

SHIRLEY PARISH



KNOWING CHRIST
MAKING HIM KNOWN



The Shirley Parish Prayer Book

November 2023

The Lord's Prayer (traditional version)

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.

The Lord's Prayer (for the young)

Our Father in heaven, you are awesome!
Show us who you are and how you want us to be.
Make earth more like heaven.
Please give us what we need to keep going each day.
Help us when we are wrong and clean us up on the inside.
Help us to let other people off and move on.
Keep us from bad stuff.
You're in charge!
You're strong and powerful and always there. Forever!
Yes!



Welcome to the Shirley Parish Prayer Book

Let's be honest - prayer is not easy. We all struggle at times. We can't find the words we want. And when we do spend time in prayer we don't seem to be able to concentrate and we find our thoughts wandering. And so, perhaps, we give up trying.

I hope that this Parish Prayer Book will help us to get back on track. The book has some suggestions for prayers that we can use for mornings and / or evenings, and also some prayers suggested by members of our congregations which may just be the words you are looking for.

For both morning and evening there are two options for each day depending how much time you have. The shorter options will take about 5 minutes, the longer ones around 10 minutes. It's up to you which you choose! We hope everyone will aim to pray morning and evening, but the book is supposed to be an aid to prayer, not a straight-jacket! Above all, I hope it will be *used*, not just browsed, so it can help us all to deepen our relationship with God.

You can find out more about how the book works on page 21 if you are interested - or just get stuck in!

Some sections may feel more 'comfortable' than others, but can I encourage you to have a go, even with the ones which may seem very different from what you are familiar with. You may be surprised at how we can engage with God even through apparently unusual ways.

I hope you find this book helpful. Please come back to Paul, Richard, Wendy or one of the Readers if you have any comments or suggestions for future books.

Paul
Vicar, Shirley Parish

Day 1

Three to five minute options:

Morning:

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,
so may the light of your presence, O God,
set our hearts on fire with love for you;
now and for ever.

Amen.

+ The Lord's Prayer (*see inside front and back covers for options*)

+ Personal intercessions

Evening:

Thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength. (*Isaiah 30.15*)

Lighten our darkness,
Lord, we pray,
and in your great mercy
defend us from all perils and dangers of this night,
for the love of your only Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Ten minute options:

Morning:

Anglican Prayer for the morning (*see facing page*)

Evening:

The Examen (*see page 16*)

Anglican Prayer for the Morning

Preparation

O Lord, open our lips;
and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;
let us pray with one heart and mind *(A period of silence may be kept)*
As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,
so may the light of your presence, O God,
set our hearts on for with love for you; now and forever. Amen

Bible passages *may be read*

A Psalm

The Gospel *(You may wish to use the reading from the previous Sunday)*

Prayers

Please offer your own prayers or use the following as a guide.

That this day may be holy, good and joyful:
we pray to you, O Lord.

That we may offer to you our worship and our work:
we pray to you, O Lord.

That we may strive for the well-being of all creation:
we pray to you, O Lord.

That in the pleasures and pain of life,
we may know the love of Christ and be thankful:
we pray to you, O Lord.

That we may be bound together by your Holy Spirit in communion with all
your saints, entrusting one another and all of our life to Christ
we pray to you, O Lord.

Almighty and everlasting God,
we thank you that you have brought us safely to the beginning of this day.
Keep us from falling into sin, or running into danger,
order us in all our doings,
and guide us to do always what is righteous in your sight;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The Lord's Prayer *(see inside front and back covers for options)*

The Grace *(see inside back cover)*

Day 2

Three to five minute options:

Morning:

God is with you, wherever you may be and whatever you may choose to do.

When might you most need to keep this in mind?

+ The Lord's Prayer (*see inside front and back covers for options*)

+ Personal intercessions

Evening:

Jesus said, 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' (*Matthew 11.28-end*)

Look down, O God, from your heavenly throne,
illuminate the darkness of this night with your celestial brightness,
and from the children of light banish the deeds of darkness;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Ten minute options:

Morning:

Contemplative Prayer (*see facing page*)

Evening:

Evening Prayer from Iona Abbey (*see pages 17-19*)

Contemplative Prayer

“Contemplation is the practice of being fully present – in heart, mind, and body, to what *is*, in a way that allows you to creatively respond and work towards what could be....

“For many, contemplation is prayer or meditation, a practice of deep listening, to better connect with ourselves and divine love”¹.

These words may help to guide you into this way of praying. If you can, you may wish to record them, allowing a good pause at the end of each line. Make yourself comfortable before you begin, then play them to guide your prayer.

Let Your God Love You

Be silent.

Be still.

Alone.

Empty

Before your God.

Say nothing.

Ask nothing.

Be silent.

Be still.

Let your God look upon you.

That is all.

God knows.

God understands.

God loves you

With an enormous love,

And only wants

To look upon you

With that love.

Quiet.

Still.

Be.

Let your God—

Love you.

Edwina Gateley

¹ From The Center for Action and Contemplation www.cac.org

Day 3

Three to five minute options:

Morning:

Creator God,
you made us all in your image:
may we discern you in all that we see,
and serve you in all that we do;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

+ The Lord's Prayer (*see inside front and back covers for options*)

+ Personal intercessions

Evening:

Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.

(1 Peter 5.6,7)

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy;
may your holy angels dwell with us and guard us in peace,
and may your blessing be always upon us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Ten minute options:

Morning:

Creation Prayer (*see facing page*)

Evening:

The Examen (*see page 16*)

Creation prayer

The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.
They have no speech, they use no words;
no sound is heard from them.
Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world.

Psalm 19:1-4

If you have time and are able, go outside – into the garden or for a short walk. Notice the natural world, with its rhythms and cycles. If this is not possible, sit by the window, or find a picture or photo of the natural world, and use that as a prompt for prayer.

Thank God for things of beauty. Lament that which is spoilt. Ask for wisdom for all humanity, that we might live lightly and reverently upon the earth.

“Rejoice that God is the Maker, the Lover and Keeper of the world. Do not take these words as facts – make them part of your experience of living in this world. Once or twice a week spend some time looking closely at some created thing. All of creation holds mystery if we look deep enough. If we look long enough and with our heart, God’s glory is waiting to be found in even the smallest of things.”

From The Path of Light, David Adam SPCK 2009

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change
The courage to change the things I can
And the wisdom to know the difference

Day 4

Three to five minute options:

Morning:

Offer to God the places of your day,
the people you will meet,
and the ways you will spend your time,
that people may see Christ and give glory to God
in all you are and all that you do.

+ The Lord's Prayer (*see inside front and back covers for options*)

+ Personal intercessions

Evening:

Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil is prowling round like a roaring lion, seeking for someone to devour. Resist him, strong in the faith.

(1 Peter 5.8, 9)

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep this night,
and give your angels charge over those who sleep.

Tend the sick,
give rest to the weary,
sustain the dying,
calm the suffering,
and pity the distressed;
all for your love's sake, O Christ our Redeemer.
Amen

Ten minute options:

Morning:

Intercession (*see facing page*)

Evening:

Evening Prayer from Iona Abbey (*see pages 17-19*)

Intercessions

Intercession is about bringing the needs of others and the world around us to God. Here you will find some set words to say, and also plenty of spaces to bring to God those things on our hearts or in the news.

In the beginning, before time, before people, before the world began.

God has always been

Here and now, among us and beside us, enlisting the people of earth for the purposes of heaven.

God is present

In the future, when we have turned to dust and all we know has found its fulfilment.

God will always be

Not denying the world, but delighting in it; not condemning the world, but redeeming it;

through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God has always been; God is present and God will always be.

And so, at the start of the day, we bring to God those things on our hearts.

It can be helpful to divide our intercessions up into sections, to get a balance of things which we wish to bring to God. You can find some suggestions of things to pray for under each heading if you turn to page 22.

Globally we pray for.....

Nationally we pray for....

Locally we pray for....

In our church we pray for...

For particular people in need we pray for....

The Lord's Prayer (see inside front and back covers for options)

The Grace (see inside back cover)

Day 5

Three to five minute options:

Morning:

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.
Amen.

+ The Lord's Prayer (*see inside front and back covers for options*)

+ Personal intercessions

Evening:

Read Psalm 139.1-18 in your Bible

Come, O Spirit of God,
and make within us your dwelling place and home.
May our darkness be dispelled by your light,
and our troubles calmed by your peace;
may all evil be redeemed by your love,
all pain transformed through the suffering of Christ,
and all dying glorified in his risen life. Amen

Ten minute options:

Morning:

Praying with music or art (*see facing page*)

Evening:

The Examen (*see page 16*)

Praying with music, or art

Many of us are moved by music – traditional hymns or modern worship songs, chants or classical settings based on Christian themes.

If you can, find a recording of a favourite piece of music – maybe you have a CD, or can access a programme such as “Songs of Praise” via iPlayer on your TV. YouTube is a great source for contemporary worship music or Taizé chants, and Radio 3 has a wide range of classical music. If none of these work for you, try using the words of a hymn which you know well and sing them yourself – either out loud or in your head.

Make yourself comfortable and allow yourself to become still. Play the music and allow it to ‘speak’ to you. Maybe of God’s goodness, God’s love, Jesus’ teaching, his death and resurrection, the work of the Holy Spirit. Respond in words or in silence, in joy or lament. Maybe you want to weep, or maybe even to dance! To re-commit yourself, or just to say a heart-felt thank you. All this is prayer.

You can use the same idea with art. It’s easiest to start with an obviously religious painting, or an icon, but God can speak to us through any medium. If you have access to the internet, the Visual Commentary on Scripture (thevcs.org) has some wonderful resources and commentaries which can help. Please speak to one of the ministry team if you would like more help finding music or images.

Lord Jesus,
By the loneliness of Your suffering on the cross
Be near to me in my need.
Banish my fears,
Increase my faith,
Hold me in your love,
And fill me with your peace;
For your Name’s sake
Amen

Day 6

Three to five minute options:

Morning:

Lord, you are ever watchful
and bless us with your gifts;
as you provide for all our needs,
so help us to build only what pleases you,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

+ The Lord's Prayer (*see inside front and back covers for options*)

+ Personal intercessions

Evening:

A sabbath rest still remains for the people of God; for those who enter God's rest also cease from their labours as God did from his. Let us therefore make every effort to enter that rest. (*Hebrews 4.9-11a*)

Stay with us, O God, this night,
so that by your strength
we may rise with the new day
to rejoice in the resurrection of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Amen

Ten minute options:

Morning:

Bible-based prayer (*see facing page*)

Evening:

Evening Prayer from Iona Abbey (*see pages 17-19*)

Bible based Prayer

This suggestion for Morning Prayer has a focus on reading and thinking about the Bible. You will need to choose your own reading – perhaps work your way through one of the gospels. The Gospel according to Mark is a good place to start.

Find a place where you are comfortable and will not be interrupted

This is the day the Lord has made
We will rejoice and be glad in it

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. (Psalm 119:105)

Read the passage you have chosen slowly a couple of times.

Then think about these questions

You might find it helpful to jot down your thoughts

- Is there anything I don't understand / need to ask someone about?
- Is there something new that I have never noticed before?
- What does this passage say about my relationship with God?
- What does it say about how I should relate to others (and myself)?

When you are ready, bring those thoughts to God.

You might find it helpful to pray this prayer to finish:

Lord, thank you for being with me during this time. Thank you for the opportunity to know you and your ways better. Open my heart as I put into practice those things which you have revealed to me. Thank you, Lord, for the gift and love of your Word. May it be to me a lamp to my feet and a light to my path this day and always.

Amen.

The Examen

The Examen is a simple, four-step way of reflecting on, and praying through, the day which is coming to an end. It is sometimes called “Ignatian prayer” after Ignatius of Loyola, who recommended it over 500 years ago.

It will probably take you between seven and ten minutes. Don't worry if you don't think anything particularly stunning has happened in your day – as you get used to using the prayer it will help you to notice things which maybe you have missed in the busyness.

Make yourself comfortable, and work through these four steps in your own time....

Replay: Think over your day - like a film or TV programme playing in your head. Notice what you are noticing. What made you happy? What made you anxious? What made you angry? What didn't go so well?

Rejoice: Thank God for those things which are obvious. But also say thank you for non-obvious things which we sometimes forget – random acts of kindness, a smile given or received, food, warmth, safety.... Relish and savour these gifts in gratitude to God.

Repent: Say sorry to God for moments that come into your mind as you review the day. Don't dwell on them and beat yourself up but notice them and hand them over to Jesus for his forgiveness. Receive his forgiveness afresh, and allow the Spirit to work within, to change what needs to be changed.

Reset: Commit yourself to God afresh for tomorrow and ask for his grace to see his presence more clearly. Receive his blessing as you turn towards sleep.

A Simple Evening Liturgy (The Iona Community)

If you are using this on your own, please feel free to use "I" rather than "we."

Opening Responses

Peace on each one who comes in need

Peace on each one who comes in joy

Peace on each one who offers prayer

Peace on each one who offers song

Peace of the Maker, Peace of the Son

Peace of the Spirit, the Three in One

Celebration and Confession

O God, for your love for us, warm and brooding,
which has brought us to birth and opened our eyes
to the beauty and wonder of creation.

We give you thanks.

For your love for us, wild and freeing,
which has awakened us to the energy of life:
to the sap that flows, the blood that pulses,
the heart that sings.

We give you thanks.

For your love for us, compassionate and patient,
which has carried us through our pain,
wept beside us in our sin,
and waited with us in our confusion.

We give you thanks.

For your love for us, strong and challenging,
which has called us to risk for you,
asked for the best in us,
and shown us how to serve.

We give you thanks.

O God we come to celebrate
that your Holy Spirit is deep within us,
and at the heart of all life.
Forgive us when we forget your gift of love
made known to us in Jesus,
and draw us into your presence.

A passage from the Bible

may be read here.....

Prayer

These or other words may be used

We bring to God
someone we have met or remembered today
and for whom we want to pray

silence is kept

We bring to God
someone who is hurting tonight and needs our prayer

silence is kept

We bring to God
a troubled situation in our world tonight

silence is kept

We bring to God
someone whom we find it hard to forgive or trust

silence is kept

We bring ourselves to God
that we might grow in generosity of spirit,
clarity of mind,
and warmth of affection.

silence is kept

Closing responses

O Trinity of Love,
You have been with us at the world's beginning,
Be with us till the world's end.

You have been with us at our life's shaping,
Be with us at our life's end.

You have been with us at the sun's rising,
Be with us till the day's end.

Blessing

Blessing and laughter and loving be yours.
The love of a great God
Who names you
And holds you
While the earth turns and the flowers grow;
This day
This night
This moment
And forever.
Amen.

Lord, be with us to guide us;
Within us to strengthen us
Without us to protect us
Above us to raise us
Beneath us to uphold us
Before us to lead us
Behind us to guard us
Ever about us
This day and evermore
This day and evermore

Tudor Grange Primary Academy St James School Prayer

Dear Lord

Thank you for our loving community that keeps us safe and happy.
Bless our school, that by working and playing together, we may learn to
have faith in you, ourselves and one another.
Give us courage to make good choices as we continue on our journey,
like St James.

Amen

O Lord, as each day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating
concerns and duties, help us to perform them with laughter and kind
faces; let cheerfulness abound with industry; give us grace to go
blithely on our business all the day; bring us to our resting place weary,
contented and undishonoured, and grant us in the end the gift of
sleep; for Jesus Christ's sake.

Amen

A Prayer to use at the end of Church worship

We now leave thy house.
Help us to remember we do not leave thy presence.
Be thou ever near to us,
May we be ever near to you.
Amen.

More information on how the booklet can be used

For both morning and evening there are two options for each day depending how much time you have.

The shorter options will take around five minutes. In the morning they start with a simple prayer suggested by the Church of England, followed by the Lord's Prayer and some space for your own specific intercessions. The evening prayers are taken from the service of Compline.

The longer options can take around ten minutes. In the mornings there are six suggestions each of which have a different style. You will find them on the facing pages. One follows the Anglican Morning Prayer order, another is more contemplative, and others focus on creation, intercession, the Bible, and music or art. It may be that you find that one approach works particularly well for you – but please do try them all! Some include the Lord's Prayer, for others we suggest you begin or end with one of the versions offered inside the front and back covers.

For the evenings there are two alternatives that can be used through the week. One is an "examen" which gives an opportunity to reflect on the day that is past and bring any thoughts and insights to God. The other is a simple form of evening prayer in the Celtic tradition from Iona Abbey.

Finally, we have called the days 1-6 so you can start your week on whichever day suits you. For Sunday worshippers this will probably be Monday.

Many thanks to everyone who shared a prayer for this book.

We had so many that we have not been able to include them all this time, but the ones we have included are in the green boxes throughout the booklet.

We have kept all the prayers safely and will include more in the next version of the Prayer book. If you have a prayer which you would like to offer for our 2024 version, please give it to one of the clergy or Readers. Thank you.

Ideas for Intercessions

Globally we pray for

- peace within and between nations
- leaders and governments
- the way we use and misuse the planet's resources
- places in the news, and countries we have links with

Nationally we pray for

- Our Government
- Our members of Parliament
- Our business leaders
- Leaders in public service
- The media and other opinion leaders

Locally we pray for

- Schools and places of learning
- Hospitals, doctors' surgeries and all in health and social care
- Local businesses
- Our local council and those who serve us
- The street we live in

In our church we pray for

- Our worship
- Our witness
- Our clergy and leaders
- Our activities in this week and in the weeks to come

For particular people in need we pray for

- The sick
- The bereaved
- Those struggling in life
- Our families
- Ourselves

The Lord's Prayer (contemporary version)

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 Lord's Prayer ('The Message' paraphrase)

Our Father in heaven,
Reveal who you are.
Set the world right;
Do what's best— as above, so below.
Keep us alive with three square meals.
Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others.
Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil.
You're in charge!
You can do anything you want!
You're ablaze in beauty!

The Grace

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us, and those we love,
this day and always.
Amen

Acknowledgements

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Bible readings are from NRSVA, other than Psalm 19 from NIV, and The Message paraphrase of The Lord's Prayer on p23.

Let Your God Love you (Contemplative Prayer) by Edwina Gately
Accessed from

https://www.journeywithjesus.net/PoemsAndPrayers/Edwina_Gateley.shtml

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Shirley Parish Prayer for Growth

God of mission, who alone brings growth to your Church,
send your Holy Spirit to give vision to our planning,
wisdom to our actions, and power to our witness.

Help our church to grow in numbers, in spiritual commitment to you,
and in service to our local community.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.