

SUNDAY PRAYERS

17th May 2020



St Nicolas
NEWBURY

Being Good News. Bringing Good News.

(Please use these prayers in whatever way is helpful for you, whether you follow them through as a service or pick out the sections which best help you to engage with our living God.)

Loving God, we gather in Jesus' name:
bringing our hungry hearts and carrying our heavy loads.
We come to find rest and life.
We come to drink of the living water that is Jesus your Son.
He will sustain us, and help us grow in faith and understanding.

PRAYER FOR THE DAY (from *Seasons and Celebrations* by Donald Hilton)

Almighty God,
You loved the world so much that you gave your Son.
We will give ourselves in worship and service to you.
Bind us together in that fellowship of love
which unites us to you, our Father,
through the Son
and in the power of the Holy Spirit.
In Jesus' name. Amen.

ISAIAH 55:1-6

'Come, all you who are thirsty,
come to the waters;
and you who have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without cost.
Why spend money on what is not bread,
and your labour on what does not satisfy?
Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,
and you will delight in the richest of fare.
Give ear and come to me;
listen, that you may live.

I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
my faithful love promised to David.
See, I have made him a witness to the peoples,
a ruler and commander of the peoples.
Surely you will summon nations you know not,
and nations you do not know will come running to you,
because of the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel,
for he has endowed you with splendour.’
Seek the LORD while he may be found;
call on him while he is near.

CONFESSION

Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy
forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly,
love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God.
Amen.

ACTS 2:42-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Will Hunter Smart's sermon on this passage can be found [here](#).

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION written by Jonathan, Helen, Anna and Becca Dean.

(There is an alternative prayer activity on page 5 of this booklet)

Lord, we pray for the church in countries where Christianity is outlawed, and Christians are persecuted. We pray for protection and safety for Christians in these countries, particularly North Korea & Afghanistan. May you give them the strength and courage to sustain their faith. Thank you for organisations such as Open Doors, and their work in giving vital aid and long-term support to persecuted Christians. We pray for churches across the world as they grapple with the new environment we are adjusting to right now. Enable them to shine the light of your love in their communities.

Father God we lift up our nation in the middle of this crisis. We pray you would strengthen all our key workers and bless them with energy, peace, and courage as they continue their vital work. We thank you for their sacrifices. We pray especially for Boris Johnson, his cabinet and all those making critical decisions – may you guide them to wise choices as restrictions begin to ease, that protect us and care for the most vulnerable in our society. May you use this time to make changes in our society to reflect your kingdom more, putting others above ourselves and caring deeply about creation.

Lord, we thank you for the people of Newbury and pray that these difficult times will help strengthen our community. We pray that people's focus would be shifted from materialism and self-gain, to Christ centred love for one another. Help us to look out for each other's needs and prayerfully respond to the situations around us. We pray that the vulnerable people in our town and those anxious about health, work and loved ones, would know your peace and comfort. We pray that as our town adjusts to the ever-changing environment, those in positions of leadership act with integrity and wisdom.

Thank you for the faithfulness you have proven in our lives and help us to be reminded that this will continue in all circumstances. Fill us with your peace and compassion, that we may reflect your love to those around us. Help us to remain connected as a church community and encourage one another despite this time of separation. Set a fire in our hearts to use this opportunity to spread the hope and good news that we have through Christ. We pray that the certainty of an eternity with you, our heavenly Father, would bring comfort to people in the midst of such uncertainty.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.

THE GRACE

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.

ALTERNATIVE PRAYER ACTIVITY

What does it mean for you to be devoted to God's Word?

Have you become more or less devoted during this time of restriction and lockdown?

Have you turned to God's Word for answers, direction, and comfort? If you've turned elsewhere for these things, how helpful have they been?

Do you study it to know God better?

What might motivate or inspire you to become more devoted to God's Word?

Here are just a few suggestions:

- Bible reading notes – there are lots of different ones available
- An app giving suggested readings for each day
- Read through a book of the Bible and spend some time thinking about what it is saying to you
- Try listening to someone reading the Bible (online or on CD) if you find it hard to concentrate on reading the words
- Keep a journal of what you read and how you respond to it
- Try to learn a section of scripture by heart so that you can call it to mind whenever you need to be reminded of God's love for you