

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 prayers in URC streamed Service 31 May 2020*

Bless the Lord, how great you are.
Wrapped in a garment of glory and might...clothed in light.
Great are your works. In wisdom you made them all.
Rich is the earth and filled with your life.
Bless the Lord. Amen

Prayer of Thanksgiving *Prayerbook p 78*

Let us give thanks to God who sees possibility beyond tragedy,
Who speaks into places of distress and offers life from a cross.

Prayer of Confession *Adapted from Prayerbook 2020 p80*

O Lord, sometimes we think that you have forgotten us:

- when we suffer pain that does not go away,
- when things appear to get worse instead of better,
- when we are alone and no one seems to care.

It seems as if you hide yourself away from us
And we feel weak, bereft and defeated.
Forgive us for not remembering that you are a constant presence.
Forgive us for not being still and listening for you. Amen

Personal Prayer *Adapted from Prayerbook 2020 p73*

Lord, all too often I draw quick conclusions based on first impressions,
Making premature and even prejudicial judgements of other people.
Help me to be more discerning of character and more open-minded.
You sent your Spirit at Pentecost to remind me how
Your love for the world is wondrously unfettered.
Help me to be as generous in my love.

*Spirit of God, unseen as the wind,
gentle as is the dove;
teach us the truth,
and help us believe,
show us the Saviour's love.*

Without your help, we fail our Lord, we cannot live His way;
we need your power, we need your strength, following Christ each day.

Margaret V Old (1932-2001) © Scripture Union

Selected thoughts from Rev Andy Braunston's sermon *URC streamed Service 31 May 2020*

We've seen new ways of being the Church – services have been live streamed from manses, recorded on phones, mixed together at computers, emailed, burnt to CDs and printed on paper and then posted out.

We've been caught up with calling each other, checking that we're ok, ensuring that the most vulnerable in our communities are cared for and we've done all this with very little travel and minimal financial cost.

We've grieved those who have died and supported those who have been ill.

We've grown closer to each other through our isolation and our pain.

The Holy Spirit continues to renew both the Church and the Earth.

In the stillness occasioned by the lockdown nature has reasserted itself, our Earth has had a welcome respite from damaging human activity.

In the stillness occasioned by the lockdown we've learnt to be Church in a different way – **the challenge for us is to work out if we keep these changes as a viable way to live, worship and serve or go back to normal.**

Prayers of Intercession

1. For mental resilience for workers as society struggles to regain a new normal

We pray for your presence :

For nurses, doctors, NHS support workers coming off duty after long exhausting shifts,

For ministers and priests of religion after leading yet another funeral & comforting the bereaved,

For care home staff trying to keep caring after the death of a home resident,

For teachers working endlessly at home to prepare lessons to teach directly in school & adapted for online presentation,

For police, fire and ambulance emergency workers ready to help in any circumstance,

For transport staff & those maintaining travel routes across the country.

For essential food shop workers at the till & restocking the warehouses & shelves,

For delivery drivers travelling long distances or dashing around locally,

For all those workers we do not see who toil behind the scenes.
Lord, we pray for your still calm voice to penetrate the mental clangour of these workers, who go to work worried & come home tired and drained of energy. 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 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

Reflection time – on what we have just prayed about

Closing Prayer *Adapted from Called to Praise #518*

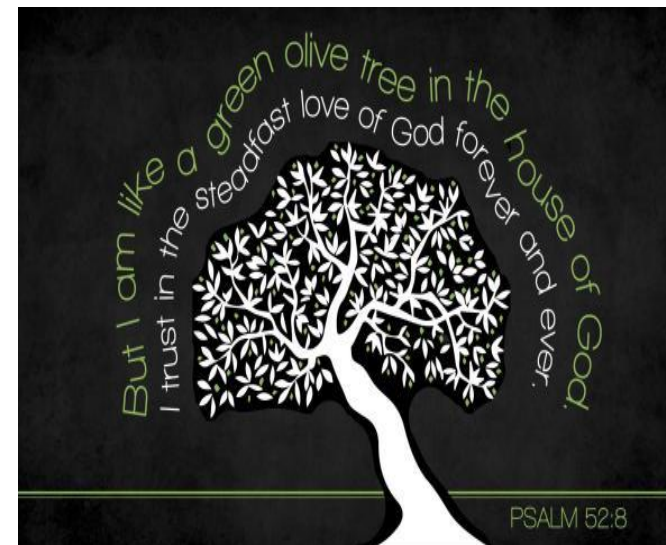
In Christ's name we affirm that we are all members of one family; we are kinsfolk to every race; we acknowledge that the greed of one nation harms another.

And we also know that love, compassion, justice & fairness can sweep into every corner of the earth...so be it Lord. Amen

If you are facing difficult situations and would like us to support you in your prayers, please email or telephone us. Morfudd & John

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**

June 2020

Number 82

St John's URC Northwood