

A service of private prayer and reflection

While we are unable to worship together in one place, the Church is still united in prayer across time and space. You may wish to use this outline as a basis for Sunday prayers, perhaps at the time when you might normally have been in Church, or at a time which works for you.

It's not written in stone, so alter this until it works for you in the way that you would like. The dispersed community of Christ in the town (and beyond) will be keeping the voice of prayer going throughout this difficult time, and we are all a part of that one great voice sounding through time and eternity.

Preparation

Take a few moments to become still and remember God's presence. Try to set other concerns aside for now and give them into God's keeping.

**Heavenly Father,
even though we cannot meet together,
we know that you hold each of us in your loving arms.
Our thoughts are with our brothers and sisters
who would normally be worshipping with us.
May we all draw nearer to one other and to you in spirit
as we share this time of prayer, apart yet still together,
and knowing that nothing can separate us from your love.
Amen.**

A short period of self-examination follows. Then:

**Lord God,
We have sinned against you;
We have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing
and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore to us the joy of your salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Pause a moment to remember God's assurance of forgiveness to all who truly repent, and take comfort from it.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;

though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;
God will help it when the morning dawns.

The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

(from Psalm 46)

Reading(s) *(Sunday readings are at the end).*

Prayers

This is the time to bring before God all the fears and anxieties we have, as well as thanksgiving for unexpected blessings. Take your time.

When we can't meet easily with others our fears can spiral and we can become very anxious. It may help to sit quietly in God's presence and just hold our concerns before him.

If it's more natural to you to pray out loud, then do that.

Some suggestions for prayer are:

The world in this difficult time.

The Church as it seeks to minister to others in new ways.

Those affected by corona virus – those who are ill, all health workers, those in isolation. Pray that we will find ways to reach out to the lonely, the anxious and the distressed.

Our local community, for neighbourliness and cheerfulness.

All those working in essential services.

Those we carry on our own hearts

The following form of prayer may be helpful:

**That this day may be holy, peaceful
and full of your presence;**

**That our work and the people we meet
may bring us closer to you;**

**That we may hear and respond to your call
to peace, justice and loving service;**

**That you will sustain the faith and hope of those
who are lonely, oppressed and anxious *especially*;**

**That you will strengthen us in your service,
and fill our hearts with longing for your kingdom;**

That....

In faith, we pray to you, O God.

Our Father....

Final Prayer

**In darkness and in light,
in trouble and in joy,
help us, heavenly Father,
to trust your love,
to serve your purpose,
and to praise your name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

*Close with **the Grace**, holding our friends, family and community in our hearts.*

Sunday Bible readings

29th March (Lent 5)	Romans 8.6-11.	John 11.1-45
5th April (Palm Sunday)	Philippians 2.5-11	Matthew 26.14 – 27.66
10th April (Maundy Thursday)	I Corinthians 1.23-26,	John 13.1-7, 31-35
11th April (Good Friday)	Hebrews 4.14–16; 5.7–9	John 18.1 - 19 .42
12th April (Easter Day)	Acts 10.34-43	John 20.1-18
19th April (Easter 2)	Acts 2.14a, 22-32	John 20.19-31
26th April (Easter 3)	Acts 2.14a, 36-41	Luke 24.13-35
3rd May (Easter 4)	Acts 2.42-47	John 10.1-10
10th May (Easter 5)	Acts 7.5-60	John 14.1-14
17th May (Easter 6)	Acts 17.22-31	John 14.15-21