

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 2 August 2020*

Lord of compassion and boundless blessings,
We are full of joy that you care so greatly for us
And we adore you for your love and generosity. **Amen**

Prayer of Thanksgiving *Adapted from Roots 19 July 2020*

Lord, we come to your presence with humility,
Aware of our imperfections.
We want everything to be perfect & we know we are far from achieving that.
Therefore, we rejoice that you are a patient teacher,
Who is willing to keep trying to transform our lives
And give us chances to learn, time and again,
How to create a right environment,
So that we may be your presence in this world
And be fruitful in all we do.
Thank you. **Amen**

Prayer of Confession *Adapted from Roots July 5 2020*

Lord, please forgive us
For the times when our image & our understanding of You are far too small;
When we try to fit ALL of You into the tiny box of our brain
So we can cope with You OR
When we are too frightened to let Your transforming power loose in us.
Please forgive us for our lack of awareness of how mighty You are
When we talk to You. **Amen**

Personal Reflection *Taken from Susan Durbar's sermon URC Sunday Service 28 June 2020*

"I am not prepared for the gift of life that is so much a gift that I can't earn it, that I lose sight of the miraculous grace of it all, that I sometimes have a way of asking God for my wages, when all the time God wants to give me more than anyone could ever earn or expect from life. I need moments, so many, and people in abundance, to remind me always that '...the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord'.

.....There is something in us all that wants life to be 'fair', in the sense of somehow a kind of return for what we put in. That's why, sometimes, people say 'Why me?' when they don't think it's fair that they've become ill or infected or been bereaved. And it's why sometimes we can't quite believe the things we have been given in this life are quite ours to enjoy.....

.....But life isn't a deal – it's a gift. And, strangely enough, it's often the very people who have got what many would think 'a raw deal' who show us most powerfully that life is a gift. Even in the deepest pain there are gifts to be found and treasured. Life is not a perfectly balanced account. It's not even one that will be balanced out in some future reckoning. It is, first of all, a free gift of grace. And that's the best way to receive it and live it – whatever 'happens'."

Prayers of Intercession

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

We pray for your presence in every country on the globe

And in particular:

For the national political leaders who are trying to determine how and where to put their efforts to halt the spread of Covid 19, as it impacts on societies already suffering from war, famine and poverty, plus demanding new lockdowns for some places, then working out the complexity of easing lockdown for others;
For local political leaders working to keep their communities safe;
For those working in emergency services, hospitals and care homes where the impact of the virus is most immediate;
For scientists and researchers in many countries developing treatments and potential vaccines for Covid-19;
For employers, managers, staff and volunteers charged with making offices, shops, schools and colleges, transport services and public venues safe places to be in. **Amen**

2. For those in pain and grieving *Adapted from URC streamed service 31 May 2020*

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.....

Bring comfort to those who are grieving, especially for those who have been separated from the dying and those unable to attend their funerals.....

Bless with love those who have died and now rest in your presence. **Amen**

3. For justice and equality in world society

Forgive us for the economic divisions we have been part of creating in society

As a result of our desire for more things to make our lives more comfortable.....

The consequences of inequality in the food, housing & education available are evident with many people in low paid jobs with poor health & low life expectancy.

Forgive us for the deliberate or unwitting racism we may be part of.

Forgive us for any gender bias.

Forgive us for bias against other religions & suppression of freedom to worship.

Forgive us for the repression of people's freedom to voice opinions peacefully.

There is so much for different people in societies throughout the world to be angry about & try to change.

Our world societies are so closely linked that we need to have an awareness of each other's circumstance & how a decision in one place impacts in another place.

We pray for justice & fairness in all societies. **Amen**

4. For those who are in despair over loss of work & income

Lord, we are facing a tsunami of unemployed people,

Desperate for what the future holds for them and their families.

Open our eyes to those in need so that

If we have anything to share, we can truly love our neighbours. **Amen**

5. For Victims of violence and prejudice

We pray for those who have been the victims of violent knife crime in our society.

We pray for their families and those who have been traumatised by witnessing these events. We do not understand why these events happen.

We pray for your healing for all involved and the ending of the fear, anger and discrimination that lies behind such violence. **Amen**

Reflection time – on what we have just prayed about

Closing Prayer *There's a Wideness In God's Mercy (F W Faber 1814-63)*

For the love of God is broader than the measures of our mind;

And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.

But we make His love too narrow by false limits of our own;

And we magnify His strictness with a zeal He will not own. **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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