

Some topics for prayer

To rejoice in Christian unity - within St Andrew's as well as across Watford and beyond.

The distribution of the covid-19 vaccine across the world.

People who are victim in any way to the pandemic.

People who have to make decisions about how to manage the pandemic.

The street you live in and individuals in it.

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

Our town, our nation and our world.

Our NHS. Our schools and care homes.

People who work in our public services.

Our economy.

Caring for our planet which is our family home.

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

That we may begin to learn from what the pandemic has exposed in our society that needs healing, and to plan what to do about it.

Some prayers ('collects') set for today

Generous God,
you give us gifts and make them grow:
though our faith is small as mustard seed,
make it grow to your glory
and the flourishing of your kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord of all power and might,
the author and giver of all good things:
graft in our hearts the love of your name,
increase in us true religion,
nourish us with all goodness,
and of your great mercy keep us in the same;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive 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.
May God bless you and everyone you love and pray for.*

Welcome to private prayer

for

18th July 2021
The 7th Sunday
after Trinity



*Jesus includes all.
Do you?*

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.

***You can hear or watch our weekly
services - around 20 minutes - on our
website***

A reading set for today

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.

1st 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.

2nd 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.

3rd 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:

One new humanity the Church

So then, remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called "the uncircumcision" by those who are called "the circumcision" - a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands - remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it.

So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father.

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

Ephesians 2:11-22 (NRSV translation)

I wonder ...

- ... what the most important message is in this passage?
 - ... to what extent we truly value and celebrate diversity in other people?
 - ... how aware we are of the ways in which we identify people as 'different' or 'other' or 'them'?
 - ... do we sometimes embrace unity with conditions attached - for example 'some are more equal than others'?
 - ... what does it mean, to be 'citizens of the household of God'?
 - ... what does it mean in practice, to be 'a dwelling place for God'?
- ... and why?***