

Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone



**Prayers and Reflections
for use at home**

**Sunday 16 November 2025
2nd Sunday before Advent**

Welcome to this week's prayers and reflections. Another Church year is drawing to a close and we are in Kingdom season. I always think that this season is a perfect way to end our yearly cycle of readings. For we are thinking about Christ as our King and what will happen on his return. He will come as our Judge as well as our King. Today, we are contemplating the signs that will herald his return. Do we have the courage to trust in him and not try to second guess when he will come?

Enjoy pondering how trusting you are.

Every blessing,

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As you prepare to reflect on our Lord's promised return, and your trust in waiting on him, affirm him as the centre of your life.



Christ is our cornerstone,
on him alone we build;
with his true saints alone
the courts of heaven are filled:
on his great love our hopes we place
of present grace and joys above.

*Latin (before 9th century)
trans. John Chandler (1806-1876)*

**Prayers and Reflections for use at home
for the 2nd Sunday before Advent
Trusting**

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, when you are ready, reflect on your life with this second verse from this week's hymn.

O then with hymns of praise
these hallowed courts shall ring;
our voices we will raise
the Three in One to sing;
and thus proclaim in joyful song,
both loud and long, that glorious name.

*Latin (before 9th century)
trans. John Chandler (1806-1876)*



If you wish, dip your finger into a bowl of water and make the sign of the cross on your palm.

Set free of this past week's mistakes and regrets, our hearts are free to sing God's praises – Father, Son and Spirit. We can turn to our Lord – Christ our King – and open our souls to him in praise and prayerfulness. Through the cross and resurrection, he has set us free. Free.

Free is such a powerful word, isn't it? It is what we all long to be as beautiful yet flawed humans. Free to be the very best that we can be, daily, and free to live our lives as our Lord calls us to do – with love. Free to be able to live our lives free from fear and from anxieties – feeling safe in our homes and out on the streets.

It is not much to ask – is it? – to feel free. Yet, at various times in our lives, feeling free from / free to is a prayer not a reality. Take a moment to ponder how free you feel today. Who or what makes you feel free. Give thanks to our Lord for this. If you are feeling less than free. Lift up to him how you are feeling and why this is. Ask what you need of him and of his in-dwelling Spirit. Receive of him.



*When you are ready, say or sing this verse of being free from **Dear Lord and Father of mankind.***

*Drop thy still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of thy peace,
the beauty of thy peace.*

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

PRAYING TODAY'S PRAYER

(The Collect)

Today, this prayer is being said across our villages and the worldwide Church. Add your voice to the earthly circle of prayer to our Faithful One.

Heavenly Lord,
you long for the world's salvation:
stir us from apathy,
restrain us from excess
and revive in us new hope
that all creation will one day be healed
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Our prayer offers God's beautiful vision of how our world will be when Christ returns. It will be a world united in love for him. Gone will be everything that causes division or that harms the wellbeing of the earth. Justice and peace will be seen across the globe. Gone will be all excess of power and status, of greed and selfishness. It is no wonder that we yearn for Christ to be King of the earth as he is King of heaven.

Kingdom season is when we are invited to renew our hope in this vision of life on earth after Christ's return. We are called to refresh our trust in God's promise to us as we continue our waiting season by season. Pause to ponder your trust in God's vision for a renewed earth and in Christ's return as the world's one true King. Do you need stirring up? Reviving? Or, is your trust alive and active? Fresh and new every morning?



Here, gracious God, do thou
for evermore draw nigh;
accept each faithful vow,
and mark each suppliant sigh;
in copious shower on all who pray
each holy day thy blessings pour.

*Latin (before 9th century)
trans. John Chandler (1806-1876)*

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

The destruction of the temple and signs of the end times

Some of his disciples were remarking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. But Jesus said, 'As for what you see here, the time will come when not one stone will be left on another; every one of them will be thrown down.'

'Teacher,' they asked, 'when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to take place?'

He replied: 'Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, claiming, "I am he," and, "The time is near." Do not follow them. When you hear of wars and uprisings, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away.'

Then he said to them: 'Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven.'

'But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you. They will hand you over to synagogues and put you in prison, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. And so you will bear testimony to me. But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. Everyone will hate you because of me. But not a hair of your head will perish. Stand firm, and you will win life.'

Luke 21:5-19

Trusting...

When I was a child, one of the places that we used to visit on a summer's Sunday afternoon was Badbury Rings, an Iron Age Fort near Wimborne. These grassy earthworks were a great place to explore and play! They are also a sign to us that, as a human race, we tend to distrust our neighbours and their motives and are often at war with them. Before Jesus was born, during the decades after his death, and over the centuries since the city's temple was destroyed, Jerusalem has been fought over by peoples, empires and nations. It is a salutary reminder to not jump to conclusions; Christ will come when he comes. All we can do is wait on his return, trusting in his promise as we do so.

Some of the things that Jesus said would happen have come to pass. In AD70, when some of his disciples were still alive, after a Jewish revolt, Roman soldiers invaded Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, and killed, enslaved or exiled the people. It must have felt like an end time.

But no, this was just part one. Part two was the persecution which Jews and Christians experienced at the hands of the Romans. If you were one of our Lord's followers during these violent times, you could well have found yourself in prison or dying for your faith. You needed to have true courage to stand firm and win life! Part three is the nearly 2,000 years of waiting on our Lord's return as King. During this time, there have been wars to end all wars, devastating plagues and pandemics, earthquakes, fires and famines. We can't know when the end is coming, but we do know that it will herald in a glorious new beginning for life on earth.

Do keep trusting as you wait! Stand firm, win life!



Here may we gain from heaven
the grace which we implore;
and may that grace, once given,
be with us evermore,
until that day when all the blest
to endless rest are called away.

trans. John Chandler

OUR PRAYERS

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

Lord Jesus, you gave a vision of the end times to your disciples,
an end to worship in the temple, an end to our world's brokenness.

Lord, I dream dreams of a world filled with your love and peace.

Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, you encourage me to trust in your return. Yet, waiting is
so very hard to do at times. When I see the suffering in war-torn lands,
on islands devastated by natural disasters, I yearn for an end to this.

Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, you invite us to place our trust in your Father's love
and forgiveness, in the salvation that you won for us on the cross,
in the new life of the empty tomb. Lord, when I doubt, help me to trust.

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.**