

# **North Staffordshire Circuit (11/22)**

## **Service Sheets For the Month of October 2025**

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# **Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2025 – 27<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*This service has been compiled by Rev'd James Pritchard*

## **A Gathering Prayer:**

Creator God, we adore you, timeless, unchanging Rock of Ages. Jesus, we adore you, face of God made known to us. Holy Spirit, we adore you, comforter and counsellor. God of community three, yet one - we worship you. **Amen.**

## **Hymn: All people that on earth do dwell, (StF 1)**

All people that on earth do dwell,  
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice:  
him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell;  
come ye before him and rejoice.

The Lord, ye know, is God indeed;  
without our aid he did us make:  
we are his folk, he doth us feed;  
and for his sheep he doth us take.

O enter then his gates with praise;  
approach with joy his courts unto;  
praise, laud, and bless his name always,  
for it is seemly so to do.

For why, the Lord our God is good;  
his mercy is for ever sure;  
his truth at all times firmly stood,  
and shall from age to age endure.

To Father, Son and Holy Ghost,  
the God whom heaven and earth adore,  
from earth and from the angel host  
be praise and glory evermore.

William Kethe (d. 1594)

## **A Prayer of Praise:**

Great God of love, you beyond our imagining, love us more than we can comprehend, we praise your holy name. Steadfast God, we praise you for

the precious gift of faith,  
which gives us hope, draw us on towards your kingdom and unites us as  
we journey through all the ups-and-downs of life. In you we trust, faithful  
Trinity, Creator, Son and Spirit.

***Refrain: Thank you for calling us to treasure and pass on your story.***

Almighty God, we praise you for the wonders of your world, and for the  
vocation you have given each one of us within it, to be your witnesses in  
this generation. *Refrain*

Thank you for those who have gone before us, who revered your  
teachings and taught us by their lives and examples, so that we might do  
likewise in our turn. *Refrain*

All praise and thanks be to you, O God, author of our creation and our  
salvation,

the one who calls us to conserve the treasures of his words and deeds,  
unto the end of time. *Refrain Amen.*

*You may wish to pause to offer to God your own thanks and praise*

### **A Prayer of Confession:**

Loving Heavenly God, we confess that we are sometimes so familiar with  
our faith, sometimes with the stories in the Bible that we take them for  
granted, failing to see them for the treasured tales that they are. We live  
our lives of faith unthinkingly or failing to truly think on you.

Loving God, forgive us for our failings. For the times we forget you and  
your ways. For the times we fail to care for and conserve the treasures of  
our faith as a living tradition, not a rusty collection of old rituals.

We commit ourselves to continuing your story, the story of our faith, with  
renewed life and vigour, passing on the things we have learned as true  
witnesses to your Word, faithful to our calling. **Amen.**

### **Assurance of Forgiveness:**

Into your arms we stumble again, O Lord; your arms open in forgiveness of  
our foolishness and failings. Thank you for calling us to be in your story,  
and for forgiving us when we forget to play our part. By your Spirit inspire  
and renew us and may your story sing in and through us today and always,  
**Amen.**

## **Reading: Psalm 37 1-15**

Do not fret because of the wicked; do not be envious of wrongdoers, for they will soon fade like the grass and wither like the green herb.

Trust in the Lord and do good; live in the land and enjoy security.

Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act. He will make your vindication shine like the light and the justice of your cause like the noonday.

Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for him; do not fret over those who prosper in their way, over those who carry out evil devices.

Refrain from anger and forsake wrath. Do not fret—it leads only to evil.

For the wicked shall be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land.

Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look diligently for their place, they will not be there.

But the meek shall inherit the land and delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

The wicked plot against the righteous and gnash their teeth at them, but the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he sees that their day is coming.

The wicked draw the sword and bend their bows to bring down the poor and needy,

to kill those who walk uprightly; their sword shall enter their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.

## **Reflection:**

The psalmist says, 'Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for him.'

The psalm also has a repeated phrase - 'Do not fret.' This is an important phrase to heed, although it is easier said than done! This psalm encourages us not to lose time and energy in lamenting the seeming prosperity of those who behave selfishly and wrongly. Rather we are called to be mindful of our own attitudes: 'trust in the Lord', 'take delight in the Lord', 'commit our way to the Lord' — and we will find ourselves dwelling in God's kingdom. Perhaps we might feel angry that our right living is not appreciated by others. It may even be mocked by those who choose to take a different path. The psalmist advises against such anger and suggests that being still before God is the way forward.

Some people find waiting easier than others but if we can 'wait on God' we discover great reward. To trust God, sometimes even despite what is going on around us, to 'rest in God' to 'wait on God' can itself be a blessing. Waiting is a familiar refrain in the Psalms and in Hebrew scripture. 'My soul waits for the Lord' (Psalm 30.6) speaks of the people of God awaiting their God in longing and hope. The writer, Simone Weil, wrote '*Waiting patiently in expectation is the foundation of the spiritual life.*' Patient waiting can reveal to us deep things about ourselves that are not always easy to accept — perhaps this is why it is something we prefer to avoid. However, it is also a rich source of spiritual growth and self-understanding which, at its best, enables us to contribute creatively to God's kingdom. As the psalmist commends, do good, delight in the Lord and commit your ways to the Lord.

*Why not reflect on how stillness and waiting can help you to trust in God.*

**Hymn: Through the love of God our Saviour all will be well (StF 639)**

(Tune Ar Hyd Y Nos 'all through the night')

Through the love of God our Saviour  
all will be well.

Free and changeless is his favour;  
all, all is well.

Precious is the blood that healed us,  
perfect is the grace that sealed us,  
strong the hand stretched forth to shield us;  
all must be well.

Though we pass through tribulation,  
all will be well.

Christ has purchased full salvation,  
all, all is well.

Happy still in God confiding,  
fruitful, if in Christ abiding,  
holy, through the Spirit's guiding;  
all must be well.

We expect a bright tomorrow;  
all will be well.  
Faith can sing through days of sorrow  
all, all is well.  
On our Father's love relying,  
Jesus every need supplying,  
then in living or in dying,  
all must be well.

Mary Peters (1813–1856)

### **Reading: 2 Timothy 1-14**

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, for the sake of the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus,  
To Timothy, my beloved child:  
Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.  
I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you. For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline. Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher, and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him. Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.

**Reflection:**

Do you have any 'treasures' at home? How do you look after them? To treasure something might mean to hold it close, to keep it safe and perhaps only use it on a special occasion. You might keep it in a safe, away from prying eyes or clumsy hands. But what does it mean to treasure God's story? Do we hold that close to keep it safe? Should we lock it in a safe? The treasure surely comes from sharing the story, sharing the words and, of course, there is enough for everyone so there are no concerns about running out. Think of all the people who passed on the treasure to Timothy – Lois his grandmother, Eunice his mother and Paul himself. The theme of the President and Vice President of the Methodist conference this year is 'Our story - Our Song' a reminder of the story of God's love for us and to tell and celebrate our faith with others.

**Points to Ponder:**

*I wonder how easy we find sharing our stories of faith? Who helped us to discover faith and nurture God's story in us? How might you continue to pass on the story of the good news of God's love day by day?*

**Hymn: For all the saints who showed your love (StF 746) (Tune O Waly Waly)**

For all the saints who showed your love  
in how they lived and where they moved,  
for mindful women, caring men,  
accept our gratitude again.

For all the saints who loved your name,  
whose faith increased the Saviour's fame,  
who sang your songs and shared your word,  
accept our gratitude, good Lord.

For all the saints who named your will,  
and saw your kingdom coming still  
through selfless protest, prayer and praise,  
accept the gratitude we raise.

Bless all whose will or name or love  
reflects the grace of heaven above.  
Though unacclaimed by earthly powers,  
your life through theirs has hallowed ours.

John L. Bell (b. 1949) and Graham Maule (b. 1958)

**Prayer of Intercession & Lord's Prayer:**

Pause to remember the needs of the church, the local community, those in need, those on your hearts and minds. Name before God people and places you are concerned about and for this day.

*Today also marks Homelessness Sunday you may wish to use this prayer written for that occasion.*

Lord thank you that your love extends to everyone, thank you that you care for those individuals that are experiencing homelessness today and throughout the year. Thank you that you offer help and support through the love and kindness of volunteers and those that are compassionate. We pray that you will touch people's hearts to be generous in their time, and giving to support those experiencing homelessness in this difficult time of their life. We pray for our government and local councils that you will give them wisdom and strategy to improve the housing situation in our nation. We pray for strength, health, and wisdom for those that support people out of homelessness and into their homes. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

*You may wish to pray the Lord's Prayer*

**Hymn: Have faith in God, my heart (StF 466)**

Have faith in God, my heart,  
trust and be unafraid;  
God will fulfil in every part  
each promise he has made.

Have faith in God, my mind,  
for when your light burns low;  
God's mercy holds a wiser plan  
than you can fully know.



Have faith in God, my soul;  
his cross for ever stands;  
and neither life nor death can pluck  
his children from his hands.

Lord Jesus, make me whole;  
grant me no resting place,  
until I rest, heart, mind, and soul,  
the captive of your grace.

Bryn Rees (1911–1983)

### **Final prayer**

Help us, Jesus, to share our treasured story of your love with the world  
and with those we know and meet. **May God's blessing be with you**  
**Amen!**

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# **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2025 – 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*This service has been compiled by Rev'd Joy Ventom*

## **Call to Worship:**

We come together to glorify God,  
through our song, prayer, meditation  
and exploration of the Word.

We come together as a family,  
brothers and sisters together joined  
by the hand of fellowship.

## **Hymn: All praise to our redeeming Lord (StF 608)**

All praise to our redeeming Lord,  
Who joins us by His grace,  
And bids us, each to each restored,  
Together seek His face,

He bids us build each other up;  
And, gathered into one,  
To our high calling's glorious hope,  
We hand in hand go on,

The gift which He on one bestows,  
We all delight to prove;  
The grace through every vessel flows,  
In purest streams of love,

E'en now we think and speak the same ,  
And cordially agree;  
Concentred all through Jesus name  
in perfect harmony

We all partake the joy of one;  
The common peace we feel;  
A peace to sensual minds unknown,  
A joy unspeakable,

And if our fellowship below  
In Christ yet be so sweet,  
What height of rapture shall we know,  
When round His throne we meet!

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

**Prayers:**

Lord, you came among us in lowliness and simplicity.  
We adore you as the babe born in a stable,  
as the boy raised a refugee in Egypt,  
as the wandering preacher with no possessions.  
You show us what true riches are.  
Lord, we adore you, and humbly bow before you.  
Heavenly Father, we confess that we are rarely content,  
craving things that we think will bring us status or make us happy,  
but their pleasures are fleeting and we always want more.  
Father, we repent of our dependence on material things  
and our craving for the money to buy them.  
We turn our thoughts instead  
to the generosity of your loving heart.  
We commit ourselves to treasuring the abundance  
of love and joy with which you bless us, and to sharing it,  
so that greater contentment may be known by all.  
**Amen.**

**Bible Reading: Psalms 146**

<sup>1</sup>Praise the Lord!

Let all that I am praise the Lord.

<sup>2</sup>I will praise the Lord as long as I live.

I will sing praises to my God with my dying breath.

<sup>3</sup>Don't put your confidence in powerful people;  
there is no help for you there.

<sup>4</sup>When they breathe their last, they return to the earth,  
and all their plans die with them.

<sup>5</sup>But joyful are those who have the God of Israel as their helper,  
whose hope is in the Lord their God.

<sup>6</sup>He made heaven and earth,  
the sea, and everything in them.  
He keeps every promise forever.

<sup>7</sup>He gives justice to the oppressed  
and food to the hungry.  
The Lord frees the prisoners.

<sup>8</sup>The Lord opens the eyes of the blind.  
The Lord lifts up those who are weighed down.  
The Lord loves the godly.

<sup>9</sup>The Lord protects the foreigners among us.  
He cares for the orphans and widows,  
but he frustrates the plans of the wicked.

<sup>10</sup>The Lord will reign forever.  
He will be your God, O Jerusalem, throughout the generations.  
Praise the Lord!

### **Hymn: God's spirit is in my heart (StF 404)**

God's Spirit is in my heart;  
He has called me and set me apart.  
This is what I have to do,  
What I have to do:

*He sent me to give the good news to the poor,  
Tell prisoners that they are prisoners no more,  
Tell blind people that they can see,  
And set the down-trodden free,  
And go tell everyone  
The news that the Kingdom of God has come;  
And go tell everyone  
The news that God's Kingdom has come.*

Just as the Father sent me,  
So I'm sending you out to be  
My witness throughout the world –  
The whole of the world:

Don't carry a load in your pack;  
You don't need two shirts on your back;

God's workers can earn their own keep –  
Can earn their own keep.

Don't worry what you have to say;  
Don't worry, because on that day  
God's Spirit will speak in your heart –  
Will speak in your heart:

v.1 and refrain Alan T Dale (1902–1979) vv. 2-4 Hubert Richards (b. 1921)

### **Bible Reading:1 Timothy 6:6-19**

<sup>6</sup>Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth. <sup>7</sup>After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can't take anything with us when we leave it. <sup>8</sup>So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content.

<sup>9</sup>But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. <sup>10</sup>For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.

<sup>11</sup>But you, Timothy, are a man of God; so run from all these evil things. Pursue righteousness and a godly life, along with faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness. <sup>12</sup>Fight the good fight for the true faith. Hold tightly to the eternal life to which God has called you, which you have declared so well before many witnesses. <sup>13</sup>And I charge you before God, who gives life to all, and before Christ Jesus, who gave a good testimony before Pontius Pilate, <sup>14</sup>that you obey this command without wavering. Then no one can find fault with you from now until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again. <sup>15</sup>For, At just the right time Christ will be revealed from heaven by the blessed and only almighty God, the King of all kings and Lord of all lords. <sup>16</sup>He alone can never die, and he lives in light so brilliant that no human can approach him. No human eye has ever seen him, nor ever will. All honour and power to him forever! Amen.

<sup>17</sup>Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. <sup>18</sup>Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. <sup>19</sup>By doing this

they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life.

### **Thought for the day:**

Perhaps you have a bit of money, not lots, just some that you have saved. Perhaps you have invested in stocks and shares – the balance goes up and down but hopefully in a general upward trajectory. You might not consider yourself wealthy in monetary terms but have enough so that you can plan and save for big purchases. If that's the case, you would be considered wealthier than many other people. In fact, in monetary terms most people in the Western world who compared themselves with someone in the developing world would be considered very wealthy indeed.

But we are already wealthy! We are rolling in it – our wealth is so abundant that we can give it away freely. You have probably guessed I am not talking about financial equity. We didn't bring any money into the world with us and we can't take it out with us – that is not where our wealth lies. Rather, our wealth lies in the knowledge that by grace we are saved. We can't do anything to make God love us more and nothing we do can make God love us less. This knowledge brings us freedom, peace, joy and contentment. This knowledge helps us to spend our monetary wealth in ways that please God, and helps us to share the skills and abilities we have in a generous way. This is true wealth.

### **Hymn: Be thou my vision (StF 545)**

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
Naught be all else to me save that thou art.  
Thou my best thought by day and by night;  
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true Word;  
be thou ever with thee and I with thee Lord.  
be thou my great Father, I thy child; let me be  
Be thou in me dwelling, and I one one with thee.

Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight;  
Be thou my whole armour, be thou my true might;

Be thou my soul's shelter, be thou my high tower;  
O raise thou me Heavenward, O Power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor earth's, empty praise;  
be thou mine inheritance, now and always.  
be thou and thou only, the first in my heart,  
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art.

High King of Heaven, thou heaven's bright sun  
O grant me its joys after victory is won  
Great heart of my heart, whatever befall,  
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Mary Elizabeth Byrne (1880-1931) & Eleanor Henrietta Hull (1860-1935)

### **Intercessions:**

For those who wait at the gate in poverty, seeking essentials from foodbanks, unable to afford to turn their heating on, walking the streets to save using fuel at home. We pray for all in poverty and need that those who have will see and respond to the needs of those who have not. We especially ask that you will bless those who are planning winter warmth projects to provide support for those struggling as a result of spiralling fuel costs.

Loving God,

**we pray for those who wait at the gate.**

For those who wait at the gate because they have nowhere else to wait for those whose homes have been destroyed by floods; for those whose home has been bombed; for those who cannot afford a home. We pray for all who are homeless or whose homes are insanitary or unsatisfactory. We commend to you those charities that seek to provide aid to those in Pakistan, for those who welcome refugees, for those who provide emergency shelter.

Loving God,

**we pray for those who wait at the gate.**

For those who wait at the gate in sadness and grief, for those whose lives have been torn apart by the death of a loved one, for those who struggle to cope, for those who can't find a way to fit in. We pray for all those for

whom the recent period of national mourning has brought to the surface grief they were seeking to ignore that they may find the comfort and strength that your presence offers.

Loving God,

**we pray for those who wait at the gate.**

For those who wait at the gate of the church, for those who have been rejected, for those who fear they will be turned away, for those who don't know how to access your strength and love. We pray that our churches may be inviting places of welcome where no-one is turned away and all are helped to experience the grace and peace that you offer.

As we enter the gate of our homes, our churches, our lives, give us eyes to see those in need and hearts to respond in the name of our Saviour Jesus. **Amen.**

### **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.

### **Hymn: All my hope on God is founded (StF 455)**

All my hope on God is founded;  
he doth still my trust renew.  
Me through change and chance he guideth,  
only good and only true.  
God unknown,  
he alone  
calls my heart to be his own.

Human pride and earthly glory,  
sword and crown betray his trust;  
what with care and toil we fashion,  
tower and temple, fall to dust.  
But God's power,



hour by hour,  
is my temple and my tower.

God's great goodness aye endureth,  
deep his wisdom, passing thought:  
splendour, light, and life attend him,  
beauty springeth out of naught.  
Evermore  
from his store  
new-born worlds rise and adore.

Daily doth the' Almighty giver  
bounteous gifts on us bestow;  
his desire our soul delighteth,  
pleasure leads us where we go.  
Love doth stand  
at his hand;  
joy doth wait on his command.  
Still from earth to God eternal  
sacrifice of praise be done,  
high above all praises praising  
for the gift of Christ his Son.  
Christ doth call  
one and all:  
ye who follow shall not fall.

Robert Bridges (1844-1930) based on Joachim Neander (1650-1680)

### **Closing Prayer:**

Lord, you are so generous to us.

As we leave here, guide us to serve you and others  
by sharing the treasures we have been given.

Help us to be grateful when others are generous to us.

**Amen.**

# **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2025 - 29<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*This service has been compiled by Mrs Sheila Heap*

**Wherever you are, welcome to this time of worship.  
May you find it to be a time of blessing.**

## **Call to Worship:**

Come to hear God's inspired Word,  
Come with open hearts to hear its teaching,  
Come with humble hearts to hear its instruction,  
Come with minds willing to hear its challenge. **Amen.**

## **Hymn: Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above (StF 117)**

Sing praise to God who reigns above,  
the God of all creation,  
the God of power, the God of love,  
the God of our salvation;  
with healing balm my soul He fills,  
and every faithless murmur stills:  
to God all praise and glory!

What God's almighty power has made  
that will He ever cherish,  
and will, unfailing, soon and late,  
with loving-kindness nourish;  
and where He rules in kingly might  
there all is just and all is right:  
to God all praise and glory!

The Lord is never far away,  
But, through all grief distressing,  
an ever-present help and stay,  
our peace, and joy, and blessing:  
as with a mother's tender hand,  
He leads His own, His chosen band:  
to God all praise and glory!

O you who name Christ's holy name,  
give God all praise and glory:  
O you who own His power, proclaim  
aloud the wondrous story.  
Cast each false idol from its throne:  
The Lord is God, and He alone:  
to God all praise and glory!

Johann Jakob Schutz (1640–1690), Frances Elizabeth Cox (1812–1897)  
& Honor May Thwaites (1914–1993)

### **Prayer of Praise and Adoration:**

Almighty God, we praise You for the powerful words of Scripture,  
which endure from age to age in order that we may endure also.  
Thank You for entrusting Your sacred books to us in the Bible,  
so that we might study and learn from them,  
enlightened by the Holy Spirit in our efforts  
to understand your message of guidance to us.  
We praise You for the strength Your Word gives us to persevere  
when our faith is sorely tried by the ways of the world.

All thanks and praise be to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
God who is eternal love, whose Word speaks love to our hearts:

**we adore You and praise Your holy name.**

Christ who is love incarnate, whose gospel shows us a new way:

**we adore You and praise Your holy name.**

Holy Spirit, who opens the Scriptures to us, shedding light to aid our  
understanding:

**we adore You and praise Your holy name. Amen.**

### **Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Forgiveness:**

Heavenly Father, we are often slow to turn to the wisdom of your Word.  
When life presents us with problems, we wrangle with them in our own  
minds.

Your Word is the toolkit for our survival.

We are sorry for not trusting in the promises of Scripture  
and recommit ourselves to study your Word in all its fulness, so that we

may persevere in our faith  
when the world throws problems in our path.

Lord, You forgive us when our faith flounders and falters.  
You are the enduring God who perseveres with us when we fail to  
persevere with You.

We thank and praise You for Your enduring forgiveness which never  
flounders, never falters, endures to the end. **Amen.**

**You may like to join in the words of the Lord's Prayer: Our Father, who  
art in heaven ... Amen**

**Reading: Luke chapter 18 vs, 1 - 8 NSRV**

### **Introduction:**

The poor widow is a role model for faithful prayer. Like other stories of  
Jesus that compare God to human agents, this one uses a 'how much  
more' comparison. If an unsympathetic, hard-hearted judge eventually  
responds to a desperate woman's prayer, how much more does God hear  
those who cry out to Him for justice?

### **The Parable of the Persistent Widow**

<sup>1</sup>Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not  
to lose heart. <sup>2</sup>He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither  
feared God nor had respect for people. <sup>3</sup>In that city there was a widow  
who kept coming to him and saying, 'Grant me justice against my  
opponent.'

<sup>4</sup>For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, 'Though I have no  
fear of God and no respect for anyone, <sup>5</sup>yet because this widow keeps  
bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by  
continually coming.'"

<sup>6</sup>And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. <sup>7</sup>And will not  
God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he  
delay long in helping them? <sup>8</sup>I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to  
them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

## Challenge – ‘NEVER GIVE UP’

They came as such a relief, those words of His,  
For I'm as guilty as any, tending to badger God in prayer, refusing to take  
no for an answer.

I'd been wondering if that was wrong, if God would get sick and tired of  
the same old words day after day,  
perhaps even ignore me as a result, so I'd resolved to give it a rest, lest I  
test His patience too far.

Only I couldn't have been more wrong, as Jesus brought home to me so  
clearly in that wonderful parable of His.

I thought at first He was likening God to some cantankerous judge –  
An old so and so, who was reluctant to hear, can finally be worn down if  
we persist long enough –

but that wasn't the point at all, for Jesus wasn't so much comparing as  
**contrasting** God,

emphasising that the two couldn't be more different.

Though we may not realise it, God is **always** listening, **always** looking to  
respond,

**always** eager to grant His blessing,

so if He doesn't seem to answer, it's not because He doesn't want to,  
still less that we've asked too often, but because His reply is yet to come.

It may not be today,

or tomorrow,

or the day after that,

but never be afraid to ask and ask again,

for if anyone delights to hear and promises to answer

it's surely **him**.

## Hymn: Prayer Is The Soul's Sincere Desire (StF 529)

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,  
uttered or unexpressed,  
The motion of a hidden fire  
that trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,  
the falling of a tear,  
the upward glancing of an eye

when none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech  
that infant lips can try;  
prayer the sublimest strains that reach  
the majesty on high.

Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice  
Returning from false ways,  
while angels in their songs rejoice,  
and cry: 'The sinner prays!'

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,  
that Christian's native air,  
Our watchword at the gates of death;  
we enter heaven with prayer.

O You by whom we come to God,  
the Life, the Truth, the Way!  
The path of prayer Yourself have trod:  
Lord, teach us how to pray!

James Montgomery (1771–1854)

## **Reading: 2 Timothy chapter 3 v. 14 – chapter 4 v.5 NRSV**

### **Introduction:**

Timothy's faith is grounded in the Jews' 'sacred writings' not 'the Old Testament' or 'the Bible' as a whole, because these definitive collections have not yet been created. 'Scripture' (v.16) probably refers to Jewish writings translated from Hebrew into Greek during the second century BC for the benefit of Greek speaking Jews like Timothy's family, who belonged to the large Jewish diaspora living around the Mediterranean. The earliest Christians used these Greek writings as their Scriptures and regarded them as 'inspired' (v.16). This word translates *theopneustos* ('God-breathed'), which could refer to the origins of Scripture, or to the work of the Spirit when Scriptures are read and heard. Either way, Timothy should treasure these Scriptures as a gift of the Spirit.

<sup>14</sup> But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, <sup>15</sup> and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

<sup>1</sup> In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: <sup>2</sup> proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. <sup>3</sup> For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, <sup>4</sup> and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. <sup>5</sup> As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

### **Reflection:**

3 year old Jamie was excited. It was supermarket shopping day - and that meant one thing - cookies for Jamie, but as Mum strapped him in the car, she warned him: "Please don't ask for any cookies today." As she sat him in the trolley as they arrived at the shop, she reminded him: "No cookies today so please don't ask." Mum navigated the shop well, avoiding the cookie aisle, until she remembered something she'd forgotten which was - guess where - in the cookie aisle! She quickly walked down the aisle hoping Jamie wouldn't notice, but oh no! "Mum, can I have some cookies?" "Sorry Jamie, no." "Please may I have some cookies?" "I told you. No cookies today. **"PLEASE** may I have some cookies? Mum was getting angry and ignored him. As they reached the checkout Jamie realised he had one last chance. He stood up in the shopping trolley and at the top of his voice shouted: "In the name of Jesus, please may I have some cookies!" Everyone at the checkout felt sorry for Jamie and a very embarrassed Mum left the shop with Jamie, and 22 packets of cookies! Now while I don't suggest trying it out, I do think it had more to do with pitying Jamie than Jesus answering his plea, but it does remind me that

God wants us to persevere in our praying for His creation and its peoples and needs.

I wonder if you sometimes feel your prayers are like a shopping list? Peace, destruction, loss of life, famine, natural disaster..... there is never any shortage of what to pray about, and answers don't appear like Jamie's cookies.

So what might Jesus be telling us in this story:

We should pray with confidence that God will respond, but our confidence should be in God's mercy, not in our own merits.

Parables have been a common theme in Luke's story of the journey to Jerusalem. Here, he is focusing on discipleship and in particular, prayer, which is a recurrent theme for Luke, particularly referring on Jesus' own need to pray.

Local justice was normally administered by a council of elders whose particular role was to arbitrate in property disputes. However, here, the judge is acting alone as it most likely referred to a monetary dispute. Jesus portrays a vulnerable woman to whom special consideration should be given. It is set in the Temple in Jerusalem where Israelite men stood to pray in the Court of Israel overlooking the Court of Priests where sacrifices took place. The judge in the story represents God, but in this description, it is clear that his character is not to be seen as a reflection of what God is like. The judge is shown as a selfish scoundrel in order to set up "how much more" Jesus argues in the verses 6 – 7. If even a man like this can be prevailed on, how much more will a response come from God who really does care for people's good. A widow who fought her own case with no male support could easily have been exploited. The judge's compliance is purely selfish. The woman has become a nuisance and he found her quite a threat and he gives in and she gets justice.

The justice Jesus is speaking of here may well be the vindication of a persecuted minority and God is patient with them. God takes notice of persistent prayers and can be trusted to answer them - maybe not today or tomorrow, but His appointed time. Verse 8 is a reminder that prayer must always be persistent. So, while they might seem like a shopping list to us, to God, they are the pouring out of our deepest concerns and needs - which are of deep concern to Him.



During September, I followed the television documentary “I Fought the Law”, the story of Anne Ming who fought for justice for her daughter, Julie Hogg, who had been brutally murdered in the 1970s. A perpetrator was soon charged and faced trial. Despite the mounting evidence supporting the case, he pleaded not guilty and the Jury agreed. The Judge ordered a re-trial and despite compelling evidence the Jury could not reach a majority verdict. The only legal course for the Judge was to acquit him and he walked free. Despite his continued boasting of his guilt, nothing could be done due to an 800 year Law called “Double Jeopardy” which meant that no one could face a third trial, even if the guilt was known. This was where Anne took up the gauntlet. This Law had to be overturned. 13 years of campaigning began. TV, newspapers, M.P.s, the Home Secretary and ultimately, the House of Lords were Anne’s target as she persevered in seeking justice for her daughter. Eventually, it was her appearance before a House of Lords’ Committee which brought about a change. Her written speech ripped up - she spoke from the heart - she told it as it was – and her perseverance, repeatedly pouring out her heart, resulted in this 800 year Law being overturned. The accused was tried a third time and found guilty. It took those 13 years of perseverance, facing all the pain and obstacles that came her way, for the Law to be changed ensuring she achieved justice for Julie.

Paul continues that same message of perseverance in his 2nd letter to Timothy. We wonder often if times really ever change. The Ephesian Christians, for whom Timothy was caring, were facing so much false teaching. They, like many today, were questioning what they should believe. Paul's message encouraged them to put their trust in Scripture and to Timothy, he encouraged perseverance. “Preach the word” despite everything that was happening at that time, hold fast to what he had learned and persevere in preaching it, no matter what opposition or contradiction he came up against from false teachers, even when that meant becoming unpopular.

Perseverance: that is both challenge and encouragement to us. Challenge: that we need to hold fast to our Christian values and teaching - no matter what the circumstances. Encouragement: that God never tires of hearing our prayers, even when we do not realise it. He is always looking to

respond, to grant us His blessing. We cannot know how or when He will respond, but what we can be sure of is that He wants us to persevere and open our hearts to Him. **Amen.**

**Hymn: Speak, O Lord (StF 161)**

Speak, O Lord, as we come to You  
to receive the food of Your Holy word.  
Take Your truth, plant it deep in us;  
shape and fashion us in Your likeness,  
that the light of Christ might be seen today  
in our acts of love and our deeds of faith.  
Speak, O Lord, and fulfil in us  
all Your purposes, for Your glory.

Teach us, Lord, full obedience,  
holy reverence, true humility.  
Test our thoughts and our attitudes  
in the radiance of Your purity.  
Cause our faith to rise, cause our eyes to see  
Your majestic love and authority.  
Words of power that can never fail;  
let the truth prevail over unbelief.

Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds;  
help us grasp the heights of Your plans for us.  
Truths unchanged from the dawn of time  
that will echo down through eternity.  
And by grace we'll stand on Your promises,  
and by faith we'll walk as You walk with us.  
Speak, O Lord, till Your Church is built  
and the earth is filled with Your glory.

Keith Getty (b. 1974) and Stuart Townend (b. 1963)

**Prayers of Love and Concern:**

Grant us, O Lord, purity of heart and strength of purpose, that no passion may hinder us from knowing Your will and no weakness from doing it. In Your light we may see light clearly, and in Your service find perfect

freedom; through Christ our Lord. In Your strength, may we persevere in our faithful witness. ['Our Story and Song']

Lord, we lift our eyes to You.

**Hear our prayer for justice, mercy and peace.**

We pray for all involved in our justice system, for police officers, judges, lawyers and all who uphold the law. We pray for all who work in our prisons and for all those serving prison sentences.

Lord, we lift our eyes to you.

**Hear our prayer for justice, mercy and peace.**

We pray for the ongoing conflicts around the world, civil unrest, destruction, hunger, lack of medical provision and loss of life. We pray for aid workers in every situation, that they may be enabled to deliver the help where it is needed. We pray for safe passage for lorries and workers to reach those in need.

Lord, we lift our eyes to you.

**Hear our prayer for justice, mercy and peace.**

We pray for family life. We remember those who are bereaved or lonely, children who are orphaned or abused, those in need and those who are vulnerable. We pray for our own loved ones and for our communities. For those who are fearing the prospect of fuel poverty this winter and dreading escalating debt due to the ever-spiralling cost of living.

Lord, we lift our eyes to you.

**Hear our prayer for justice, mercy and peace.**

We pray for all who preach Your word, Lord. For all Christian leaders in our Churches. For all Your people. You call us to pray, to work at it and not give up. You care about every detail of our lives, from the smallest to the more complex. We place all into Your hands, for on You we can depend.

Lord, we lift our eyes to you.

**Hear our prayer for justice, mercy and peace. Amen.**

**Hymn: Show Me How To Stand For Justice (StF: 713) (An alternative tune is No. 25 'Bethany')**

Show me how to stand for justice:  
how to work for what is right,  
How to challenge false assumptions,  
How to walk within the light.  
May I learn to share more freely  
in a world so full of greed,  
showing Your immense compassion  
by the life I choose to lead.

Teach my heart to treasure mercy.  
Whether given or received –  
for my need has not diminished  
since the day I first believed:  
let me seek no satisfaction  
boasting of what I have done,  
but rejoice that I am pardoned  
and accepted in your Son.

Gladly I embrace a lifestyle  
modelled on Your living word,  
in humility submitting  
to the truth which I have heard.  
Make me conscious of Your presence  
every day in all I do:  
by your Spirit's gracious prompting  
may I learn to walk with You.

Martin Leckebusch (b. 1962)

**Blessing:**

Almighty heavenly Father, You are always faithful to us and delight to bless us.

Help us to stay connected to You through prayer and reading of Your Scriptures.

Help us, O Lord, to set aside time in our busy lives to devote ourselves fully to You. **Amen.**

*Some material is adapted from 'Roots for Churches'*

# **Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2025 – 30<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*This service has been compiled by Rev Liz Singleton.*

May God move among us now, wherever we may be, as we join together in worship.

## **Hymn: King of Glory, King of Peace (StF 56)**

King of Glory, King of Peace,  
I will love thee;  
and that love may never cease  
I will move thee.  
Thou hast granted my request,  
thou hast heard me;  
thou didst note my working breast,  
thou hast spared me.

Wherefore of my utmost art  
I will sing thee,  
and the cream of all my heart  
I will bring thee.  
Though my sins against me cried,  
thou didst clear me;  
and alone, when they replied,  
thou didst hear me.

Seven whole days, not one in seven,  
I will praise thee;  
in my heart, though not in heaven  
I can raise thee.  
Small it is in this poor sort  
to enrol thee:  
e'en eternity's too short  
to extol thee.

## **Prayer:**

In magnificent cathedrals and the humblest of homes,  
you touch our lives and warm our hearts.

We thank you, God of life,  
that you meet us in the brokenness of despair  
and the wonder of creation.

We lift up your name because you are prepared to stoop down,  
even to the least of your creatures,  
and the worst of offenders, and offer them love.

And so we bring all glory to you, through our prayers,  
our hymns, indeed, through our very lives,  
now and into eternity. Amen

Our OT reading comes from the book of Jeremiah. In the first few verses  
the Lord is giving a message to Jeremiah. The second part of the reading  
is Jeremiah's prayer in response to what God has said.

### **OT Reading: Jeremiah 14: 7–10, 19–22**

The people say, "Our wickedness has caught up with us, Lord,  
but help us for the sake of your own reputation.

We have turned away from you  
and sinned against you again and again.

O Hope of Israel, our Savior in times of trouble,  
why are you like a stranger to us?

Why are you like a traveler passing through the land,  
stopping only for the night?

Are you also confused?

Is our champion helpless to save us?

You are right here among us, Lord.

We are known as your people.

Please don't abandon us now!"

So this is what the Lord says to his people:

"You love to wander far from me  
and do not restrain yourselves.

Therefore, I will no longer accept you as my people.

Now I will remember all your wickedness  
and will punish you for your sins."

Lord, have you completely rejected Judah?

Do you really hate Jerusalem?

Why have you wounded us past all hope of healing?

We hoped for peace, but no peace came.  
We hoped for a time of healing, but found only terror.  
Lord, we confess our wickedness  
and that of our ancestors, too.  
We all have sinned against you.  
For the sake of your reputation, Lord, do not abandon us.  
Do not disgrace your own glorious throne.  
Please remember us,  
and do not break your covenant with us.  
Can any of the worthless foreign gods send us rain?  
Does it fall from the sky by itself?  
No, you are the one, O Lord our God!  
Only you can do such things.  
So we will wait for you to help us.

Jeremiah chapters 11 – 20 dovetail the prophet's so-called 'confessions' with a series of meditations and prayers that explore Jeremiah's thoughts and feelings. Our reading forms part of that series.....Jeremiah is trying to make sense of the things that are happening to God's people and to help the people in their relationship with God. Jeremiah is informed by experience.....God's grace and judgement and retribution form the basis of the divine moral universe. The people are feeling god-forsaken, terrorized and broken – and Jeremiah sees this as the consequence of their unfaithfulness. But like any good pastor Jeremiah identifies closely with his people and in his prayer he confesses their sins and he acknowledges that God is their only source of life and hope. He pleads with God not to return the people's unfaithfulness like-for-like but to remain faithful to his covenant with them.

It is a daring prayer for it's almost as though Jeremiah is asking God to step outside the existing moral universe and to deal with his unfaithful people without resorting to retribution. Jeremiah is asking for God to somehow absorb the consequences of his people's disobedience – a plea which today we can see fulfilled in Jesus.

## **Hymn: There is a Redeemer (StF 338)**

There is a Redeemer,  
Jesus, God's own Son,  
precious Lamb of God, Messiah,  
Holy One.

*Thank you, O my Father,  
for giving us your Son,  
and leaving your Spirit  
till the work on earth is done.*

Jesus my Redeemer,  
name above all names,  
precious Lamb of God, Messiah,  
O for sinners slain.

When I stand in glory  
I will see his face,  
and there I'll serve my King for ever  
in that holy place.

Our New Testament reading follows on immediately from the reading we heard last week about the persistent widow and our subsequent reflection about prayer.

### ***NT Reading: Luke 18: 9 – 14***

Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: “Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: ‘I thank you, God, that I am not like other people—cheaters, sinners, adulterers. I’m certainly not like that tax collector! I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.’ “But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, ‘O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.’ I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”



Jeremiah's profound awareness of his people's sin is reflected in the tax collector's sense of his own shortcomings. They both rely on God's mercy and faithfulness as the basis of hope for renewal.  
We rest on that mercy and faithfulness now as we pray.....

**Prayer:**

When I feel thankful, God, it is easy to forget my need of you.  
Too quickly I remember my achievements  
and my successes in doing what I ought to have done anyway.  
Too slowly I call to mind the times I got it wrong,  
and so often pride gets in the way.  
Take me by the hand again, and help me walk with you,  
for you love me despite the things I do, not because of them.  
Teach me to watch and listen, and so to learn of you,  
that I may reflect a little of your glory in the world,  
for your love's sake.  
Amen

**Reflection:**

Dorothy L Sayers was commissioned to write a play for the Canterbury Festival in 1937. She wrote 'The Zeal of Thy House' and in one scene is a description of a stonemason working on an intricate carving of a figure for the chancel of Canterbury Cathedral. The workman was distracted on this particular day and perhaps wasn't being as careful as he should and at a crucial point in the process he let his tools slip. Suddenly he is faced with a valuable and custom-cut stone, misshapen and seemingly ruined. Seeing what has happened the supervising architect and master mason takes the tools out of the stonemason's hands and, whilst he chastises the workman for his carelessness, he begins an enactment of forgiveness as he redesigns a new and different figure from the spoiled carving, a figure which was to play its own part in the façade of the Cathedral. The master mason then lets the blundering stonemason complete the work himself. Dorothy L Sayers concludes her script 'So works with us the cunning craftsman, God.'

'The cunning craftsman, God.' Not cunning as in sly or crafty which is how a modern interpretation of the word might explain it but cunning as

in artful, skillful, wise. Dorothy L Sayers found a wonderful way of describing how God can take all our blundering efforts and still make something good out of them. Our mismanaged lives, our failed efforts, our shameful deeds, our sinful lives – with his divine resourcefulness God can create something new and worthy and wonderful that has usefulness and beauty in his kingdom. I find that incredibly reassuring but I know that I shouldn't just take it for granted.

We're not here to tell God about our great accomplishments and achievements – unlike the Pharisee who had no problem it seems in praying proudly in public. Look at me God – haven't I done well! So ask yourself.....

Is God more impressed with what I do for him, than he is by the time I spend with him? Is going to church a habit for me, is it a social activity? Do I ever look at people who don't go to church, and think I'm better than they are because I do go to church? Do I ever look at people in prison and think I'm better than they are because you're not in prison? Do I ever look at people who are divorced and think I'm better than they are because I'm not?

Jesus told this parable. Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and one a tax collector. And the Pharisee stood and prayed thus... 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men – I don't cheat, I don't sin, I'm not an adulterer, and I'm certainly not like this tax collector.'

Now there's nothing wrong in reflecting on an impressive record of achievement and doubtless the Pharisee was a model husband, an exemplary churchman, devout in his religious duties and generous in supporting the church funds. But his prayer has this enormous hollow ring to it. There is no compassion, no love, no sympathy, no concern for the poor tax collector praying in obvious misery. From the Pharisee there is no humility. His words are sanctimonious and shallow and all he seems to be looking for is praise from God – eternal brownie points! Superior, proud and a right pain in the proverbial.....his attitude isolates him both from humanity and from heaven. Jesus puts such an attitude in its place with his concluding words 'For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.'

Someone once said 'The Christian Church is the only organization in the world where one of the conditions for membership is the admission that you're not perfect. If you will confess that you have come short of God's perfect will, that you need his forgiveness and grace to live the Christian life, that you accept Jesus as Saviour, and that you are willing to work alongside other Christians to do God's work in the world, then the Church opens her doors to you.' And it's in that frame of mind That we should come to worship .....standing in need of God's forgiveness and asking for his grace to live a better life. We are among the great company who through the ages have done the same.....coming to submit themselves to the cunning craftsman, God.

Think about the story of the stonemason and some of the stories we read in the Bible..... Moses, who lost his temper with God; David, who gave in to uncontrollable lust; Peter, who bowed to cowardice and denial; James and John, who sought to get the best seats in God's kingdom; Paul, whose life began as a cruel inquisitor. These stories aren't just about good men but also the worst of humanity as well. Yet God, the cunning craftsman, took each one of them in a moment of humility and with forgiving and patient love fashioned each into a holy and useful life.

The tax collector in the parable knew his life had been spoiled, that he'd messed up and disfigured his life through his own poor workmanship. There was no one to blame but himself yet he realized the need to turn to someone for help and that someone was God. God, the divine architect, hears his cries of need and stoops to help him..... 'and he went home justified before God.'

So as you worship God today, wherever you may be, bow before the divine architect, the cunning craftsman, confess your failings and ask him to use you anew that you might be justified before God. 'For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.' This is the moment for humility when the cunning craftsman can go to work and leave us exalted not because of all we have done but despite what we have done.

**Hymn: Come down, O love divine (StF 372)**

Come down, O Love divine,  
seek thou this soul of mine,  
and visit it with thine own ardour glowing;  
O Comforter draw near,  
within my heart appear,  
and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.

O let it freely burn,  
till earthly passions turn  
to dust and ashes, in its heat consuming;  
and let thy glorious light  
shine ever on my sight,  
and clothe me round, the while my path illuming.

Let holy charity  
mine outward vesture be,  
and lowliness become mine inner clothing;  
true lowliness of heart,  
which takes the humbler part,  
and o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.

And so the yearning strong,  
with which the soul will long,  
shall far outpass the power of human telling;  
for none can guess its grace,  
till he become the place  
wherein the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling.

**Prayers:**

Merciful God, we pray for all people the world over  
who, like the Pharisee, think themselves better than most.  
We ask your hand on those whose eyes are blind to their own  
shortcomings,  
hearts that are full of their own importance,  
minds that fail to acknowledge the worth of others.  
We pray for your church.  
May all who profess to serve and follow you

be aware of their own shortcomings and vulnerabilities,  
be honest and true, living lives worthy of your name.

We pray for this country's government in its present troubles.  
May all who govern be in tune with people from all walks of life and be in  
tune with you.

We pray for the vulnerable,  
that their needs, whatever they may be, will be met.  
We pray for those needing to use the food banks in our communities,  
many of which are in crisis due to depleted donations;  
for those living on the streets of our towns and cities;  
for those fleeing oppression and the effects of conflict.  
May all your created people recognise the equal worth of others.

And we pray for those we know who are sick in body, mind or spirit.  
For those in hospital and those at home.  
And we remember those who have died and all who mourn.

Merciful God, may those of humble heart and mind  
**draw strength from your pools of blessing.**

**In Jesus' name we pray**

**Amen**

Lord's Prayer

**Hymn: Tell out, my soul (StF 186)**

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!  
Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;  
tender to me the promise of his word;  
in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name!  
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;  
his mercy sure, from age to age the same;  
his holy name - the Lord, the Mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!  
Powers and dominions lay their glory by;

proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,  
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!  
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.  
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord  
to children's children and for evermore!

**Closing words:**

Go humbly with God, so that through your love for him, others may know  
and worship him.



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