

Bolingbroke Deanery Team Parishes

Faithful, Confident, Joyful

22nd November 2020

Christ the King

(White)



See: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches/call-prayer-nation#sunday>

We are called to prayer each day of the lockdown at 6.00pm – see the topic for prayer each day below & the prayer for this week:

Lord Jesus Christ, in these dark and difficult days, we turn our hearts to you. In ages past, you have delivered our nation from disaster. Do it again, we pray. Give wisdom beyond human wisdom to our leaders, Give strength beyond human strength to the NHS and all our frontline workers. Give comfort beyond human comfort to the elderly and all who grieve. Lord Jesus Christ, in these dark and difficult days, turn your face towards us, have mercy upon us, and heal our land, we pray. Amen.



Christ the King

9.00am Sunday Service at Home **Watch the service Church online**

Join us for our weekly online services, streamed each Sunday at 9am. A service of Prayer for the Nation

22/11/2020

This online service of Prayer For The Nation comes from Durham Cathedral.

The service, marking Christ The King, is led by the Bishop of Durham, with contributions from the Dean of Durham.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online>

10.00am Prayer in our own homes See below

Christ the King

Physical Services cancelled but there will be online worship,
N.B. - All Churches Closed for Public Worship. For November.

9.30am Spilsby Eucharist (Broadcast later only)

6.00pm Prayer for the Nation: Family Friends and Loved ones.

Bolingbroke Churches on line:

We will continue to publish a short video on YouTube and linked it to our website.

Our Web Site <http://lincoln.ourchurchweb.org.uk/spilsby/index.php>

I have created a YouTube Account **Bolingbroke Team Churches**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7o5VzGhMNC>

Monday Clement Bishop of Rome, Martyr, c.100

6.00pm **Prayer for the Nation:** Schools & Colleges, Children & Young People

Tuesday

7.00pm Deanery Synod via Zoom all welcome

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88336523456?pwd=aDdjU9lZTcrM3B4V2E3NWRiNmtqdz09>

6.00pm **Prayer for the Nation:** Elderly, isolated & vulnerable

Wednesday Isaac Watts Hymn Writer, 1748

10.30am Spilsby Eucharist to Broadcast later

3.30pm Team Meeting

6.00pm **Prayer for the Nation:** Business, the work place & economic wellbeing

Thursday

6.00pm **Prayer for the Nation:** The NHS & other key workers

Friday

6.00pm Prayer for the Nation: National & Local Government

Saturday

6.00pm **Prayer for the Nation:** All who are grieving & and all suffering with physical & mental ill health.

ADVENT SUNDAY

Physical Services cancelled but there will be online worship,
N.B. - All Churches Closed for Public Worship. For November.

9.30am Spilsby Eucharist (Broadcast only)

6.00pm **Prayer for the Nation:** Family Friends and Loved ones.

Private Prayer in the Following Churches:

St James Spilsby	Daily	08.00 to 12.00
St Helen East Keal	Daily	10.00 to 15.00
St Helen's West Keal	Saturdays	10.00 to 14.00
St Nicholas Partney	Thursdays	11.30 to 12.30
St Mary Tetford	Thursdays	14.00 to 15.00
St Luke Stickney	Thursdays	09.45 to 11.00
St Helen Stickford	Thursdays	10.00 to 11.30
St Mary Hundleby	Daily	10.00 to 14.00

Daily 8am Morning Prayer

at Noon

God of love, turn our hearts to Your ways and give us peace. Amen

Letter to the nation from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have invited the nation to join them in prayer, in a message encouraging ‘calm, courageous and compassionate’ responses to the difficulties of the second national lockdown in England.

Dear Friends,

These are deeply challenging and difficult times for us all. When we are surrounded by fear and suffering, it can be hard to feel hopeful. This coming winter feels like it will be longer and darker than usual.

There is a story in the Bible where Jesus and his disciples are caught in a storm. The disciples are understandably terrified as the wind and waves threaten to overpower them. ‘Why are you so afraid?’, Jesus asks. This year, we too have been caught in a storm which often feels overwhelming. And yet we can look to Jesus, in the boat with us, who calms the storm and comforts us in our fear.

We are writing to share our belief that whoever you are, and whatever you happen to believe, you are loved by God. Beyond measure. We also want you to know that we are praying for you, particularly asking that Christ’s love will comfort us, calm our fears, and lead our nation and our world through this terrible pandemic. Starting this week, we have asked every church to pray each day at 6pm. We invite you to join with us. You’ll be able to find simple resources on the Church of England website and social media channels.

There are three other responses that we want to encourage everyone to consider - First, let’s be *calm*. By only buying what we need and not hoarding, or by reaching out to our neighbours as we did during the first lockdown, we can be stronger together in ways that are impossible if we go it alone. When things go wrong - as they always will with such complex challenges - let us look for good and right ways forward together.

Secondly, let’s be *courageous*. There are many reasons to be fearful at the moment, but the story of Christ calming the waves calls us to give our fears to Jesus and have faith in Him. The British willingness just to get on with things is one of our very best characteristics – let us not be paralysed by fear. We will all need each other’s courage in the months to come.

Thirdly, let’s be *compassionate*. So many of us are holding so much pain - our own and the pain of those we love. We will need to be gentle, kind and patient with each other. In the first wave we showed we are a nation of compassion and kindness. Let’s dig deep and keep that love for our neighbours strong in this second time of struggle.

Even though there is much darkness around us, there are also many points of light in the weeks ahead.

On Remembrance Day. As we remembered the courage and sacrifice of those who gave everything for this nation in war, we are also reminded of the possibility for hope after destruction, of new life after suffering. In the coming weeks, there are great religious ceremonies. For Hindus, Sikhs and Jains there is Diwali, the festival of light. Sikhs will celebrate the birth of Guru Nanak. The Jewish community will observe Hanukkah. Many Muslim communities have just celebrated Eid-e-Milad, the anniversary of the birth of Muhammad.

Soon it will be Christmas. At his birth Jesus was also called Emmanuel. It's a word that appears in lots of carols. It means 'God is with us'. And this is the message of Christmas: in Jesus, God is with us, sharing our darkness and our struggles, bringing comfort and joy. It is the source of our hope. As the Bible says: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1:5) Let us shine in the darkness of this winter. May God bless you and keep you, and all those you love.

The Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury
The Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York

The sick at home or in hospital,

Leo Seebacher-Hobson, Nigel Worth, Kathleen, Ann, Molly, Veronica, Dorothy, Maggie J. Betty Brawn, Tristan, Michael P, Joan T. Mark, Jossie Lee, June, Hilary, Michael, Harriet, Rose L., Abby, Sheila Janes, Fleur, Mary, Jeff Mason, Rosie, Jean C. Bob, (Baby) Chloe Lear, Lawrence, Margaret White (Spilsby), Ann Howman, John and Audrey Prince, Sylvia Bonsey, Anthea B.

The Departed: Jean Tonry, Joan Abbey, Elsie Shaw, Grace Pettit, Alec Cark, Marjorie Ely, Edward Hanson, Baby Gracie-Mai Woodhouse-Holland.

Anniversary:

Mary Croutcher, Harry Curwen, May Parnell, Violet English, Nellie Francis, David Graves, Paul Kitchen, Michael Hallam, Derek Smith, Baby: Tyler Boucher, Stephen Adkins(p), Gerald Rose, Irene Hextall, Kneale Whittom, Toni Cockayne, Bronwen Woods, Rhoda Sleaford, Laura Parish, Alma Leverton, Jane Fox-Robinson, Sheila Mackie, Baby Baxter, Barbara Clarke, Mary Hampson, Norah Walls, Katherine Thornley, Edward Ellis, Maureen Kemp, Edna Ely, Roy Blackbourn, Alf Mountain, John Dale, Philda Upex, Carol Panrucker, Eileen Ely, Vera Lawrence, John Spalding, Sidney Ashley, Geoff West, Frank Richardson, Bernard Holmes, Dennis Armstrong, Howard Lansom, Phyllis Blackbourn, David Price, Alice Snow, Sadie Kennet, Kenneth Frost, Denise Nelson, Barry Pogson, James Adair.

<p>Sunday 22nd Christ the King</p>	<p>I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him. Ephesians 1: 17 Pray for wisdom for all in authority within the Church.</p> <p>Pray for the Church of Bermuda (Extra-Provincial to the Archbishop of Canterbury) The Rt Revd Nicholas Dill – Bishop of Bermuda</p>
<p>Monday 23rd Clement, Bishop of Rome, Martyr, c.100</p>	<p>The Deanery of Corringham. Rural Dean: Revd Canon Phillip Wain, Lay Chair: Paul Howitt-Cowan Pray for the discussions at Deanery level around Resourcing Sustainable Church Santiago (Chile) The Rt Revd Hector (Tito) Zavala Santiago (Philippines) The Rt Revd Frenzel Ray P Piluden</p>
<p>Tuesday 24th</p>	<p>Church Schools in the Corringham Deanery Blyton Cum Laughton, Corringham, Gainsborough Parish, Gainsborough St George`s, Lea Frances Olive Anderson, Newton-on-Trent, Saxilby.</p> <p>Sao Paulo (Brazil) The Rt Revd Francisco Cezar Fernandes East Carolina (The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Robert Skirving</p>
<p>Wednesday 25th Catherine of Alexandria, Martyr, 4th century Isaac Watts, Hymn Writer, 1748</p>	<p>Gainsborough and Morton: Revd Steve Johnson Pray for all who are working to create links between Church and Community</p> <p>Sapele (Nigeria) The Rt Revd Dr Blessing Erifeta East Kerala (South India) The Rt Revd V S Francis</p>
<p>Thursday 26th</p>	<p>The Lea Group - Corringham, Gate Burton, Heapham, Knaith, Marton, Pilham, Springthorpe, Upton with Kexby: Revd Phillip Wain Pray for the PCC and all Church officers as they work to keep the Churches open for services Saskatchewan (Canada) The Rt Revd Michael William Hawkins East Ruwenzori (Uganda) The Rt Revd George Turyasingura East Tennessee (The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Brian Lee Cole</p>
<p>Friday 27th</p>	<p>The Saxilby Group - Saxilby w Ingleby and Broxholme, Newton-on-Trent, Kettlethorpe (Plurality with Stow Group): Revd Nicola Penn-Allison Pray for the members of the individual churches living out their faith in the local community Saskatoon (Canada) The Rt Revd Christopher Harper Eastern Himalayas (North India) Vacant</p>
<p>Saturday 28th</p>	<p>The Stow Group - Torksey, Stow-in-Lindsey, Coates, Willingham-by-Stow (Plurality with Saxilby Group): Revd Nicola Penn-Allison Pray for the members of the individual churches living out their faith in the local community Sebei (Uganda) The Rt Revd Paul Kiptoo Masaba Eastern Kowloon (Hong Kong) The Rt Revd Timothy Kwok Kyushu (Japan) The Rt Revd Luke Ken-ichi Muto</p>
<p>Sunday 29th Advent Sunday</p>	<p>‘God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.’ 1 Corinthians 1:9 Pray for the Lusitanian Church (Extra-Provincial to the Archbishop of Canterbury) The Rt Revd Jorge Pina Cabral - Bishop of the Lusitanian Church</p>

<p>Monday 30th Andrew the Apostle</p>	<p>The Trentcliffe Group - Blyborough, Blyton, East Stockwith, Glentworth, Harpswell, Hemswell, Loughton w Wildsworth, Willoughton: Revd Mark Briscoe Pray for the PCC and all Church officers as they work to keep the Churches open for services Sekondi (West Africa) The Rt Revd Alexander Asmah Eastern Michigan (The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Todd Ousley</p>
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Bolingbroke Team Ministry

**Christ the King
Morning Worship**



We come to you, Lord, as people who are hungry,
 people who are thirsty, strangers, imprisoned, exposed,
 knowing that you have come to us, too, in these same guises.

In our brokenness, welcome us.

And open up our defences as we come to you,
 O Lord of many guises. Amen.

Hymn

Here is love vast as the ocean, loving kindness as a flood
When the prince of life our ransom, shed for us His precious blood
Who his love will not remember, who can cease to sing His praise?
He can never be forgotten, throughout heaven's eternal days

On the mount of crucifixion, fountains opened deep and wide
Through the floodgates of God's mercy, flowed a vast and gracious tide.
Grace and love like mighty rivers, flowed incessant from above
Heaven's peace and perfect justice kissed a guilty world with love.

Words: William Rees

Invitation to Confession

Jesus is our high priest, tempted like us, yet without sin. He lives for ever in heaven to intercede for us. Through him we approach the throne of grace with confidence and confess our sins.

A prayer of confession

O King enthroned on high, filling the earth with your glory:
holy is your name, Lord God almighty
In our sinfulness we cry to you to take our guilt away,
and to cleanse our lips to speak your word,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Assurance of sins forgiven

May the God of love and power forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by his Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Reading from Ezekiel 34.11-16,20-24.

For thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God. I

will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken.

Hymn

How deep the Father's love for us, how vast beyond all measure.
That he should give his only son to make a wretch his treasure.
How great the pain of searing loss. The Father turns his face away
as wounds which mar the chosen one bring many sons to glory

Behold the man upon a cross, my sin upon his shoulders.
Ashamed I hear my mocking voice call out among the scoffers
It was my sin that held him there until it was accomplished.
His dying breath has brought me life - I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything, no gifts, no power, no wisdom,
but I will boast in Jesus Christ - his death and resurrection
Why should I gain from his reward? I cannot give an answer.
But this I know with all my heart - his wounds have paid my ransom.

Words: Stuart Townend

Reading from the Gospel of Matthew 25.31-46

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left.

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of

the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?'

And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.'

Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?'

Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Homily from the Diocesan Website

Christ the King is the final festival in the church year – next week we start again with Advent, ready to follow the story of our salvation in the life, teaching, example, death and resurrection of our Lord. The final piece of this great drama, it asks "and who is this Jesus for each one of you?" The answer is "my King". But not, of course, the avenging King the first century Jewish people expected and prayed for. Not a King as we might expect from our understanding of political history. When the name Christ the King was chosen by Pius XI in 1925 it was for a new festival, pre-empting Mussolini's declaration of himself as Il Duce. So a king above earthly kings.

The concept of Christ as a king is very powerful. What are kings? Someone who has authority above any other in their land – yes. They take their power from their father, and hand it down to their children – yes. They expect

honour as well as obedience of their subjects – yes. Their people are united through their rule and their respect, into a kingdom – yes.

Kings are not always good and their reigns not always beneficial – here we need to understand the unique nature of Jesus as a king. Pius XI is helpful in this. He writes: “for Jesus Christ reigns over the minds of individuals by his teachings, in their hearts by his love, in each one's life by the living according to his law and the imitating of his example”.

We tend to think of ourselves as “followers” rather than “subjects” – exercising our free will to turn to Christ and reflecting our human dislike of the idea of subservience. The definition of Christ as “king”, however, makes us consider ourselves as “subjects”. Submission of our own wills to the rule of Christ, even if undertaken freely, is actually a relinquishment of our freedom. A faith with opt-outs when Christ’s rule or example or instruction doesn’t suit us isn’t a faith at all.

Today’s gospel shows us clearly what service this king expects of us his subjects, and it is not like the service expected by any earthly king. Remember Jesus’s summary of the law? Love God, love each other. That is it. If you do one, you automatically do the other. You cannot love a God who is generous love, and not want to share the love God feels for others. Jesus makes this even clearer. He doesn’t only say “if you love me, do me a favour and love others”, he goes a step further. It is in loving each other that you show your love for me. I am the neighbour you love. Not just love, but serve.

Serve is a word implying generosity, selflessness, sacrifice. This is not the service of “the service industries”, doing your job, possibly quite resentfully. This is the service of love and respect, such as we celebrated on Remembrance Sunday, such as we expect and celebrate in committed relationships, such as we offer to someone we totally admire.

This isn’t just an option for a Christian, not even just a consequence of faith, it is our faith itself. We believe in and meet the Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospel, in the Eucharist, and, just as importantly, in each other – even the stranger or the ‘undesirable.’ Matthew doesn’t say loving service of all our fellows is just a sign, it is a defining point of faith. Eternal life with God through Jesus is discovered, entered and sustained through the way we

serve God's children and creation, and God's plan for justice. Ignoring that need to serve at all costs commits us to an eternity without Christ, distant from God, voluntarily opting out of God's forgiving, healing salvation.

As we look back on our lives, on this church year ending today, on the extraordinary changes to life that 2020 has thrust upon us, and as we look forward to another year, another cycle of following and participating God's saving grace, offered through Jesus Christ and shared with us through the church, let us think about the meaning of Christ's kingship, - and our role as his servants and subjects.

As we confront the difficulties and challenges of serving Christ by serving and actually loving our neighbour, sacrificing our interests to theirs, recognising the imprint of the divine in those we think too awful for words, let us remember the king we serve and his call to serve each other. Not just our local brushes with difference of colour, faith, lifestyle and so on, though these are of great importance. Big questions, too.

What would the Jesus of today's gospel say about our buying up of enough vaccine to offer two shots each to our 70m people, when the world has 7.8 billion people needing two shots, most of whom cannot afford them? What would Jesus have to say about a church trying to explore whether some are welcome or not at his own table by virtue of identity, sexuality, or other issues in the forthcoming Living in Love and Faith debate? What would Jesus have to say about major powers boosting their prosperity by polluting or destroying God's creation.

In serving each other with self-sacrificial love we make Christ our king. By looking to ourselves, we reject him and the fruits of his salvation and the promise of eternal life.

Questions for Reflection

1. Think about the ways Christ's kingship differs from earthly power. How does this change how we serve this king and build his kingdom?
2. Looking back, in what ways have we as individuals, a church, a society failed to follow Christ our king by loving and serving others self-sacrificially?

3. Who and what do we find it hardest to love and serve, and what, through prayer and action, can we do about it?
4. How might we, in the new year starting next week, on the slate wiped clean through forgiveness, and in the new sense of the world and its needs dawning at this time, build a kingdom fit for this extraordinary, untypical and demanding yet generous king?
5. Is there anything else from the passage not already discussed that speaks to you? What is it?
6. What will you do this week in your Monday-to-Saturday ministry in response to what you have heard today? #everydayfaith

Hymn

Brother, sister, let me serve you; let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey, and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you in the night time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping; when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow, till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven, we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together of Christ's love and agony.

Brother, sister, let me serve you; let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too.

Words: Richard Gillard

The Creed

Let us declare our faith in God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

We pray for the coming of God's kingdom.

You sent your Son to bring good news to the poor, sight to the blind, freedom to captives and salvation to your people: anoint us with your Spirit; rouse us to work in his name.

Father, by your Spirit bring in your kingdom.

Send us to bring help to the poor and freedom to the oppressed.

Father, by your Spirit bring in your kingdom.

Send us to tell the world the good news of your healing love.

Father, by your Spirit bring in your kingdom.

Send us to those who mourn, to bring joy and gladness instead of grief.

Father, by your Spirit bring in your kingdom.

Send us to proclaim that the time is here for you to save your people.

Father, by your Spirit bring in your kingdom.

Lord of the Church, hear our prayer, and make us one in mind and heart to serve you in Christ our Lord. Amen.

Collect

God the Father, help us to hear the call of Christ the King and to follow in his service, whose kingdom has no end; for he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, one glory. Amen

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.

Hymn

At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow,
every tongue confess him King of glory now.

'Tis the Father's pleasure we should call him Lord,
who from the beginning was the mighty Word.

At his voice creation sprang at once to sight,
all the angel faces, all the hosts of light,
thrones and dominations, stars upon their way,
all the heavenly orders in their great array.

Humbled for a season to receive a name
from the lips of sinners unto whom he came,
faithfully he bore it spotless to the last,
brought it back victorious, when from death he passed.

In your hearts enthrone him; there let him subdue
all that is not holy, all that is not true;
crown him as your Captain in temptation's hour:
let his will enfold you in its light and power.

Brothers, this Lord Jesus shall return again,
with his Father's glory, with his angel train;
for all wreaths of empire meet upon his brow,
and our hearts confess him King of glory now.

Caroline Marie Noel 1817 - 1877

A sending out prayer

O God of kindness, send us out with more time for interruptions, and more
generosity for kindness, so that we might see you within these walls and
beyond these walls. Amen.

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An act of Spiritual Communion

You may wish to find a space for prayer in front of a cross, a candle, or a special place.

You might choose to make your Spiritual Communion at a particular time of day, or after viewing a live streamed service.

Reflect on the day and on your relationships.

- *What good things have come from God today?*
- *Where have I fallen short?*
- *What might I do tomorrow?*

You may wish to say or pray

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Read the following words from Scripture. If you have access to today's readings for Holy Communion, you may wish to read and reflect on them.

Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life.

Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'

John 6.35

Pray for the needs of the world, for your local community, and for those close to you.

End with the Lord's Prayer.

Our Father...

Give thanks for the saving death and resurrection of Jesus and ask him to be with you now.

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have given me, for all the pains and insults you have borne for me. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.

O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.

*after the Prayer of St Richard of Chichester
Conclude with the following:*

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil, and keep us in eternal life.

Amen.

A prayer for all those affected by coronavirus

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy.

Sustain and support the anxious, be with those who care for the sick, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may find comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

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All Saints to Advent

Introduction to the Season

No Christian is solitary. Through baptism we become members one of another in Christ, members of a company of saints whose mutual belonging transcends death:

One family, we dwell in him,
one Church, above, beneath;
though now divided by the stream,
the narrow stream of death. (Charles Wesley)

All Saints' Day and the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed on All Souls' Day both celebrate this mutual belonging. All Saints' Day celebrates men and women in whose lives the Church as a whole has seen the grace of God powerfully at work. It is an opportunity to give thanks for that grace, and for the wonderful ends to which it shapes a human life; it is a time to be encouraged by the example of the saints and to recall that sanctity may grow in the ordinary circumstances, as well as the extraordinary crises, of human living. The Commemoration of the Faithful Departed celebrates the saints in a more local and intimate key. It allows

us to remember with thanksgiving before God those whom we have known more directly: those who gave us life, or who nurtured us in faith. Redemption is a work of God's grace; it is God who redeems us in Christ and there is nothing to be done beyond what Christ has done. But we still wait for the final consummation of God's new creation in Christ; those who are Christ's, whether or not they have passed through death, are joined in prayer that God's kingdom will be revealed finally and in all its fullness. We also sense that it is a fearful thing to come before the unutterable goodness and holiness of God, even for those who are redeemed in Christ; that it is searing as well as life-giving to experience God's mercy; and this instinct also is expressed in the liturgy of All Souls' Day.

Remembrance Sunday goes on to explore the theme of memory, both corporate and individual, as we confront issues of war and peace, loss and self-gift, memory and forgetting.

The annual cycle of the Church's year now ends with the Feast of Christ the King. The year that begins with the hope of the coming Messiah ends with the proclamation of his universal sovereignty. The ascension of Christ has revealed him to be Lord of earth and heaven, and final judgement is one of his proper kingly purposes. The Feast of Christ the King returns us to the Advent theme of judgement, with which the cycle once more begins.

Clement

23 November

Bishop of Rome, Martyr, c.100

According to the oldest list of Roman bishops, Clement was the third Bishop of Rome. He is believed to have been bishop from AD 92 to 100.

Legend records that the Apostle Peter himself consecrated Clement, and that Clement relinquished the position to Linus, only to take it up again after Linus' death. Early Church historians point out that Clement knew both Peter and Paul. There is little evidence to suggest that Clement was martyred, his 'life' being written in the fourth century and legendary in character.

The Letter of Clement to Corinth, composed just before the persecution of Domitian, was still read frequently in the city at the end of the second century. The letter shows the position of Rome as Church of honour and authority in relation to other, younger Churches. The Letter, which can be ascribed to Clement with

certainly, shows him to be a man concerned with unity and peace, one who sought to restore order to the factious Corinthian Church, and who emphasized the emerging role of bishops and priests at the Eucharist. Clement emphasizes apostolic succession, the responsibility of all to preach the gospel, and stresses the duty of the Church to pray for those in power. Let him who has love in Christ keep the commandments of Christ. Who can describe the bond of the love of God? What man is able to tell the excellence of its beauty, as it ought to be told? The height to which love exalts is unspeakable. Love unites us to God. Love covers a multitude of sins. Love bears all things, is long-suffering in all things. There is nothing base, nothing arrogant in love. Love admits of no schisms: love gives rise to no subversion: love does all things in harmony. By love have all the elect of God been made perfect; without love nothing is well-pleasing to God. In love has the Lord taken us to Himself. On account of the Love he bore us, Jesus Christ our Lord gave His blood for us by the will of God; His flesh for our flesh, and His soul for our souls.

Clement: xlix

Catherine of Alexandria

25 November

Martyr, 4th century

The Life of Catherine was written in the eighth century, and she owes her place in history to this legend.

According to tradition, Catherine was of a royal family and at the age of 18 she protested against the persecution of Christians by the Emperor Maxentius.

Maxentius brought in 50 philosophers to convince her of the errors of Christianity. After prolonged debate some of these philosophers were converted to Christ, but all were killed because of their failure to silence Catherine.

Catherine is said to have refused a proposal of marriage from the Emperor himself and as a consequence was thrown into jail. She then converted all her fellow prisoners and jailers. Maxentius was furious, and ordered her to be tied to a spiked wheel (later called a Catherine Wheel). The wheel broke, and Catherine was subsequently beheaded.

Catherine's legend flourished throughout the Middle Ages, particularly through the period of the Crusades. She became the patron saint of young girls, students and nurses. Her legend spread partly through paintings and other artistic representations of her life.

Isaac Watts

25 November

Hymn Writer, 1748

Isaac Watts was born in Southampton in 1674 and educated at the grammar school there. Having considerable academic ability he came to the attention of a local benefactor who offered to send him to university. But rather than Anglican Oxford or Cambridge Watts chose the highly regarded Dissenting Academy at Stoke Newington in Middlesex. Leaving there in 1694 he worked first as a private tutor before entering the Independent ministry, first as assistant in 1699, then three years later as pastor of Mark Lane Chapel in London.

Because of deteriorating health he resigned his ministry at Mark Lane in 1712 and retired to Abney Park, Stoke Newington, where for the remaining 36 years of his life he lived under the patronage of the Abney family. Here his limited financial independence allowed him the freedom to write and yet he was said to have given away to the poor a third of his modest allowance. Watts has sometimes been accused of harbouring Unitarian sympathies but this was probably an inaccurate inference from his known opposition to a proposal in 1719 to require Nonconformist ministers to subscribe to the doctrine of the Trinity. It would appear to have been the proposed compulsion rather than the doctrine itself that he opposed.

Physically unprepossessing, it was his serene and spiritual manner and his unswerving faith that endeared him to others and is reflected in the words of many of his hymns. In fact he wrote over six hundred hymns though few of these are now in regular use. Among his hymns still sung are *Jesus shall reign where'er the sun*, *Joy to the world* and, *one of the finest English hymns of any age*, *When I survey the wondrous cross*.

Known as the father of English hymn writing, Watts both continued in the tradition of metrical Psalms (e.g. Psalm 90 – O God, our help in ages past) and began a general move away from that rather limited musical diet to a richer variety of hymnody that took root in both Nonconformity and the Church of England.

See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down:
When did such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all!

Calling all singers, choristers and musicians in Lincolnshire!

Abridged and edited transcript from Howard Williams, Assistant Pastor at Alive Church. You can watch the video <https://vimeo.com/479299047> .

Over the last number of months Christians from across the county have been singing the song 'The Blessing' from the Cathedral, over Lincolnshire.

In 2021 it is hoped that churches from across Lincolnshire can gather together to sing it. Until then, and in the run up to Christmas, they wanted to do something that reveals God's love for the county through the local church. They have chosen to film and record a version of the song 'The Blessing'.

They would like as many people from churches across to county to take part and would like to mobilise the singers, choristers and musicians to become part of a mighty choir contributing their voices to the song.

In addition, they would also like to include footage of the way local churches are blessing and serving their communities through their outreach projects.

They will be releasing the video in the run up to Christmas and believe that the video will be a great visual representation of the power of the united church and the way in which the church is mobilised across the county to bring the blessing of God wherever we are.

There are two ways to be involved **(PLEASE NOTE THE DEADLINE FOR SENDING SUBMISSIONS FRIDAY 4TH DECEMBER)**

Singers, choristers and musicians

[Follow this link](#) on Diocesan Web Site

<https://www.lincoln.anglican.org/news/calling-all-singers-choristers-musicians-in-lincolnshire> which will take you to a Google Drive folder where you can download the backing track and all the instructions so you can create your own audio version, and your own video version of the song. You will also need to sign a photography consent form which is also published on the page.

Community leaders

If you lead, or are involved in, a project that blesses the local community then you can find the instructions of how you can create a video showing what you do through your project at the same link as above <https://bit.ly/36Amxvx>

It is believed that as this song is sung over the county at Christmas it will be a wonderful testimony of the love of God, shown through the local church.

Webinar - Receiving online gifts

Churches rely on the generosity of their congregations and their communities to support their mission and ministry. Many people give regularly to their church by standing order or direct debit. Others give in cash when the offering is taken in a church service or when visiting the church, and people will not be able to give in this way whilst our church buildings are closed.

Many individuals are going through financial uncertainty as a result of lost or changed employment during the restrictions, and that may affect their giving too. This means that it is even more important that those who can give are able to do so.

To help churches during these difficult times the National Giving Team and Digital Teams are hosting a one-hour webinar on **Tuesday 8th December at 11am** covering the following:

- How to set up a online giving facility
- How to receive online gifts
- How to encourage online giving
- How to communicate with your community
- A live question and answer session.

[Book your place via link https://www.lincoln.anglican.org/news/webinar-receiving-online-gifts .](https://www.lincoln.anglican.org/news/webinar-receiving-online-gifts)

Praying for the Sick

[People recognized Jesus], and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the market-places, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

Mark 6.55,56

How do you pray for those who are ill? In the Gospels people brought their friends to Jesus. Some of them once made a hole in the roof of a house where Jesus was, to get their friend in front of him. Think of praying as bringing people to Jesus. Sometimes it takes time, effort, and a determination not to give up. And as you bring them, think about exactly what it is you want to ask him for.

Lord God, whose Son, Jesus Christ, understood people's fear and pain before they spoke of them, we pray for those in hospital. Surround the frightened with your tenderness; give strength to those in pain; hold the weak in your arms of love; and give hope and patience to those who are recovering. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen

Prayer by Christine McMullen

This is an extract from *Pocket Prayers for Healing* by Trevor Lloyd (Canterbury Press, £6.99)

