

## MEMORIAL HYMN FOR AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE

### IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE BUSHFIRES 2009

Now thank we all our God  
for lives beloved and cherished,  
the brave who faced the flames,  
the young and old who perished,  
for those who fight the fires  
that sear our country's soul,  
for all who give relief  
to comfort and make whole.

No tears can stem this grief  
through outback, town or city,  
yet as disaster strikes,  
we share a common pity,  
where hearts and hands can help  
to build or recreate,  
our nation stands as one  
to mourn our people's fate.

Our lives are held in trust,  
O God of our believing,  
and we who still are spared,  
owe duty to the grieving,  
for everyone is kin  
when all can feel this pain,  
as families are gone  
and shattered ones remain.

Now thank we all our God  
for courage meeting danger,  
when selfless spirits fight  
for mate or helpless stranger,  
when wind and bushfire flare  
and terror grips our faith,  
compassion keeps us strong,  
through tragedy and death.

TUNE: Nun Danket Alle Gott

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Note: Shirley wrote this hymn on 12 February 2009, in response to the Victorian bushfire disaster. She chose the theme and tune of "Now thank we all our God" because Martin Rinkart wrote his much-loved hymn after ministering to people dying from the plague in Saxony in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and after conducting funerals for around 5000 plague victims, including his wife. Shirley gives free permission for its use throughout Australia.