

Christ Church, Ipswich
Sunday 16th March 2025
Family Worship for the Second Sunday of Lent

Hello. I hope all is well. Let us worship God together:

Call to worship and opening prayers

Come together to seek God.
 Come as you are with your joys and sorrows.
 Come with your thanks and doubts.
 Come with your fears and hopes.
 Come together to seek and worship God.

Lord, you are our light and our salvation;
 our hope in times of fear.
 You protect us at times of danger,
 and you hear our prayers.
 So, Lord, we seek your face,
 and we trust in your goodness. **Amen.**

Faithful God,
 we come to worship you,
 conscious of our vulnerability
 but rejoicing in your protective love.
 Speak your values into our hearts,
 your energy into our actions,
 and your integrity into our lives,
 that we may use our time well and wisely,
 and be a church of compassion, conviction and courage.
 In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

R&S 92 Amazing grace

1 Amazing grace (how sweet the sound)
 that saved a wretch like me!
 I once was lost, but now am found,
 was blind, but now I see.

2 As grace that taught my heart to fear
 so grace my fears relieved;
 how precious did that grace appear,
 the hour I first believed!

3 Through many dangers, toils and snares
 I have already come;
 God's grace that brought me safe thus far,
 and he will lead me home.

4 The Lord has promised good to me,
 his word my hope secures;
 he will my shield and portion be
 as long as life endures;

5 and, when this heart and flesh shall fail,
 and mortal life shall cease,
 I shall possess within the veil
 a life of joy and peace.

John Newton. (1725-1807)

A prayer of adoration

Eternal God,
 we trust you for today.
 Inspire us to stay focused and to follow your plan for our lives.
 We trust you for tomorrow.
 Empower your people to protect the vulnerable
 and to proclaim the truth.
 We trust you for every day.
 Be with us as we journey through life towards your great heart
 of love in which there is no fear, no failure and no limits. **Amen.**

A prayer of confession

Dear God,
 forgive us when the words we speak expose our self-interest.
 Help us, forgive us, and deepen our faith.
 Forgive us when the things we do compromise your integrity.
 Help us, forgive us, and deepen our faith.
 Forgive us when the way we use our resources clashes with
 your core values.
 Help us, forgive us, and deepen our faith.
 For Christ's sake. **Amen.**

Assurance of forgiveness

As a hen covers her chicks with her wings,
 so you cover us with your forgiving love:
 drawing us into a new beginning,
 a new way of being, a new way of serving;
 strengthening, sustaining and surrounding us
 with your power and your presence
 each day of our lives and beyond. **Amen.**

A prayer of thanksgiving

We praise you, loving God,
 that you give each of us enough time
 to do all that we are called to do.
 Take from us the worry of hurry,
 and enable us to delight in your presence with us,
 and to share our joy with all who are in need
 of hope and friendship and courage.
 In Jesus' name we pray – thankfully and hopefully. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

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. 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.

Family Talk

Hymn The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want

1 The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;
he makes me lie in pastures green.
he leads me by the still, still waters,
his goodness restores my soul.

*And I will trust in You alone,
and I will trust in You alone,
for Your endless mercy follows me,
your goodness will lead me home.*

2 He guides my ways in righteousness,
and He anoints my head with oil,
and my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.

3 And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
for You are with me, and Your rod and staff
are the comfort I need to know.

Stuart Townend Copyright
© 1996 Thankyou music.

Our children and young people go to Junior Church with our love and blessing**Old Testament Reading****Psalm 27****(OT page 465)**

*Triumphant Song of Confidence
Of David.*

¹The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold^[a] of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?

²When evildoers assail me
to devour my flesh—
my adversaries and foes—
they shall stumble and fall.

³Though an army encamp against me,
my heart shall not fear;
though war rise up against me,
yet I will be confident.

⁴One thing I asked of the LORD,
that will I seek after:
to live in the house of the LORD
all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the LORD,
and to inquire in his temple.

⁵For he will hide me in his shelter
in the day of trouble;
he will conceal me under the cover of his tent;
he will set me high on a rock.

⁶Now my head is lifted up
above my enemies all around me,
and I will offer in his tent
sacrifices with shouts of joy;
I will sing and make melody to the LORD.

⁷Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud,
be gracious to me and answer me!
⁸'Come,' my heart says, 'seek his face!'
Your face, LORD, do I seek.
⁹ Do not hide your face from me.

Do not turn your servant away in anger,
you who have been my help.
Do not cast me off, do not forsake me,
O God of my salvation!
¹⁰If my father and mother forsake me,
the LORD will take me up.

¹¹Teach me your way, O LORD,
and lead me on a level path
because of my enemies.
¹²Do not give me up to the will of my adversaries,
for false witnesses have risen against me,
and they are breathing out violence.

¹³I believe that I shall see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living.
¹⁴Wait for the LORD;
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the LORD!

Epistle Reading**Philippians 3:17-4:1 (NT page 184)**

¹⁷Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. ¹⁹Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. ²⁰But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹He will transform the body of our humiliation so that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself. **4** ¹Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

Gospel Reading**Luke 13:31-35****(NT page 71)***The Lament over Jerusalem*

³¹ At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, 'Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.' ³² He said to them, 'Go and tell that fox for me, "Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. ³³ Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed away from Jerusalem." ³⁴ Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! ³⁵ See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

R&S 224 In the cross of Christ I glory

1 In the cross of Christ I glory,
towering o'er the wrecks of time;
all the light of sacred story
gathers round its head sublime.

2 When the woes of life overtake me,
hopes deceive, and fears annoy,
never shall the cross forsake me:
lo! it glows with peace and joy.

3 When the sun of bliss is beaming
light and love upon my way,
from the cross the radiance streaming
adds more lustre to the day.

4 Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,
by the cross are sanctified;
peace is there that knows no measure,
joys that through all time abide.

John Bowring (1792-1872)

Reflection***A moment for reflection as Stephen plays for us*****Hymn Beauty for brokenness**

1 Beauty for brokenness,
hope for despair,
Lord, in Your suffering world
this is our prayer.
Bread for the children,
justice, joy, peace,
sunrise to sunset,
Your kingdom increase!

2 Shelter for fragile lives,
cures for their ills,
work for the craftsmen,
trade for their skills;
land for the dispossessed,
rights for the weak,
voices to plead the cause
of those who can't speak.

*God of the poor,
friend of the weak,
give us compassion we pray:
melt our cold hearts,
let tears fall like rain;
come, change our love
from a spark to a flame.*

3 Refuge from cruel wars,
havens from fear,
cities for sanctuary,
freedoms to share.
Peace to the killing-fields,
scorched earth to green,
Christ for the bitterness,
His cross for the pain.

God of the poor...

4 Rest for the ravaged earth,
oceans and streams
plundered and poisoned –
our future, our dreams.
Lord, end our madness,
carelessness, greed;
make us content with
the things that we need.

God of the poor...

5 Lighten our darkness,
breathe on this flame
until Your justice
burns brightly again;
until the nations
learn of Your ways,
seek Your salvation
and bring You their praise.

God of the poor...

Graham Kendrick

Prayers

Lord, as we wait for your promises to be fulfilled,

help us to keep trusting your faithfulness.

Heavenly Father, as we look at the state of our world we sometimes start to wonder. When we focus our attention on incredible suffering in Africa; the devastation of so much of the Middle East; the continued war in Ukraine and the fragile attempts for a ceasefire, we often fail to understand. We are tempted to ask: Are you still in control?

Lord, we do not have the answers. Yet you have invited us to pray. And so we come, offering our faltering prayers to you - believing, even if only a little bit at times, that you are listening and you will act. We bring the many, many needs of the world to you now -those we see in the news and those seen only by you. You see the pain and you see the suffering and yet we know, and we trust, that you are Lord.

Lord, as we wait for your promises to be fulfilled,

help us to keep trusting your faithfulness.

Lord of the universe, thank you for all the beauty in our world. We think of the new growth blooming at the start of spring. We are amazed by the incredible night sky, the stars, the planets: everything we can see and everything that is beyond our comprehension. All of it crafted by your hands. All of it upheld by you. Lord, as we look at the stars, help us to remember your promise to Abram and your promises to us. Abram never saw the full fruit of the promises and yet he carried on following your word. We may not understand, we may be confused but help us, whenever we see the night sky, to remember that you are a faithful God.

Lord, as we wait for your promises to be fulfilled,

help us to keep trusting your faithfulness.

Lord, sometimes our problems and troubles seem insurmountable. We can't see a way through. We can't understand why. We think of those we know who are in pain; awaiting a diagnosis; struggling with anxiety and depression; facing a long, hard road to recovery; and those who are mourning the loss of a loved one; a job; an opportunity; those who live on the edge of society.

Lord, we don't know why and sometimes we're afraid to ask in case you think we are losing our faith. But we know that when times are tough we need you more than ever. We need to cling tightly to you just as you hold us firmly and safely in your arms. Help us to trust that, even if the now is really, really hard, the not yet will be good because you are a good God. Lord, we believe. Help our unbelief.

Lord, as we wait for your promises to be fulfilled,

help us to keep trusting your faithfulness.

Father, we pray for our community. We think of those places that seem dark or dangerous. We pray for the places that we would rather not go through. And we think of the places that give us pleasure. We pray for those who work in our community and we pause to think of our neighbours, those we meet on the bus, in our office, our classroom, in the park as we walk the dog. Lord, you are Lord of all these people and places whether we recognise it or not. You have a plan for our community. Help us to listen for the part you want us to play in bringing that plan to fruition. Give us the courage, as a church and as individual people of God, to tell others of your amazing faithfulness and love. Draw people to your light, we pray and fill our streets with your praise.

Lord, as we wait for your promises to be fulfilled,

help us to keep trusting your faithfulness.

Lord we thank you for the times when we have glimpses of your glory; when we have seen your promises coming true even when we didn't expect it. We think of all the good things that have happened to us or our families this week and we pause to smile. We thank you for good news stories; for those unexpected moments of joy, maybe from people we don't normally have much to do with; for fun; for laughter; for a job well done. We thank you that you are with us in these small moments as well as the life-changing situations.

As we prepare to go into the coming week, help us to look forward to travelling with you. Go before us, Lord, and light our way. Help us to see you in the trivial and the timeless; in the life-changing and the mundane. Keep us from following our own feeble footsteps but instead lead us on and take us where you are going, Lord. Surprise us with your presence; startle us with answers to our unspoken prayers; bring us back here next week with stories to tell of your goodness.

Lord, as we wait for your promises to be fulfilled

Help us to keep trusting your faithfulness and to keep following your wonderful, winding, challenging path.

Amen

R&S 601 Christ is the world's true light

1 Christ is the world's true light,
 its captain of salvation,
 the daystar clear and bright
 and joy of every nation;
 new life, new hope awakes,
 where'er we own his sway:
 freedom her bondage breaks,
 and night is turned to day.

2 In Christ all races meet,
 their ancient feuds forgetting,
 the whole round world complete,
 from sunrise to its setting:
 when Christ is throned as Lord,
 all shall forsake their fear,
 to ploughshare beat the sword,
 to pruning-hook the spear.

3 One Lord, in one great name
 unite us all who own thee;
 cast out our pride and shame
 that hinder to enthrone thee;
 the world has waited long,
 has travailed long in pain;
 to heal its ancient wrong,
 come, Prince of Peace, and reign.

G. W. Briggs (1875-1959) altd.*
 © Oxford University Press from *Enlarged Songs of Praise*

A sending out prayer

Lord, you have kept your promises to your people throughout the ages.
 Send us out with renewed confidence
 that you are faithful to your Word.
 Help us to see signs that you are at work in our lives
 and the wider world this week.
 In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

The Blessing

And may the blessing of God Almighty,
 Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer,
 be upon us and those we love, this day and always. **Amen.**

The Grace

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 the love of God,
 and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
 be with us all evermore. Amen.**