

THIS IS YOUR SPACE TO PRAY

EDITION 3

This prayer resource is offered in the hope that it will sustain you whilst we are worshipping in different places. Just because we are not gathering together in one place as we would usually do on a Sunday morning, it doesn't mean we aren't gathering together as a community of faith and prayer.

We will be adding to this resource over the next few days as members of our community write their own prayers and reflections. Please keep in touch with us during this time.

If you need spiritual or pastoral support, please contact:

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Don't forget worship services are available online each Sunday at <http://manninghamuc.org/online/>

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAYER

Begin by centering yourself and your thoughts – you might like to light a candle or focus on an image or a flower, leaf, pinecone

Breathe the breathe prayer. If you say Yah-weh, the name of God, you cannot say it without breathing both in and out deeply. This will calm your breathing

You might like to write down the names of all those you know who need prayer

If you are praying in the morning, consider what is happening today. Is there anything you would like supported in prayer? Is there anything challenging today? Anything you know will bring you joy?

If you are praying in the evening, consider your day and all that happened. Where do you need guidance? What are you thankful for?

PRAYERS WRITTEN AND OFFERED BY MEMBERS OF OUR OWN CHURCH COMMUNITY:



Lord God

You know what lies deep in our heart; our needs and our fears, even before we know them ourselves. You know of our anxieties over this terrible epidemic sweeping your world. You know how surreal it feels for us. We don't know what direction it will take or when we might emerge from the nightmare. All we know deep down is that you are with us and we will emerge to a new day, perhaps not in the way we might have planned, but we will get through it.

Lord, we are reminded that our parents and grandparents faced trials no less than ours. The traumas of two world wars, a pandemic and a depression did not define them and we know with your help this trial will not define us. Help us to believe that we will emerge, wiser and changed for the better.

While it is easy for us to wallow in our own despair Lord, we know that you made us better than that. For the Gospel of Jesus reminds us that we have a role to play in this epidemic.

- Make us obedient to the wisdom of our health experts and our government that sets the restrictions to limit the virus and let us be an example to those around us.
- Help us to be disciplined in our confinement; to eat and drink with restraint and to exercise our minds and our bodies and to treat those close to us with care and empathy.
- Help use our gifts to ease the burden of others and to let them know they are affirmed by us and loved by you beyond measure. Most of us aren't on the front line in this crisis and our roles are ill-defined, but we know of many things we can do. We have neighbours and friends, those we see often and those rarely who might need our help, a cheery word or a prayer. There are some who are now distant from us because of past hurts or the tyranny of time or distance; Lord help us discern if this may be the time to reconnect.

Lord we know we will get through this crisis with you, for nothing can ever separate us from your love. We know we will emerge into a new dawn. So help us make this time one of profound

reflection on the meaning and purpose of our lives and one of service to those who might need us.

In Jesus' name we pray
Amen

(Don April 2020)

Thoughts on Prayer



I found it inspiring to join with Christians across the world at 10 o'clock one night in March 2020 to pray the Lord's prayer from our own homes. This was a powerful act when the world was in the grip of a pandemic with no end in sight.

But how do we continue to pray when isolated?

I re-read something I'd written Lent 2008 when I was wondering the same thing, although at that time we were pandemic-free.

My thoughts then had turned to a Russian Monk I had read about. In his quest to find answers on how to pray, he went from place to place seeking wisdom from others.

Finally, a short but effective prayer came to him. It was,
'Lord have mercy on me.'

Employing this same prayer recently in 2020, I walked round and round our small courtyard garden saying it but replacing the 'me' with the names the countries that were struggling to contain the pandemic. I found this prayer not only simple to remember, but it encompassed all I wanted to say at that time.

(Rosemary Beavis. April 2020)

Prayer; Change and Hope

Father God

In this time of Lent,
Life has stopped,
Times have changed,
I have decided
I don't like

change.

A prisoner in my own home,
Removed from friends,
And family,
Living with memories,
I long to sit with my friend,
to solve the world's problems,
Over a cup of coffee.

I long

To hear children laugh
Choirs sing

The band play

Beneath an empty

cross

Father God'

In this changing'
uncertain world'

I have come to realise,
To understand,
one thing will never change
No matter where I am
Or what my circumstances.

That old empty cross
Will never change.

This simple,
Stark reminder
of injustice
will never change.

Yet the world has forever changed,
Because of this cross.

Father God,
I give thanks
For this day
As again, I celebrate a risen Lord.

I give thanks,
That in this changing world
You remain,
And will always be,
Our father in Heaven;

My constant companion
While a prisoner
In my own home,

Amen.

(Ken Manson)

We come together this Easter from a wide variety of physical spaces, obeying the physical isolation rules that protect us from COVID-19 and that aim to protect our amazing health and other essential service workers, but coming as one family of faith, forever connected by the love of our mother/father God.

Lord, you walked the path of your Easter journey with foreboding but with a clear sense of purpose, determination and certain hope. We rejoice today for your presence with us in every moment of our lives, in the happy ones, in the deep dark times, in what can sometimes be a daily slog, and in the opportunities.

As we walk the path of COVID-19 together, if separate, please help us to focus on the hope that you offer everyday


- May we as a world and a community be led to walk together, for each other and not for ourselves, on this journey that can unite despite its tragic ravaging of so many people; lead us to hope
- Be with every individual person and family (singles, each parent, young person, little child, grandparent, friend, colleague) affected by sickness, danger, death, fear, isolation, uncertainty and may they know, and be able to feel, that they are not alone. Lay your gentle guiding hand on each one with the strong sense of peace that comes with love; lead us to hope
- Be with those who are leading and guiding nations, making hard if measured decisions in unprecedented times. Give them strength, wisdom, health and willing collaboration with those who might normally oppose; give them hope
- Be with our scientists, those seeking to understand this virus, its treatments, and to develop the vaccine that will subdue it; give them insight, give them hope
- Be with those working in supermarkets, local food traders, farmers, restaurants providing takeaway, transport workers, teachers, childcare workers and others who support those of us who isolate; give them peace and health, give them hope
- Be with our amazing health and safety workers in every aspect – doctors, nurses, paramedics, pharmacists, allied health, police, fire, cleaners, armed forces and more, the few doing so much and risking so much for the many; give them strength, support and resilience, give them hope

- Be with every person who is hidden and is struggling at this time – those with other health conditions, those living with violence, those challenged by mental health, the homeless, the hungry, the insecure – give them solace and a helping hand to grasp, and give them hope
- Be with business and the economy, those losing jobs, those struggling to pay bills – may they find reason and compassion; give them hope
- Be with our Earth and nature – we know we have made a mess of your creation and the Earth is showing us now how a ceasing of damaging activity can begin to make a difference. Thank you that the Earth is less polluted from space, help us to listen to the wisdom of indigenous leaders who have nurtured this planet for generations; may this time of shared challenge give us pause to consider what we will give up collectively to begin to restore our world; give it hope
- Please give each one of us your sure hope and patience as we live this time together; may we become more connected, more satisfied with the simple, valuing that which really has value – other people, family, friends, community, health, food, shelter and sufficient wealth; may we know, feel and share your hope and love anew.

And while we focus daily on our shared COVID journey, may we remember it is one period in a much bigger space, a highly challenging period that will and should change our lives, but one that we collectively can choose for positive development and growth rather than for crushing defeat. May we take your Easter journey onward and higher, with hope and determination for a healthier, kinder, more compassionate future.
Amen


(Wendy Austin)

Psalm 91 V11

 This was the verse that led my mother through the unimaginable desolation of a missing husband for six years during WW11, discovering three years along that he was held captive in a Prisoner of War camp on Timor. She treasured it always:

‘For He will give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.’

The Aboriginal Our Father

 You are Our Father, you live in heaven
We talk to you, Father you are good

We believe your Word Father
We your children, give us bread today

We have done wrong, we are sorry
Help us Father not to sin again


Others have done wrong to us
And we are sorry for them, Father today


Stop us from doing wrong, Father
Save us all from the evil one

You are Our Father, you live in heaven
We talk to you, Father you are good.

Amen

Leunig

 Love is born
With a dark and troubled face
When hope is dead
And in the most unlikely place
Love is born:
Love is always born

 Lord,
I had forgotten the stillness, the absolute lazy quiet of a suburban neighbourhood on a sunny day

I hadn't listened to the magpies song in a long time
I hadn't really noticed the changing beauty of the autumn colours in the trees

I hadn't experienced the simple joy in growing veggies from seed or delighted in finishing some creative projects - most of which had been started once and carefully stored away for another day in a less busy time.....

There have never been so many young families out riding or walking or spending time together, and I miss my family but i would rather they stay safe, and the catchups online are so good.

Lord we do not know your plan but this quiet time is also cathartic for many,

Yet there are many more we do not forget who are at the brunt of this pandemic and whose lives are at risk to keep us safe.

Please help us to let them know we are so grateful,

We need to be so mindful and united to get through this but with your help we must

We pray in your name Lord

Amen

“ Creator God ,
During this harrowing time of the pandemic
We pray for those deeply affected by it - those who are suffering from the virus or seeing their loved ones suffer, both here and overseas, those who have lost jobs or businesses and incomes, those whose lives are turned upside down , those who are worried about their future,

We thank you for the selfless work from our medical teams and leaders of our country, and all those who work behind the scenes so that we can still get our essential items and live as well as possible during these restrictions. We pray that they will know how much we value them.

Although this is a deeply disturbing time
We thank you for giving us some hope for the future

Thank you for giving us the hope of recovery, the hope of controlling the viral spread, the hope of a vaccine , and the hope of seeing our loved ones and friends again soon, of getting back to work, to school, to our normal lives again.

Lord we hold onto the hope that this time will pass and that the world will steadfastly recover

In your name we pray

Amen

From Dale Steel

“ In this time of change we have found ourselves going through so many emotions - fear and uncertainty, horror, depression, anxiety, stress, sadness, before acceptance, calmness, kindness, and an appreciation of the world around us.

The changes were unprecedented and strict leading to fear and uncertainty and a lot of hardship for many.

But we knew the changes were here for the best reason and here till we changed the curve, so we had to have acceptance and grace.

It was a time of reassessing and prioritising.

As we do we become aware of the positive things like being less busy, less rushing, having more time to do the things that bring you joy, more family time for young families, time to remotely connect with others.

We can also use this time to reflect on the busyness of our lives in this modern age, and on the things that are most important.

For some this is a time to slow down, to breathe deeply, to take care of ourselves and others, to learn new skills or to revisit the skills we had not used for a while, to connect through technology, to get back to basics.

As in nature living things must change to grow, so we can use this time to grow. We can grow spiritually, emotionally, physically and intellectually.

We can expand our knowledge and our way of doing things and learn new skills, and practise the old skills again.

This slower pace of life is in many ways a gift, and one that we should make the most of - before it's time to get back to our fast paced lives again.

Maybe it's time to re-evaluate that as well. Many businesses have found it's just as easy to operate from home- at least sometimes. and there are many ways to connect online as our online choirs have shown us.

The health of our atmosphere and planet is improving, with way less fuel and aviation gas consumed and less industry causing pollution.

It will be a temporary reminder of a different life that we could have had

**PRAYERS FROM THE WIDER CHURCH AND
AVAILABLE ON THEIR WEBSITES:**

Statement of Faith



Silence is Not Enough

In our remembrance we know
silence is not enough
to change the world

I have come that you may have life and life to the full

In our remembrance we know
silence is not enough
to bring peace to the world

Behold I make all things new

In our remembrance we know
silence is not enough
to change the minds of leaders

Your light must shine before people

In our remembrance we know
silence is not enough
to change the way we do things

This is what I command you: love one another

In our remembrance we know
silence is not enough
to convey the truth of war

Every tree is known by the fruit it bears.

The mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

In our remembrance we know
silence is not enough
but your words are

Come and follow me

~ written by Roddy Hamilton, and posted on the **New Kilpatrick Parish Church** website. <https://www.nkchurch.org.uk/original-liturgy>

Prayer of Petition



God help us to change.

To change ourselves and to change our world.

To know the need for it.

To deal with the pain of it.

To feel the joy of it.

To undertake the journey without understanding the destination.

The art of gentle revolution.

Amen.

~ written by Michael Leunig in "A Common Prayer" (1990). <http://www.harpercollins.com.au/books/1863717404> Posted on the **Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand** website. <http://www.presbyterian.org.nz/for-ministers/worship-resources/>

Prayer of Adoration and Confession

(inspired by Acts 9: 1-6)



You break in, O God,
on the road

you break in, O God,

exactly the way we do not believe

you break in, O God,

and change everything

Why are your stories never mundane

Why can you not just leave us alone

and go and transform somewhere else

that is not as certain and sure of you

You just disrupt us and cause anxiety

We are not people of change

You break in, O God

with a call

you break in, O God

with an invitation

you break in, O God

with the truth

Why do you wait for us to respond
and never give up?

Why do you speak into our souls
the truth of how we live?

Why do you keep goading us, provoking us
disturbing us with the truth?

You break in, O God

with a new realm

You break in, O God

with a new world

You break in, O God

with your intent for the future

You always are a challenge to us
and we dream of that realm of yours we speak of so
often

but what disturbs us most is how you want to get
there

through us, your partners and companions,
with space enough for everyone
even those who persecute you
by doing nothing

God, break in again

and call us to be your workers

God, break in again

and use the gifts we are to build your realm

God, break in again

and change our world once more.

So be it
Amen

~ written by Rev. Roddy Hamilton, Minister of New Kilpatrick Church.
Posted on the Church of Scotland's **Starters for Sunday** website. [http://
www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/starters_for_sunday/](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/starters_for_sunday/)

Prayer



"If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you." Luke 17:6

Boundless God,
help us to see the world differently—
not with our own limited vision
but with the gaze of love and justice.

Give us the foolishness to believe that we can change
what the world says is impossible;
and when we lose sight of the power of love to
change the world
increase our faith. Amen.

~ posted on the Christian Aid website. <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/>