past few years and throughout that we have looked towards others more than ever. As we help our neighbours, let's show grace, kindness and friendship to those who reach out.

I wish our nations continued peace and prosperity for generations to come. I hope we can continue to flourish and grow our Sister City relationship and work towards an ever-peaceful friendship especially in the spirit of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Prayer of Peace Concert.

On behalf of the community of the City of Ipswich, I continue to offer my support and friendship to the citizens of Nerima City.

Yours sincerely,

Mayor Teresa Harding

1 Nicholas Street  
PO Box 191  
IPSWICH QLD 4305

Phone (07) 3810 6011  
Email [mayor@ipswich.qld.gov.au](mailto:mayor@ipswich.qld.gov.au)

[ipswich.qld.gov.au](http://ipswich.qld.gov.au)