

A Month of Sundays February 2024



Preston Ribble Circuit

Ministry Team

Sunday 4th February 2024

Call to worship

'How good it is to sing praises to our God;
for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.'
So, let us praise the God who is
great in strength and mighty in power,
and whose love will never let us go.

Bible reading: Isaiah 40:21-31

²¹ Do you not know?

Have you not heard?

Has it not been told you from the beginning?

Have you not understood since the earth was founded?

²² He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth,
and its people are like grasshoppers.

He stretches out the heavens like a canopy,
and spreads them out like a tent to live in.

²³ He brings princes to naught
and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing.

²⁴ No sooner are they planted,
no sooner are they sown,
no sooner do they take root in the ground,
than he blows on them and they wither,
and a whirlwind sweeps them away like chaff.

²⁵ "To whom will you compare me?

Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One.

²⁶ Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens:

Who created all these?

He who brings out the starry host one by one
and calls forth each of them by name.

Because of his great power and mighty strength,
not one of them is missing.

²⁷ Why do you complain, Jacob?

Why do you say, Israel,

"My way is hidden from the LORD;
my cause is disregarded by my God"?

²⁸ Do you not know?

Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.
²⁹ He gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.
³⁰ Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;
³¹ but those who hope in the LORD
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.

Hymn Stf 526: Lord of all hopefulness

- 1 Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
whose trust, ever childlike, no cares could destroy,
be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.
- 2 Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe,
be there at our labours, and give us, we pray,
your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.
- 3 Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
your hands swift to welcome, your arms to embrace,
be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.
- 4 Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm,
be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

Jan Struther (Joyce Placzek) (1901–1953)

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Prayers of intercession

God of love,
we pray for the renewal of our cities
so that in them people can live, work, play and find space to breathe.
We ask that priorities would work for people rather than speculative
investment;
for the common good rather than corporations.
We pray for the social cohesion of our neighbourhoods
and are aware of lost networks of support and care.
We pray for charities struggling because of the pandemic, especially...
and as we look to the future,
may we work to build connection rather than separation
and restore the fabric of community.

Renew our strength and bind up our wounds

Help us to hope in you.

God of love,
your kindness is everlasting.
Surround us with your arms of love;
keep our eyes fixed on you
and make us ready to follow where you lead,
trusting that you will provide for us – today and always.

Amen.

Reflection

The opening images in today's reading from Isaiah are majestic. God is the one who stretches out the heavens, brings down earthly rulers like stubble in a tempest, creates and numbers the host of stars. They are images of power, but they can make God seem very distant from our everyday lives. If God 'sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers' (Isaiah 40.22) that can make us feel of no more importance than insects. If that was all the passage said about God, then the exiles might well feel abandoned in Babylon – that 'My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God' (verse 27).

But the passage moves on to assure them otherwise. It concludes: 'those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles' (verse 31), an image of humanity soaring to God. That promised renewal of strength is the sign that God, far from

viewing humanity as mere grasshoppers, actually enters into the heart of individuals to give the inner strength to endure. The mighty power, described at the beginning of the reading, is not distant from us, but is ours to draw on in the minutiae of our daily lives.

‘Have you not known? Have you not heard?’ is repeated like a refrain, giving it a special emphasis (verses 21 and 28). The two questions can appear to be saying the same thing, but ‘know’ and ‘hear’ are not identical. ‘Have you not heard?’ implies that people have shared their experiences. For us to hear of God’s power, someone must tell us. Perhaps people have told you personally of the effects God has had in their lives, the evidence they have had that God ‘gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless’ (verse 29). Perhaps you have read accounts, or listened to people speaking on programmes such as BBC’s Songs of Praise.

However, all this is second hand. ‘Have you not known?’ asks a rather different question. It asks what we have experienced for ourselves of God’s power in our lives. Sometimes we have to take the long view to discern it. The Babylonian exile lasted about 60 years and, looking back, the exiles may well have asked themselves how they got through it. Today’s passage originates from a period in their exile when the end was in sight, perhaps a time when they could reflect on the faithfulness of the God who had strengthened them for the experience and now offered the hope of mounting on eagles’ wings. Perhaps it gives us the opportunity to reflect on our own lives to consider where God has renewed our strength when we felt faint, weary and powerless, or even fell, exhausted on our journey. And if we have stories to tell, then ‘Have you not heard?’ can encourage us to tell them, because unless we do, others will not hear of God’s power in ordinary lives.

Say the Lord’s Prayer

A sending out prayer

Creator God, you count all the stars,
not one of them is missing from your love.
Thank you that we are all remembered by you,
And that no one misses out on your loving care.

Amen.

Sunday 11th February 2024

Call to worship

Here we are again, Lord.

There are many temptations to be elsewhere,
but, as you live and as we ourselves live,
we will not leave you.

It's a lifelong journey: as long as life lasts, we're on it.

And while we're on it we should make the most of it.

Help us to make the most of this time together
with you today. **Amen.**

Bible readings: 2 Kings 2:1-12

Elijah Taken Up to Heaven

2 When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. ² Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; the LORD has sent me to Bethel."

But Elisha said, "As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel.

³ The company of the prophets at Bethel came out to Elisha and asked, "Do you know that the LORD is going to take your master from you today?"

"Yes, I know," Elisha replied, "so be quiet."

⁴ Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, Elisha; the LORD has sent me to Jericho."

And he replied, "As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went to Jericho.

⁵ The company of the prophets at Jericho went up to Elisha and asked him, "Do you know that the LORD is going to take your master from you today?"

"Yes, I know," he replied, "so be quiet."

⁶ Then Elijah said to him, “Stay here; the LORD has sent me to the Jordan.”

And he replied, “As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you.” So the two of them walked on.

⁷ Fifty men from the company of the prophets went and stood at a distance, facing the place where Elijah and Elisha had stopped at the Jordan. ⁸ Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up and struck the water with it. The water divided to the right and to the left, and the two of them crossed over on dry ground.

⁹ When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?”

“Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit,” Elisha replied.

¹⁰ “You have asked a difficult thing,” Elijah said, “yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours—otherwise, it will not.”

¹¹ As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. ¹² Elisha saw this and cried out, “My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!” And Elisha saw him no more. Then he took hold of his garment and tore it in two.

Mark 9:2-9

The Transfiguration

² After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. ³ His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. ⁴ And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

⁵ Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” ⁶ (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)

⁷ Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!”

⁸ Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.

⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

Reflection

Who doesn't love stories of a brave and tenacious people that takes on a quest or challenge? Often, they involve following a leader in whom everyone puts their trust, but who doesn't always let everyone know exactly what the plan is! There are many real-life stories like this as well. How many adventure films can you think of, or stories you have read, that follow this kind of pattern? Do any of them involve mountains? When Jesus asked Peter, James and John to follow him up 'a high mountain' I wonder how they felt about the invitation. Were they flattered to have been chosen from the 12, or were they apprehensive? We are not told how high the mountain was. If it was Mount Tabor, that's just under 2,000 feet. If it was Mount Hermon – as several scholars think is more likely – that's almost 10,000 feet! Today, we use the phrase, 'they had a mountain to climb' to mean facing a significant challenge. Put together the physical demands of the climb with the fact that in the Jewish imagination going up a mountain was connected with the daunting prospect of an encounter with God, and we can see the chosen three might well have been apprehensive. And when they get to the mountain-top, they do have an experience that leaves them 'terrified'.

One of the attractions of adventure stories where the characters meet a series of challenges is that they make us ask ourselves, 'What would I do in that situation? Would I give up, or would I have the courage to keep going? How far would I want to go? How far would I get?' Only three of the disciples are chosen for the mountain-top challenge and revelation, but we are all called in some way to follow Jesus, not knowing where he will lead but having to trust him. What challenges have you faced so far in the adventure of your discipleship? What are you facing at the moment? Do you have anxieties for the future?

One of the challenges is sharing our experiences with others. Although Peter, James and John were told not to say anything about what happened, that was only until after the resurrection. Then, they must have spread the word or it wouldn't have been written in the Gospel

accounts. Choosing the right people to tell about our experiences with Jesus and the right time, as well as having the courage to do it in the first place, are all challenges in themselves. In our Old Testament reading Elijah offers Elisha escape routes from the demands of their shared vocation as prophets. Elisha's persistence encourages us to risk going on the next stage of our journey of discipleship, and the story of the transfiguration reminds us we have a leader who climbs our mountains with us.

Hymn StF 585: God, whose love is all around us

- 1 God, whose love is all around us,
who in Jesus sought and found us,
who to freedom new unbound us,
keep our hearts with joy aflame.

- 2 For the sacramental breaking,
for the honour of partaking,
for your life, our lives re-making,
young and old, we praise your name.

- 3 From the service of this table
lead us to a life more stable ;
for our witness make us able ;
blessing on our work we claim.

- 4 Through our calling closely knitted,
daily to your praise committed,
for a life of service fitted,
let us now your love proclaim.

Fred Kaan (1929–2009)

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Prayers of intercession

God of glory,
open our eyes and open our hearts.
Help us to see Jesus.

God of glory,
change us and renew us by your Spirit.
Make us more like Jesus

God of glory,
we see you in the beauty of the universe,
we meet you in the love of our friends and families,
we find you in our joys and in our pain –
faithful and true.
We see you revealed to us in Scripture,
we hear you speaking to us in the silence,
we know you in our hearts,
and we find you in the person of Jesus.
As we look at the events in our world,
help us to see where you are at work.
In our homes and in our daily lives,
help us to notice the glimpses of your glory
shining through the ordinary fabric of our lives.
You are the God who comes close to us:
though we are far apart from each other
Surround us with the light of your presence.

God of glory,
we live with so many uncertainties.
Today we pray for people whose lives are always uncertain:
for people in war torn parts of the world;
for all who wonder where their next meal will come from;
for people who are jobless or homeless;
for all who are fleeing from domestic violence.
Help us to make our churches sanctuaries of peace and safety.
May we be ready to respond to the need of others
and to do what we can to tell the story
of the love that will never let us go,
the love that can change us and the world.
Help us to love one another as you have loved us.
You are the God who comes close to us:

though we are far apart from each other
Surround us with the light of your presence.

God of glory,
open our eyes and open our hearts.
Help us to see Jesus.

God of glory,
change us and renew us by your Spirit.
Make us more like Jesus. Amen.

Say the Lord's Prayer

A sending out prayer

We go out into the world in peace
as links in the chain of faith;
may we be brave witnesses,
sharing through word and deed
the revelations we have received.
Amen.

Sunday 18th February 2024

A gathering prayer

Rainbows delight and surprise us.
Our breath pausing, we stand under the beauty
of the creator's promise of unfailing love.
Colours of joy beaming onto us,
recalling us to remember, to turn,
to believe the good news.

Hymn Stf 277: My song is love unknown

- 1 My song is love unknown,
my Saviour's love to me,
love to the loveless shown,
that they might lovely be.
O who am I,
that for my sake
my Lord should take
frail flesh and die ?

- 2 He came from his blest throne,
salvation to bestow ;
but they made strange, and none
the longed-for Christ would know.
But O my Friend,
my Friend indeed,
who at my need
his life did spend !

- 3 Sometimes they strew his way,
and his sweet praises sing ;
resounding all the day
hosannas to their King.
Then 'Crucify !'
is all their breath,
and for his death
they thirst and cry.

4 Why, what has my Lord done ?
What makes this rage and spite ?
He made the lame to run,
he gave the blind their sight.
Sweet injuries !
Yet they at these
themselves displease,
and 'gainst him rise.

5 They rise, and needs will have
my dear Lord made away ;
a murderer they save,
the Prince of Life they slay.
Yet cheerful he
to suffering goes,
that he his foes
from thence might free.

6 In life no house, no home,
my Lord on earth might have ;
in death, no friendly tomb
but what a stranger gave.
What may I say ?
Heaven was his home ;
but mine the tomb
wherein he lay.

7 Here might I stay and sing,
no story so divine :
never was love, dear King,
never was grief like thine !
This is my Friend,
in whose sweet praise
I all my days
could gladly spend.

Samuel Crossman (c. 1624–1683)

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A prayer of adoration

God of truth,
we praise you for your covenant with us and all creation and
for all the colours of your blessings:
for the reds and yellows of your unconditional and costly love;
for the pinks and greens of your creativity and compassion;
for the oranges and purples of your grace and understanding;
and for the blue of your faithfulness.
In wonder and joy we praise you. **Amen.**

Say the Lord's Prayer

Bible readings: Genesis 9:8-17

⁸ Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: ⁹ "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you ¹⁰ and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. ¹¹ I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth."

¹² And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: ¹³ I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴ Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. ¹⁶ Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth."

¹⁷ So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth."

Reflection

Noah's ark captures people's imagination as a great escape story.

Having created the world God became very disappointed with the mess human beings made of their appointed task of helping God care for creation. Things were so bad that '...the Lord was sorry that he had made humankind on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart' (Genesis 6:6). So, God has another attempt to form a new creation. This time God uses a tried and tested honourable human, Noah, and two of each type of animal to start again. And we all know the rest of the story. Two of every form of animal get shut up in the ark.

But the ending of the story is amazing, and we often miss this while we are caught up in the drama of the rescue. As the flood subsides, God's love for humans and indeed the whole of God's creation deepens. God's heart is moved – permanently changed. God sees the frailty of humans and compassionately accepts humans as they are in their wonderfulness and messiness all mixed up together. God pledges to love not only humans, but the whole of creation in an unending and steadfast love that will wrap around each person, each family, each tribe, each creature and the whole world, no matter what for ever and ever.

God pledges God's love, as it were, in human sickness and in human health, in human flourishing and in human poverty for ever and ever and ever. The promise goes beyond the death of Noah's generation to include Noah's descendants and on to us and our descendants. And because it is God's, the promise is utterly reliable.

Take a moment to breathe deeply and to feel the reassurance that this promised love gives you: a love that will be with you, all those you love and all of us through thick and thin. Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of this promise is that it is unconditional. It is almost as if God knows we are not up to reciprocating the promise. Some days we might be up to it a bit, and other days completely miss it. But God guarantees to pick up the slack when we miss the mark. The beauty of this promise is reflected in the beauty of the rainbow – a radiant cosmic smile holding together in its image light, warmth and water – essential elements to sustain the life of the universe.

Prayers of intercession

We pray for those exploring faith,
for those preparing for baptism,
and for those around the world
who are persecuted for their religion:
may they know the good news of the kingdom.
We pray for the world that God loves so much,
and for those who have the power
to bring peace to the nations:
may they work with truth and integrity.
We pray for our community and those who are in need,
for the fragile and the vulnerable,
and for those who support and care for them:
may they feel the presence of Jesus walking with them.
We pray for those who are homeless,
for those who are unemployed,
and for those who will go hungry and thirsty today:
may we, in Christ, draw near to bring comfort and support.
We pray for ourselves,
for strength to commit ourselves to follow in your way, Lord,
and the grace to withstand temptation:
may we grow closer to you as we journey through Lent
and prepare to meet Jesus at the cross.
Amen.

A sending out prayer

God of new beginnings,
your undying, tender love is truly amazing.
You sustain the whole universe with what is needed for life.
You trust us humans to care for that life.
We often fail,
but your love reaches out a hand to pick us up,
to help us start again.
Thank you. **Amen.**

Sunday 25th February 2024

A gathering prayer

We imagine God's plan for us –
our ideas of what a happy future looks like,
for us, for our family, for our community, for the world.
It will bring success, and joy, glory and praise.
But will it? Often things turn upside down, we lose control,
there are unexpected consequences.
God invites us to learn to trust without clear seeing;
only later do we recognise God's goodness to us.

Bible readings: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

The Covenant of Circumcision

17 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. ² Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers."

³ Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, ⁴ "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. ⁵ No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. ⁶ I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. ⁷ I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.

¹⁵ God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. ¹⁶ I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her."

Mark 8:31-38

Jesus Predicts His Death

³¹ He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. ³² He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

³³ But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”

The Way of the Cross

³⁴ Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. ³⁶ What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? ³⁷ Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? ³⁸ If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.”

Reflection

In his book *Falling Upward*, Richard Rohr illuminates one of life’s profound mysteries. Somehow our failing can be the foundation for our ongoing spiritual growth. In the first half of life, those who have fallen, failed or ‘gone down’, seem to be the only ones who understand ‘up’. The heartbreaks, disappointments and loves of the first half of life are stepping stones to the spiritual joys that the second half has in store for us. The stories of Abram, Sarai – and Peter – perhaps illustrate this. In this week’s reading Sarai, Abram’s wife, was 90 years old. A huge disappointment in her life was that she had no children. The sign of God’s blessing of an expanding clan and tribe had eluded her. She had adventured through life with Abram. When he was 70 and she 61 they had been called by God to leave their homeland in Haran and travel to a

'promised land' in which God would make of them a great nation. But, nearly 30 years later, Sarai was still childless.

It did not look promising. And yet in today's reading the promise is made again. God's ideas of timing and human ideas of timing often don't tie up. In the next passage when Sarah hears the news she laughs because she doesn't believe it! When Abram hears the news from God, and God's desire for a covenant between them in which they pledge faithfulness to one another, his response is to fall on his face. Maybe it took Abram 30 years to learn to trust God, even when he doesn't understand. He has learnt to trust him through several disasters in life and, in the end, he has just learnt to trust, no matter what.

And what about Peter? In this week's story he is perhaps in what Richard Rohr calls the 'first half of life'. Just before this passage he has had a wonderful spiritual breakthrough. He is the first person to publicly declare that he recognises that Jesus is the promised Messiah. If we put ourselves in Peter's shoes, he must have been euphoric. As if the scales have fallen from his eyes. He has named a realisation that has been creeping up on him for some time. Wow! Imagine the spiritual high. But then immediately, he falls into complete confusion. Jesus begins to talk about the suffering and death of the Messiah. Peter's reaction is 'what on earth is he talking about'. He must stop talking this way, or he will put people off. He tries to stop Jesus and is rebuked in unbelievably strong terms. 'Get behind me, Satan'.

Like most of us, Peter will turn out to be a very slow learner. He will go on to make some horrific mistakes, such as denying he even knows who Jesus is; and going back on his promise to unconditionally baptize Gentiles. And yet despite, and maybe because of, his failures Jesus sees that he has the gifts to be the rock on which Christ's church can be built.

The takeaway for us is perhaps to re-evaluate our failures, disappointments, hurts and see that in the wondrous grace of God, God can use what can feel like big difficulties to help us to learn to trust God even when we don't understand.

Prayer of praise

Incredible God, we thank you and praise you for trusting in us even when we find it hard to trust in you. **Amen.**

We thank you and praise you for offering us more than we could ever imagine. **Amen.**

We thank you and praise you for making the impossible possible. **Amen.**

We thank you and praise you for all the blessings of youth and of age. **Amen.**

We thank you and praise you for everything – in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Hymn StF 317: At the name of Jesus

- 1 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.

- 2 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 :

- 3 Bore it up triumphant
with its human light,
through all ranks of creatures
to the central height,
to the throne of Godhead,
to the Father's breast ;
filled it with the glory
of that perfect rest.

4 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.

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

Caroline Maria Noel (1817–1877)

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Prayers of intercession

We pray for followers of Jesus Christ;
for those who are imprisoned for their faith,
for those who serve as missionaries,
for teachers of the faith...

We pray for those who deny themselves to serve others;
for those who work in hospitals and prisons,
for those who are carers,
for those who serve their communities as volunteers...

We pray for those who carry the weight of a cross;
for the homeless and unemployed,
for those who are ill or bereaved,
for those who struggle with mental health...

We pray for ourselves, as we follow Christ;
for strength to overcome our struggles and failures,
for our fears and worries,
for those we love, and those who love us...

Amen.

Say the Lord's Prayer

A sending out prayer

Loving God,
Thank you for the wonderful times,
when our hearts are singing.
Thank you also,
that you are with us in the difficult times,
when we are confused and don't understand.
Help us to feel your presence – at all times.
Help us to hear your guidance and learn to trust you,
knowing that good times will come again.
Amen.