



Prayer Resources

for when you can't get to church

or for use at home

St Catherine's Hatcham

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Being stuck at home can be boring, frustrating, or lonely, even if there are other people in the house with you! And if you are very unwell, or worried you might become so, it can be frightening, too. God is with us in these situations, whether we are conscious of his presence or not. Remembering this, and relying on him in prayer, can help you to keep going.

We hope this booklet will give you some ideas about how to maintain and deepen your faith and your prayers. God wants us to turn to him in all our troubles and perplexities, even if we can't always find the "right words". And remember - the rest of the church is praying for you!

Simple Forms of Prayer

- Lighting a candle before you pray can help you to focus and listen.
- Jesus taught us the Lord's Prayer so that we would always have words to say. Use it!
- The "Examen". Don't let the name put you off! This is a very simple way to prayerfully review your day with God in five steps:
 1. Become aware of God's presence, or ask God to help you remember he's there with you.
 2. Review the day with gratitude (as best you can!)
 3. Pay attention to how you're feeling about it.
 4. Choose one feature of the day and pray about it.
 5. Look toward tomorrow. What do you expect the day to hold? Ask God to help you remember he's with you.
- Lectio Divina: again, if this is new to you, don't let the name put you off. Lectio helps you to read the Bible in a prayerful way. Pick a short passage of Scripture (it can be anything you like, but if you're stuck, parables of Jesus or the shorter Psalms are a good choice). Read it through, slowly, two or three times. Notice what jumps

out at you, and ask yourself, what is God saying to me here? Reflect on this for a few minutes. Then, read the passage again. Now ask yourself, what do I want to say to God? - then say it. Lastly, sit quietly and know that God is with you.

- Sometimes sitting in silence can be a powerful way to pray. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you.

Some Collects and Other Prayers To Say

Sovereign God,
the defence of those who trust in you
and the strength of those who suffer:
look with mercy on our affliction
and deliver us through our mighty Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

O God, our sovereign and our shepherd,
who brought again your Son Jesus Christ from the valley of
death,
comfort us with your protecting presence
and your angels of goodness and love,
that we also may come home

and dwell with him in your house for ever. Amen.

Lord God, whose Son, Jesus Christ,
understood people's fear and pain
before they spoke of them,
we pray for those in hospital or sick at home;
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.

Almighty God,
you see that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves:
keep us both outwardly in our bodies,
and inwardly in our souls;
that we may be defended from all adversities
 which may happen to the body,
and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the
soul;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

A prayer of confession:

Father eternal, giver of light and grace,
we have sinned against you and against our neighbour,
in what we have thought,
in what we have said and done,
through ignorance, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.

We have wounded your love
and marred your image in us.

We are sorry and ashamed
and repent of all our sins.

For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and lead us out from darkness
to walk as children of light. Amen.

The collect for purity/ prayer of preparation:

Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,

and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

God be in my head, and in my understanding;
God be in my eyes, and in my looking;
God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;
God be in my heart, and in my thinking;
God be at mine end, and at my departing. Amen

Prayers before sleeping:

Be present, O merciful God,
and protect us through the silent hours of this night,
so that we who are wearied
by the changes and chances of this fleeting world,
may rest upon your eternal changelessness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Abide with us, Lord, for it is evening,
and day is drawing to a close.
Abide with us and with your whole Church,
in the evening of the day,
in the evening of life,
in the evening of the world;
abide with us and with all your faithful ones, O Lord,
in time and in eternity. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
who at this evening hour lay in the tomb
and so hallowed the grave
to be a bed of hope for all who put their trust in you:
give us such sorrow for our sins,
which were the cause of your passion,
that when our bodies lie in the dust,
our souls may live with you forever. Amen.

(Source: Common Worship/ The Church of England Liturgical Commission)

Creative Ways of Praying

- You might find it helpful to listen to favourite hymns or worship songs, or other pieces of music that have a special meaning for you.
- Pictures can help prompt our prayers - for instance photos of loved ones, maps or pictures of our community or the wider world
- If the news is getting you down, try praying for the people and situations that are mentioned.
- Why not try doodling, painting, or drawing as you pray?

Online Resources

- You can find services of Morning, Midday, Evening, and Night Prayer from the Church of England online at <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-daily-prayer>, arranged for you with the readings of the day. There is also an app you can download to your smartphone or tablet (follow the link on the web page or search for “daily prayer” in your app store and look for the blue and white logo). Choose whether to pray in modern language, or to use the Book of Common Prayer.

“Prayer During the Day” is the shortest and simplest of the services, morning and evening prayer have the longest portions of Scripture.

- An Ordinary Office: <http://anordinaryoffice.org.uk/>.
“An Ordinary Office” is designed to be very accessible (you can follow it through text, symbol, audio, or video). Easy to pray if you’re unwell or very tired. Morning, midday, and evening prayer, plus “nocturnes” for those who can’t sleep.
- The Northumbria Community:
<https://www.northumbriacommunity.org/offices/how-to-use-daily-office/>. Short but poetic forms of daily prayer in the “Celtic” style.
- Pray As You Go: <https://pray-as-you-go.org/>. A short (11-12 minutes) daily act of prayer and worship, available online or as a tablet and smartphone app (search for “pray as you go” in your app store and look for the headphone logo). This easy to use, beautifully produced site uses music and pictures to help you pray and reflect with a passage of Scripture. Follows the Roman Catholic calendar, but widely used by

Christians of all traditions. There are also special seasonal meditations.

- Word Live:

<https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/living-faith>. Daily Bible study and prayer points from Scripture Union. Linked to a Facebook group where you can share your thoughts and prayers with other Christians.

A Prayer Labyrinth

You might find it helpful to 'walk' the labyrinth by tracing it with your finger as you pray.

