

## Some topics for prayer

Young people returning to school or college; their teachers and support staff; their families.

Businesses discovering they are having to lay people off or even to close; the people affected.

The street you live in and individuals in it.

Members of your family. Friends. Not-so-friends.

St Andrew's and our parish.

People who are planning how to use our hall again, to be least at risk from covid-19.

Our town. Our NHS. Our schools and care homes. People who work in our public services.

People living anywhere in the world where there is famine, war, poverty, pandemic ...

Victims of hatred based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, class ...

## Two prayers ('Collects') set for today

Almighty God,  
you search us and know us:  
may we rely on you in strength  
and rest on you in weakness,  
now and in all our days;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

Almighty God,  
who called your Church to bear witness  
that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself:  
help us to proclaim the good news of your love,  
that all who hear it may be drawn to you;  
through him who was lifted up on the cross,  
and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
Amen.

*Please take this leaflet home with you and may God bless you and everyone you love and pray for.*

## Welcome

### to private prayer

### at St Andrew's

**Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> September 2020**



This sheet offers you one of the readings set for today, together with a structured way of reading it prayerfully. It also offers you prayers set for today, some other prayers, and ideas for topics for prayer.

But first and foremost, let us 'Be still and know that I am God' (Psalm 46:10)

### The Lord's prayer

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.

### The Grace

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
be with us all evermore. Amen.

## A reading set for today (Matthew 18:15-17)

*Here is a suggestion for a structured way of reading prayerfully. It is based on an ancient practice called Lectio Divina.*

First, breathe slowly and deeply.

Ask God to speak to you through the passage that you are about to read.

1<sup>st</sup> reading of the passage: listen.

Read through the passage once, silently, but 'saying each word out loud in your mind', and listening.

Allow a word or phrase to attract your attention. Let it arise naturally from the passage as if it were God's word for you today, however unexpected.

Say it to yourself a few times, or underline it with a pen.

2<sup>nd</sup> reading of the passage: ponder.

Read the passage a second time. As you read and listen, ask how and why this word or phrase is speaking to you.

Summarise what it means for you.

3<sup>rd</sup> reading of the passage: pray.

Read the passage a third time, prayerfully asking Christ what he is saying to you in this word or phrase, and listen.

What is it that you need to do - or consider - or relinquish - or take on - as a result of what God is saying to you?

Talk to God about it in prayer.

*Here is space to jot things down, to take away and to return to later:*

Jesus spoke to his disciples.

"If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one.

"But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

"If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector."

Matthew 18:15-17

### ***I wonder ...***

- ... if any part of what Jesus said resonates with what we see in the news?
- ... if any part of what Jesus said resonates with anything in your own life?
- ... what it feels like, to be the people who are hurt?
- ... what it feels like, to be someone who does the hurting?
- ... what God feels like, to see people hurting each other?
- ... what the most important part is, of what Jesus said?
- ... what it means, to repent and say sorry and change?
- ... where forgiveness come into all this?

It might be worth looking at the immediate context of this passage. It is preceded by the story of the lost sheep (Matthew 18:12-14), and followed by Peter asking about forgiving people (Matthew 18:21-35)

***You can hear our weekly audio service -  
around 20 minutes - on our website***

<https://standrewswatford.org.uk/>