

Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone



**Prayers and Reflections
for use at home**

**Sunday 31 August 2025
Week of Prayer for Creation**

Welcome to this week's prayers and reflections. It is a special edition as today begins a Week of Prayer for Creation. It is a season dedicated to God as the creator and the sustainer of all life, and our role as co-carers of the planet we call home. Our theme is Peace with Creation.

Enjoy celebrating what a wonderful world and God we have.

Every blessing,

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*As you prepare to give thanks for God's gift of creation,
turn your thoughts to the beauty of nature.*



*All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.*

Each little flower that opens,
each little bird that sings,
he made their glowing colours,
he made their tiny wings.

Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)

Some people, in order to discover God, read books. But there is a great book: the very appearance of created things. Look above you! Look below you! Read it. God, whom you want to discover, never wrote that book with ink. Instead he set before your eyes the things that he had made. Can you ask for a louder voice than that?

St. Augustine (354-430)

Prayers and Reflections for use at home in the Week of Prayer for Creation Peace with Creation

PREPARING OURSELVES

Take a moment to be still in God's presence and feel his love. If you are indoors, you may wish to light a candle as a sign of God's love - here, in your room. You may also wish to have a bowl of water ready for the time of letting go. When you are ready, say this opening prayer.

Lord, as I sit and wait in silence,
I place my hopes and dreams,
my fears and concerns,
into your safe and loving hands.
Enfold me with your love,
make my heart beat in time with yours;
in Jesus' name,
I pray. **Amen.**

LETTING GO

If you come to this time of prayer and reflection with any regrets, with things that you wish you had not said, done or been, offer them to God in the silence of your heart. And then, reflect on the words of this next chorus and verse.



*All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.*

The purple-headed mountain,
the river running by,
the sunset and the morning
that brightens up the sky.

Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)



*If you wish, dip your finger into a bowl of water and make the sign of the cross on your palm.
Feel God's forgiveness.*

Our chorus and verse invite us to recall who gives us life - God! Do you give thanks for this as each new day begins? I do. As I start my day with praise and prayers, I look out on my front garden. I notice the early sun, take in the sights and sounds of nature, and give thanks. I feel at peace with creation and with the one who gives life to all living things. I feel at one with nature - I am part of God's creation. This puts my life in perspective, I am a part of creation not a consumer of creation. Pause to ponder this, what is your relationship with nature?

The long, hot, dry summer months have nearly dried up the brook which flows through the centre of my village. Every time I walk up Church path, I'm struck by the very visible impact that human lifestyles are having on the planet's wellbeing and the peace of all living things. This week is our chance to lament this and pray for change.

If you wish, think about the signs that you are seeing of creation's distress and of the seasons changing. Notice how you feel about this. Offer this prayerfully to our God who made our world to be a wonderful home to all living things.



*All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.*

*The cold wind in the winter,
the pleasant summer sun,
the ripe fruits in the garden,
he made them everyone.*

Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)

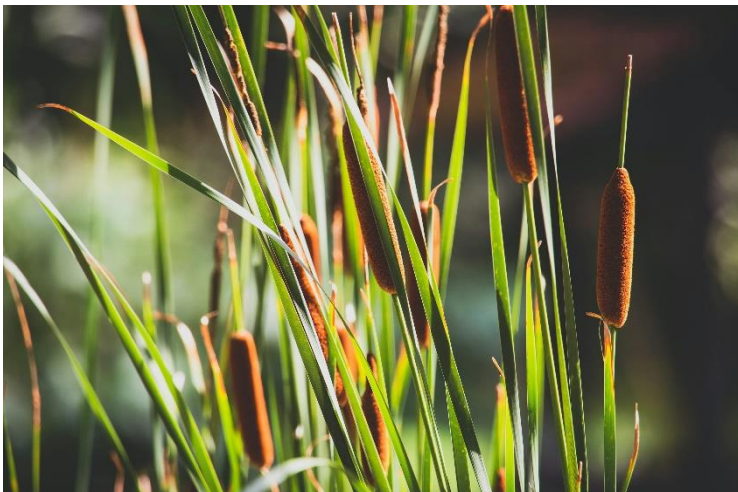
PRAYING TODAY'S PRAYER

(The Collect)

Across our villages, this prayer is being said this week. Add your voice to this earthly circle of prayer to our God whose love for his creation is unbreakable.

Lord of all life,
you created the universe,
and gave us this beautiful earth
to discover and to cherish;
help us to wonder at creation,
to treasure your gifts
and to use them to your glory. **Amen.**

Our prayer contains four beautiful words that are God's instruction to us - discover and cherish, wonder and treasure. By exploring God's creation, outdoors or through our TV screens, we will learn more about nature, about the one who gives life to our planet, and about his call on us to care as he cares. We will want to cherish all of the life around us. We will love all of God's creatures as he does. Wondering about how all of this life came into being will help us to feel close to God our Maker - nature is a thin place that can connect earth with heaven. We will treasure this wonderful world of ours... with 'ours' being all living things not just us humans! Use these four words to ponder how creation fills you with peace and praise.



*All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.*

The tall trees in the greenwood,
the meadows for our play,
the rushes by the water,
to gather every day.

God's care for his creation

The LORD took pity on his people and replied to them:

'Do not be afraid, land of Judah;

be glad and rejoice.

Surely the LORD has done great things!

Do not be afraid, you wild animals,

for the pastures in the wilderness are becoming green.

The trees are bearing their fruit;

the fig-tree and the vine yield their riches.

Be glad, people of Zion,

rejoice in the LORD your God,

for he has given you the autumn rains

because he is faithful.

He sends you abundant showers,

both autumn and spring rains, as before.

The threshing-floors will be filled with grain;

the vats will overflow with new wine and oil.

'I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten -

the great locust and the young locust,

the other locusts and the locust swarm -

my great army that I sent among you.

You will have plenty to eat, until you are full,

and you will praise the name of the LORD your God,

who has worked wonders for you;

never again will my people be shamed.

Then you will know that I am in Israel,

that I am the LORD your God,

and that there is no other;

never again will my people be shamed.'

Peace with Creation

This passage from the Book of the prophet Joel is set just before the exile, the sending of God's people into Babylon. It speaks of a difficult time - not just for the people but also for the fields and orchards and wildlife. It sounds like a plague of locusts has ravaged the land, eating up everything in their path. Nature is out of balance because of human actions. It reminds me of the destruction that human conflict inflicts on the landscape - all nature suffers. To be able to live at peace with creation requires us to end a number of things, such as all wars - our use of chemicals to control weeds and pests - our over consumption of earth's resources. What else would you add to this list? Pray for this.

All is not lost. God is very aware of the damage we are doing to creation, and the earth's need for shalom (prosperity and peace). He offers such comforting words to those who are suffering because of our lifestyles, 'Do not be afraid.' is what he says to the wild animals, the fruit-bearing trees and vines, and the grain-yielding crops. God knows their needs, refreshing rain being one of their key essentials (and ours too).

'Do not be afraid.' are the words that our world needs to hear at this time as crops fail to flourish as temperatures rise, as wildlife struggle to keep cool and hydrated, and as our oceans fill up with plastics. God can and is inspiring us to change our ways. God will renew his creation - one action at a time as well as at the end of time. Place your trust in him.



*All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.*

*He gave us eyes to see them,
and lips that we might tell
how great is God Almighty,
who has made all things well.*

Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)

OUR PRAYERS

Feel free to use one or more of these prayers and to add your own.

Creator God, as I look at the world around me, I take in all of the life, all of the beauty of your creation. The sights and sounds of nature fill me with inner joy and peace, and I feel close to you our Maker...

Lord, hear my prayer.

Creator God, as you look at the world around me, you take in all of the signs of distress. You see how fields and forests, gardens and streams are suffering due to human lifestyles. Lord, say 'Do not be afraid' to...

Lord, hear my prayer.

Creator God, as you look at the people around me, you see who is struggling with life. You sense their pain, their loneliness and sadness. You know who is on my heart. Lord, say 'Do not be afraid' to...

Lord, hear my prayer.

Offer your own heartfelt prayers and yearnings, praise and thanksgivings.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF BLESSING

A closing prayer of blessing for this week.

O God, you search me and you know me,
all my thoughts and feelings are open to your gaze,
you see the paths I will take before I take them. Guide my daily living.
Bless me and keep my loved ones safe, I pray. **Amen.**