

Prayer of Gathering

From Psalm 52:8 Like a green olive tree in the House of God "Prayer Handbook 2013" p.75

1. With roots in the soil
Of past generations
We worship you,
Living, loving God.

2. Through layers of soil
At times fertile,
At other times depleted,
We reach for experience and sustenance from
saints of old.

3. And in our own time, we offer to you, fresh shoots and new ideas
Borne upon branches shaped and gnarled by life,
And pray our worship shall be to you fruitful, sweet and rich. **Amen**

Prayer of Praise Adapted from Roots p.8 January 2021

Father God, full of Wisdom and Power, whose mighty arm stretches over all the earth,

We bow down in humble adoration.

Holy Saviour, full of Grace,

We bow down in humble adoration.

Spirit of the Living God, ever with us,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit – three in one,

We bow down in humble adoration. Amen

Prayer of Approach Adapted from Prayer Handbook 2021 p.6

We stand, your people, seeking the presence of You, our Maker.
We come, a pale reflection of your mystery,
Revealed daily through our conversations, and actions
Which show too often that we are at variance with your will.
We stand, your people, yearning to know you better. **Amen**

Prayer of Confession Adapted from Prayer Handbook 2021 p.8

We know that everyone of us holds an opinion about anything.

We are aware that any event is ripe for our comment and analysis.

We scrutinise every one's well-intentioned efforts.

We are relentless in seeking fault.

We know that our opinions are rarely untainted and objective.

Help us to remember that criticism is best replaced by wisdom,

Through Your Voice speaking softly and clearly if we are only ready to listen. **Amen**

Prayer of Thanksgiving Adapted from Surprised By Grace p.42

Thank you Lord, for those jewel-in-the-mud moments

When life is really beautiful.

Thank you for every piece of treasure in our lives.

Give us eyes that see the sparkles in the dust

And grace to polish what is tarnished

So that we may find again the truths that you have given us. **Amen.**

Personal Food for Thought Adapted from Unwrapping the Kingdom p.38

In Silent Prayer we may find ourselves drawn into a relationship with God, which is one of intimacy and reciprocity.

This relationship happens in our hearts, our inmost selves, where we are truly ourselves. Here in our hidden selves, the place which no one else can enter and whose depths we ourselves do not fully know, God engages with us in an unspoken dialogue.

Silent prayer is a way of listening in and engaging with this conversation with God; of making ourselves aware that God is there in the depth of ourselves and entering into the relationship. This relationship is one of the greatest intimacy. It is an extraordinary and wonderful thing. God is the Lord God Almighty, infinite in his greatness, whom we cannot grasp with our minds, yet he is present in the secret depths of our individual mortal being.

As we enter more fully into silence, we can begin to have the sense that, deep within us, God and our hearts are intimately entwined. He seems to share our very being.

Yet in all this, God is still distinct from us- close yet utterly separate. He remains God Almighty, Glorious and mighty, Holy and mysterious.

Prayers of Intercession

1. For mental resilience for all as society struggles to control the spread of Covid 19 across the world and its many impacts on society & economies

With today's technology we have access to news from afar almost immediately.

Help us not to become blasé about the situations we hear and see

But to pray and care faithfully for all concerned.

We pray for your presence in every country on the globe

And in particular for our leaders throughout the world.

We pray especially for our government to take decisions for the good of ALL society. **Amen**

2. For the NHS

Cast your blessing over all those working to the limits of their energy to care for the sick including those who are in intensive care with Covid 19.

Give wisdom to hospital managers and consultants organising staff rotas and scheduling regular surgery and treatment alongside the present crisis.

Enable paramedics and pharmacists to work safely alongside their hospital colleagues.

Be with GPs who are working in their local communities to maintain their services.

We pray for those administering the new vaccines. **Amen**

3. For the physical and mental well-being of children and students

Lead us to work for the welfare and protection of all young people

May we respect their dignity so that they flourish in life.

We pray for teachers and students amid uncertain term times & new ways of learning.

And for all families juggling stressful situations. **Amen**

4. For vaccine researchers

We are so grateful for what has been achieved so far but we pray for the scientists challenged by new variants of the Covid-19 virus. **Amen**

5. For the lonely *Adapted from Roots 25 December 2020 & Roots1 Nov 2020*

We pray for those who are missing someone they love

For whatever reason ...*PAUSE*

Our unique circumstances this new year mean many will be alone because of the isolation placed on us by the Covid pandemic.

We pray for all of us who feel lonely as a consequence of the Covid restrictions

And miss working with colleagues & socialising with family and friends.

Particularly those who live alone and who may see no human face for days on end.

You are the God of encounters.

We know that You are always there when we are alone,

But we need to have human company too

So help us to be very aware of those we need to get in touch with...now. **Amen**

6. For those without an income

Help us to look out for those among our family, friends and neighbours

Who are at the end of their tether due to loss of jobs and lack of money.

and to be conscious of people's physical needs.

We remember those charities trying to support them.

And the need for kindness. **Amen**

7. For those without homes

We pray for those searching for warmth and safety on our streets,

For those fleeing persecution and violence,

For those in temporary accommodation as their homes have been flooded or damaged-

Remembering particularly those affected by storm Bella & the Croatian earthquake. **Amen**

8. For those trying to learn new ways of trading abroad

We pray for those seeking clarity and stability on how to proceed,

For businesses, farmers and fishermen adapting to new trade agreements,

For supermarket trying to maintain the flow of adequate food supplies. **Amen**

9. For those who are unwell

Holy Spirit, Light in our darkness, bless those known to us who are ill in mind, body or spirit,

whom we name now in the silence of our hearts & with whom we must keep in touch...*PAUSE*

Make them aware of your presence as the Comforter...always with them. **Amen**

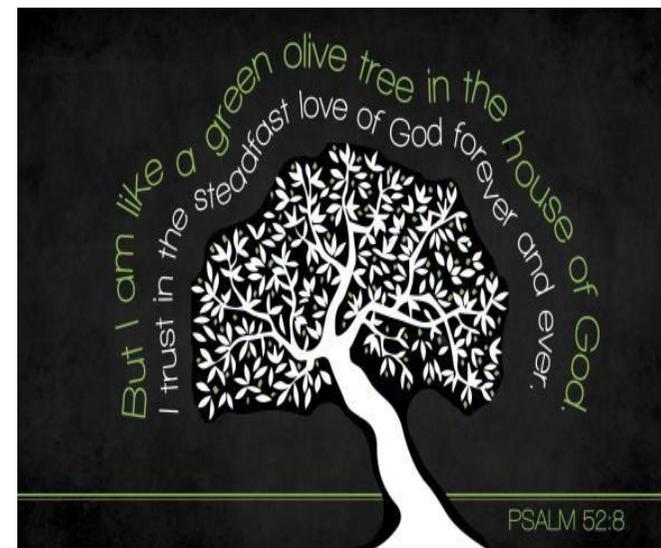
Reflection time & time for quiet or open prayers

Closing Prayer

Lord, encourage us to be a blessing to others through our kind actions and attitudes to others in our lives. **Amen**

Prayer Fellowship

At home



**You are invited to use these prayers
to help you in your own worship
for the work of our Church
and the life of our community**

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St John's URC Northwood