

Oh Lord, he's on a whinge 'n' a prayer

**Paul
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Sydney's heritage links the present with the past. So we agree with Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore in backing retention of the prayer that opens council meetings.

Newly elected Greens councillor Matthew Thompson is on the wrong tram in calling for the prayer to go.

Just as clear is that the Lord Mayor likes the prayer and our various faith leaders representing numerous religions have no problem with it either.

It simply connects to a higher power – including the will of the people – to guide the deliberations of elected leaders.

There are also examples in some notable commercial activities that retain a certain religious overtone. For example, when passengers are referred to by the number of “souls on

board” when a cruise ship leaves Sydney Harbour or another port.

“Souls” subtly recognises that taking a ship to sea still has some inherent though manageable risks and that protecting lives is the highest maritime priority.

No one objected when Sydney's newest Greek restaurant recently hosted a special blessing from the Greek Orthodox Church.

Scores of guests, of various religious beliefs, had absolutely no objection to the ceremony. It was treated with due reverence.

Thompson apparently missed the news that wokeism is in retreat and that many people are tired of change for change's sake.

They don't mind councils or parliaments beginning their proceedings with a humble prayer if it encourages our leaders to tackle real-life issues competently and well.

Thompson cites the 2021 census that the majority of City of Sydney residents don't hold any religious beliefs.

He claims council's prayer doesn't reflect the religiously diverse and secular communities council represents.

Many councils, he claimed, were adopting secular affirmations to open their meetings to ensure no one felt excluded from proceedings.

Council instead should solve homelessness, help small businesses and remove red tape.

On a scale of importance, axing the council prayer is extremely low.

Let's keep the prayer. It's a nice thing to do and it is part of our wonderful city's soul.

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