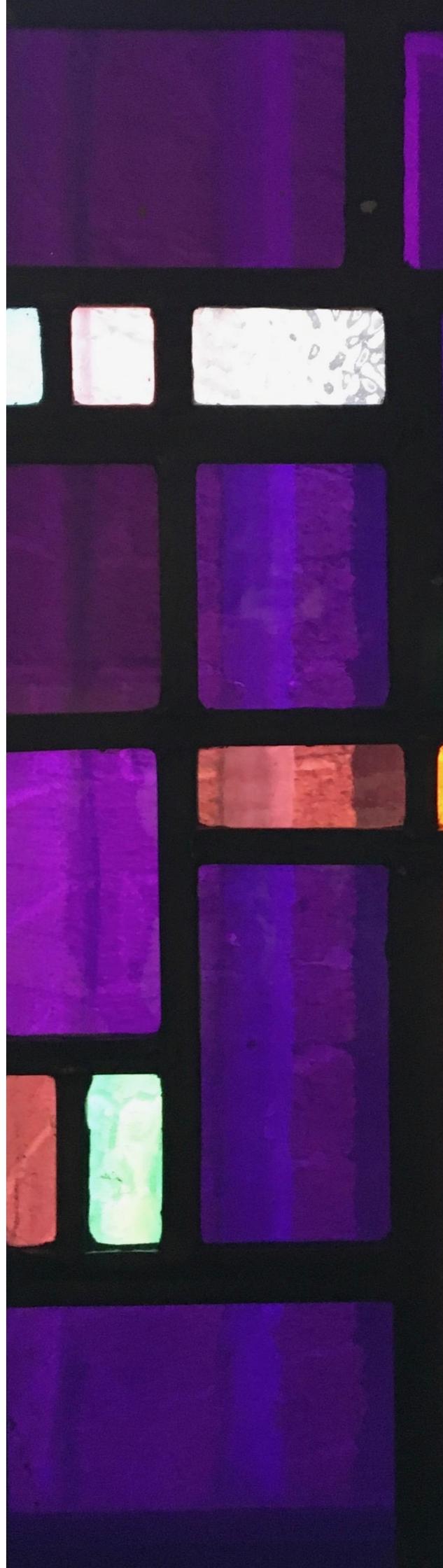




**The Down and Dromore
Committee of the
Church's Ministry
of Healing**

**Advent
Resource**



This resource has been prepared as a devotional aid for use during Advent by the Down and Dromore Diocesan Committee of the Church's Ministry of Healing.

Taking a previous resource, using the themes generally associated with the Sundays in Advent, each week an acrostic is offered to help in the teaching of that theme. There is a short meditation each Sunday, the Bible References for each Sunday in Advent are also listed, along with intercessions that can be used throughout the week.

This devotional has been further developed to include a verse and suggested prayers (from the BCP) for each day during Advent, along with some verses midweek from an Advent hymn, and a final thought for the week.

As this resource has been designed for use in any year, a separate reflection / thought has been included at the end of the resource specifically for Christmas.

Unless otherwise stated all Bible verses are from the NIV UK (2011) edition.

Intercessions are from The Book of Common Prayer (2004), pages 139-144

Advent hymns are from the Church of Ireland Church Hymnal (2000)

The First Week of Advent: Hope – Patriarchs. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

Acrostic: **H**ear
 O
 People
 Everywhere

Readings: Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalm 122; Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:36-44

Meditation

The Patriarchs were the Fathers of God's people. Through his covenant with Abraham, God established a special relationship with his chosen people, whose responsibility was to not only be devoted to their God but to proclaim his greatness to the world. The special relationship established by God with his people through the patriarchs was one that promised hope – because God promised his people blessing and fulfilment. That hope is still one God's people claim through Christ. Abraham's hope meant that he 'died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar' (Hebrews 11:13). Ours is a living hope that God, through Jesus Christ and his Holy Spirit, is still at work today. This is a message worth proclaiming!

Intercessions

God of Abraham,
we give you thanks for the assurance of your faithfulness and steadfastness.
As Abraham moved with you in faith,
grant that the Church would remain faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ, boldly
proclaiming the hope of healing and eternity that rest in him.
Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

God of Isaac,
we praise you for your greatness and your goodness.
Sovereign over all, as Isaac inherited responsibility from his Father Abraham, so
grant to all those in positions of power and authority wisdom, discernment and
grace to exercise their duties with clarity and vision.
Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

God of Jacob,
you meet with us in many ways.
As you met with Jacob and left your mark on him,
so we ask that you will leave your mark on the communities in which we live and
work. As Jacob was the father of a large and diverse family all of whom he loved,
help your people love those who find it hard to fit in to our communities.
Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

God of Joseph,
you are faithful even in the darkest times.
As Joseph found himself abandoned,
trafficked and unjustly imprisoned, we pray for all those who have suffered
similarly. We pray too for all those who are suffering.
Grant that they, like Joseph, may continue to find hope in you.
Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

God of all hope, God of consolation, hear these prayers which we offer in faith and
love; and in the name of Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

MONDAY

You answer us with awesome and righteous deeds, God our Saviour,
the **hope** of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas **Psalms 65:5**

We pray for THE WORLD
all the nations ...
our own country ...
those in authority ...
the peace of the world ...
racial harmony ...
those who maintain order ...

TUESDAY

And **hope** does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into
our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. **Romans 5:5**

We pray for THE COMMUNITY
those who work ...
the unemployed ...
those in education ...
those in research ...
those in communications ...
those who maintain the life of the community ...

WEDNESDAY

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you **hope** and a future. **Jeremiah 29:11**

Some words from Hymn 119 (verse 2) to reflect on:

*Israel's strength and consolation
Hope of all the earth thou art
Dear desire of every nation
Joy of every longing heart.*

We pray for PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

the home, and family life ...
children deprived of home ...
friends, relations and neighbours ...
relationships in daily life and work ...
those who are estranged ...
those who feel unloved ...
all ministries of care ...

THURSDAY

For in this **hope** we were saved. But **hope** that is seen is no **hope** at all. Who **hopes** for what they already have? But if we **hope** for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. **Romans 8:24-25**

We pray for THE CHURCH

the Church universal, and local ...
the unity of the Church ...
the ministries of the Church ...
the mission of the Church ...
the renewal of the Church ...
all Christians in this place ...

FRIDAY

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. **Isaiah 40:31**

The intercessions continue on the next page

We pray for THE SUFFERING

the hungry ...

the refugees ...

the prisoners ...

the persecuted ...

all who bring sin and suffering to others ...

all who seek to bring care and relief ...

SATURDAY

May the God of **hope** fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with **hope** by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Romans 15:13**

We pray for PEOPLE IN NEED

those who are tempted ...

those in despair ...

those who are sick ...

those with disabilities or who have special needs ...

those who are enslaved by addictions ...

the elderly and the dying ...

those who mourn ...

all ministries of care and healing ...

A final thought for the week:

Thought on Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

These words of God, spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, were to the people of Judah facing destruction of their way of life and deportation. It is hard to grasp that God has good plans for his people, especially when things are turbulent and frightening. Yet, God always seeks the best for his people, as he does today. We are never out of his grasp, nor out of his presence. Isaiah (49:16) reminds us: 'See I have engraved you on the palms of my hands.' Even when we feel distant from God, it is good to remember that he has engraved our names on his hands, and he will not forget us. We live in a confusing and unstable world, and yet nothing happens that God has not permitted. We need to hold onto the stability of knowing that he has a plan for our lives, which is not for evil, but will give us a future and a hope.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we live in a confusing and selfish world where people do not respect one another and we are fearful of stirring dissension and strife. Help us to rest in your love, with the understanding that you do indeed have a plan for our lives, which is to prosper us into the future. Help us when we seek your guidance, and let us hear your call for a closer walk with you, that we may live in such a manner that attracts others to you, and may we give you all the praise and the glory. Amen.

The Second Week of Advent: Peace - Prophets. Voices against authority, persecution etc.

Acrostic: **P**eople
 Everywhere
 Acknowledge
 Christ
 Everyday

Readings: Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-7; 18-19; Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12

Meditation

The Old Testament prophets were generally writing in contexts where they, on God's behalf, were seeking to call his people back to faith in him. The covenant God had made with Abraham seemed at times like a distant memory. Some were writing as part of an Israelite nation that had been conquered and was in exile. The prophets were often rabble rousers, using powerful language to convey the message of God. Invariably, the harsh critiques of the people and the challenges issued were rounded up with messages of restoration. The message is straightforward: by listening and returning to him God's people can know restoration.. And with restoration comes peace: "The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain," says the Lord.' (Isaiah 65:25)

Intercessions

Lord of the Church, to know you and to love you is perfect peace.
May your body, the Church, manifest the peace of Christ
and in so doing bear witness to you.

As the prophets foretold the restoration of your people and your world:
So we pray: **Maranatha. Come Lord Jesus.**

Lord of creation, in your Son you showed us a way of peace and of grace.
As he proclaimed blessing for peacemakers,
so we pray your blessing on all those who work for peace in our world.
The prophets often challenged authority; we ask that all those in government and
leadership would heed the voices of those whose lives have been destroyed by
conflict:

So we pray: **Maranatha. Come Lord Jesus.**

Lord of our lives, often we find real peace in the company of those you have given
us to love. We pray for our families, for our neighbours and for all in our
community. May the peace of God reign in our lives, in the lives of those who love
us and in the lives of those who hate us:

So we pray: **Maranatha. Come Lord Jesus.**

Lord of the broken, we pray for your peace in the lives of those who face despair.
Restore those, known to us and unknown, who are in pain, who suffer, who are
crippled by fear and doubt.

Reign in their lives with the power of the Prince of Peace.

So we pray: **Maranatha. Come Lord Jesus.**

God of peace, God of assurance, hear these prayers which we offer in faith and
love; and in the name of Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

MONDAY

Pray for the **peace** of Jerusalem: 'May those who love you be secure.
May there be **peace** within your walls and security within your citadels.'
For the sake of my family and friends, I will say, '**Peace** be within you.'

Psalm 122:6-8

We pray for THE WORLD

all the nations ...

our own country ...

those in authority ...

the peace of the world ...

racial harmony ...

those who maintain order ...

TUESDAY

I will listen to what God the Lord says;
he promises **peace** to his people, his faithful servants –
but let them not turn to folly.
Surely his salvation is near those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.
Love and faithfulness meet together;
righteousness and **peace** kiss each other. **Psalm 85:8-10**

We pray for THE COMMUNITY

those who work ...
the unemployed ...
those in education ...
those in research ...
those in communications ...
those who maintain the life of the community ...

WEDNESDAY

And the **peace** of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts
and your minds in Christ Jesus. **Philippians 4:7**

Some words from Hymn 124 (verse 4) to reflect on:

*Our glad hosannas Prince of **Peace**
Your welcome shall proclaim
And heaven's eternal arches ring
With your beloved name.*

We pray for PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

the home, and family life ...
children deprived of home ...
friends, relations and neighbours ...
relationships in daily life and work ...
those who are estranged ...
those who feel unloved ...
all ministries of care ...

THURSDAY

Let the **peace** of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to **peace**. And be thankful. **Colossians 3:15**

We pray for THE CHURCH
the Church universal, and local ...
the unity of the Church ...
the ministries of the Church ...
the mission of the Church ...
the renewal of the Church ...
all Christians in this place ...

FRIDAY

Peace I leave with you; my **peace** I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. **John 14:27**

We pray for THE SUFFERING
the hungry ...
the refugees ...
the prisoners ...
the persecuted ...
all who bring sin and suffering to others ...
all who seek to bring care and relief ...

SATURDAY

'The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face towards you and give you **peace**.' **Numbers 6:24-26**

We pray for PEOPLE IN NEED
those who are tempted ...
those in despair ...
those who are sick ...
those with disabilities or who have special needs ...
those who are enslaved by addictions ...
the elderly and the dying ...
those who mourn ...
all ministries of care and healing ...

A final thought for the week:

Thought on Isaiah 52:7

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

Has anyone ever told you that you had beautiful feet? I guess not. It would be quite exceptional, but here Isaiah is proclaiming the beauty of the person (feet who brings) who brings good news. It is not just any good news. It is the good news that God, in Jesus the Messiah, brings salvation to his people. This is THE message of peace and reconciliation for the whole world.

It is a message that goes from one generation to another as each of us are tasked with passing on the baton. This is good tidings as God has promised that he will never leave us nor forsake us. And he will reign for ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer

Lord God, help me to study your word, so that it is in my mouth and heart, and give me the places to go to that I may tell of your greatness and purposes in the world. Give me a clean heart and gentle tongue that your message of reconciliation and peace may be heard in the streets and byways throughout your kingdom, to your praise and glory. Amen.

The Third Week: Love - John the Baptist, lighting the way for Jesus

Acrostic: Lighten
 Our
 Vision
 Eternally

Readings: Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:4-10 or Magnificat; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11

Meditation

John the Baptist is a unique figure. Speaking out against the authority of the day, boldly and almost foolhardily, he is given a place the line of the prophets of the Old Testament. Yet he is rightly a figure of the New Testament for he knew full well the significance of Jesus his cousin. It was John who proclaimed him 'the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!' (John 1:29) and John who, at the height of his own 'celebrity' said that Jesus was 'he who comes after me, the strap of whose

sandal I am not worthy to untie.’ (John 1:27). John makes clear that Jesus’ ministry as ‘lamb of God’ will be one of love for his people. John’s example urges us to use our own lives to point to Jesus Christ, and give him the place of honour even as the Baptist did.

Intercessions

God of love, you call your Church in the world to bear witness to you as we worship in the beauty of holiness.

Grant that all your people may grow in love for you and one another as we offer our worship, praise and thanksgiving.

Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Christ our King, in your journey to the cross you gave the truest example of love for us to follow. In your passion, you showed the humility of leadership; and in your servant John the Baptist you gave us an example of humility that pointed the way from him to you. Grant to the leaders of the world that same humility to live their lives as the servants of others.

Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Spirit of God who dwells with us,
we pray for those who like John the Baptist find themselves on the edges of our community.

As John faced ridicule and dismissal from the established order of things, help us to reach out to those who are excluded and vulnerable – that they too may know your love. Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Lord of love, and Lord of life;
your word tells us that those who live in love live in you. In your mercy, look with love on all those who are in pain, who suffer from illness and who face death.

Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

God of love, God of forgiveness, hear these prayers which we offer in faith and love; and in the name of Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

MONDAY

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his **love** endures for ever. **1 Chronicles 16:34**

We pray for THE WORLD

all the nations ...

our own country ...

those in authority ...

the peace of the world ...

racial harmony ...

those who maintain order ...

TUESDAY

Because your **love** is better than life,
my lips will glorify you. **Psalm 63:3**

We pray for THE COMMUNITY

those who work ...

the unemployed ...

those in education ...

those in research ...

those in communications ...

those who maintain the life of the community ...

WEDNESDAY

And now these three remain: faith, hope and **love**. But the greatest of these is **love**.
1 Corinthians 13:13

Some words from Hymn 125 (verse 5) to reflect on:

*O'er every foe victorious He on His throne shall rest
From age to age more glorious all blessing and all blessed
The tide of time shall never His covenant remove
His name shall stand for ever that name to us is **Love**.*

We pray for PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

the home, and family life ...

children deprived of home ...

friends, relations and neighbours ...

relationships in daily life and work ...

those who are estranged ...

those who feel unloved ...

all ministries of care ...

THURSDAY

Dear friends, let us **love** one another, for **love** comes from God. Everyone who **loves** has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not **love** does not know God, because God is **love**. This is how God showed his **love** among us: he sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is **love**: not that we **loved** God, but that he **loved** us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. **1 John 4:7-10**

We pray for THE CHURCH
the Church universal, and local ...
the unity of the Church ...
the ministries of the Church ...
the mission of the Church ...
the renewal of the Church ...
all Christians in this place ...

FRIDAY

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly **loved**, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. **Colossians 3:12**

We pray for THE SUFFERING
the hungry ...
the refugees ...
the prisoners ...
the persecuted ...
all who bring sin and suffering to others ...
all who seek to bring care and relief ...

SATURDAY

Surely your goodness and **love** will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. **Psalms 23:6**

We pray for PEOPLE IN NEED
those who are tempted ...
those in despair ...
those who are sick ...
those with disabilities or who have special needs ...
those who are enslaved by addictions ...
the elderly and the dying ...
those who mourn ...
all ministries of care and healing ...

A final thought for the week:

Thought on Psalm 115:1

Not to us, Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.

It is only within recent years that I realised that a grace we sang in school at lunchtime was Psalm 115. You might ask why I didn't immediately recognise it, but it isn't surprising, because all those years ago, we sang the grace in Latin, without thought for the meaning. Now, looking back I realise the great heritage we had in the reverent way in which thanks was offered before meals.

Giving glory due to his name is very important and I am reminded of the seventy disciples who were sent out in pairs to every town and place where Jesus intended to go (Luke 10). They returned in excitement saying, 'Lord, even the demons submit to us!' Jesus said to them, do not rejoice that the demons submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven. How easily we forget, that we are not the ones who bring the healing. We may have uttered the prayer, but it is God himself who heals in response to the prayer. We always need to give him the glory.

Prayer

Dear heavenly Father, give us the grace to understand that the way of knowledge opens to us when we come with a holy and humble heart, ready to do your will. You have promised that you will never leave us or forsake us, so Lord, when you ask us to step forward to do something which is difficult for us, give us all that we need to complete the task, and the courage to stand and be counted for the kingdom. May we give you the praise and the glory for loving encouragement, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Fourth Week: Joy - Mary - anticipating the reality of His Birth

Acrostic: **J**esus
 Our
 Yesterday, Today and Forever

Readings: Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-8, 18-20; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25

Meditation

Probably just a teenaged girl, bound into an arranged marriage and suddenly pregnant, Mary's ordeal would understandably stretch the endurance of anyone. Yet, upon hearing the news that she was pregnant, hers is not a proportional response in terms of the potential problems she would face (Mary couldn't have known how Joseph would react, never mind her own family). Her response is unbridled joy. Joy that she is chosen by God. Joy that she will play a supporting role in the story of salvation. Joy that she is blessed among women. As we ask ourselves what place we give Jesus in our lives, are we ready to greet the news of his return with the unbridled joy of Mary? We are chosen. We are called to play our small part in the story of his salvation for the world.

Intercessions

Lord God, you chose Mary to bear the Christ-child.
As she responded with joy and willingness,
so we pray that in your church there would ever be joy in the knowledge that your Son is coming again.

Maranatha. **Come, Lord; quickly come.**

Lord God, your Son would be born into the line of King David.
We pray for leaders across the world.
Empower them not with status or earthly authority,
but with boldness to work for hope, for peace, for love and joy to be known
throughout your world.

Maranatha. **Come, Lord; quickly come.**

Lord God, Joseph responded to Mary's pregnancy with righteousness and faith, treating her justly. We pray for those facing injustice in our community through loneliness, through poverty, through bitter circumstance. Especially we pray for foodbanks, and for agencies that will help those who have little or nothing in these weeks.

Maranatha. **Come, Lord; quickly come.**

Lord God, our joy, our hope, our peace and our love rest in you and in the promise of your Son. We pray for your power of restoration and renewal in your church and in your world, that broken lives may be made whole;
that our broken world may be made new.

Maranatha. **Come, Lord; quickly come.**

God of hope, God of peace, God of love, you are our joy: hear these prayers which we offer in faith and love; and in the name of Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

MONDAY

Make a **joyful** noise to the Lord, all the earth.

Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing.

Know that the Lord is God. It is he that made us, and we are his;

we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise.

Give thanks to him, bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures for ever,

and his faithfulness to all generations. **Psalm 100 (NRSV)**

We pray for THE WORLD

all the nations ...

our own country ...

those in authority ...

the peace of the world ...

racial harmony ...

those who maintain order ...

TUESDAY

In the same way, I tell you there is more **joy** in heaven over one sinner who changes his heart and life, than over ninety-nine good people who don't need to change. **Luke 15:7 (NCV)**

We pray for THE COMMUNITY

those who work ...

the unemployed ...

those in education ...

those in research ...

those in communications ...

those who maintain the life of the community ...

WEDNESDAY

Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious **joy**, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. **1 Peter 1:8-9 (NRSV)**

Some verses from Hymn 123 (verse 3) to reflect on:

*Mary says: I am God's servant I will keep His Holy Word
I will gladly be the mother of my Saviour and my Lord'.*

The intercessions continue on the next page

We pray for PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

the home, and family life ...
children deprived of home ...
friends, relations and neighbours ...
relationships in daily life and work ...
those who are estranged ...
those who feel unloved ...
all ministries of care ...

THURSDAY

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my **joy** complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. **Philippians 2:1-2**

We pray for THE CHURCH

the Church universal, and local ...
the unity of the Church ...
the ministries of the Church ...
the mission of the Church ...
the renewal of the Church ...
all Christians in this place ...

FRIDAY

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dreamed.
Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of **joy**.
Then it was said among the nations, 'The Lord has done great things for them.'
The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with **joy**.
Restore our fortunes, Lord, like streams in the Negev.
Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of **joy**.
Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow,
will return with songs of **joy**, carrying sheaves with them. **Psalms 126**

We pray for THE SUFFERING

the hungry ...
the refugees ...
the prisoners ...
the persecuted ...
all who bring sin and suffering to others ...
all who seek to bring care and relief ...

SATURDAY

Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for **joy**. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. **Isaiah 35:6**

May the God of hope fill you with all **joy** and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Romans 15:13**

We pray for PEOPLE IN NEED

those who are tempted ...

those in despair ...

those who are sick ...

those with disabilities or who have special needs ...

those who are enslaved by addictions ...

the elderly and the dying ...

those who mourn ...

all ministries of care and healing ...

A final thought for the week:

Thought on Matthew 13:44

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field”.

I was not brought up in the computer age, so as kids we made our own activities. We had a wonderful wilderness of a garden, so often when friends came round we would play hide and seek. There were many good hiding places and some of my friends were particularly good at ‘disappearing’ as it were, into nothingness. It was as though they were totally lost. Finding them took a lot of searching, patience and ingenuity.

Often we do not recognise that we are lost, until we are found by Jesus! We may have been looking for ‘that something’ to fill the gnawing need or emptiness we find hard to express, and surprisingly we come to Jesus, who meets us where we are, and welcomes us home. That finding brings completeness in which nothing else is important. It is paramount, and so like the man in the field who found hidden treasure, our joy is complete, we want or need nothing else.

Prayer

Father, thank you for seeking me out of the wilderness and bringing me home into your kingdom. May the joy it gives me in belonging draw others to you and may your kingdom come in the lives of my family and my community, I ask in Jesus’ precious name. Amen.

CHRISTMAS

In the Christ Child is **LOVE, JOY, HOPE** and **PEACE** for all people.

Take time this year to stop, to thank God for these things, and to ask God's Spirit for an outpouring of each into your life.

Then pause, and ask this:

What do I need most today? Is it the **JOY** that his promises bring? Is it the **HOPE** that, whatever you face at the moment, it is not the end and he is with you? Is it the **PEACE** that comes from his presence? Or is it the promise that you are his be**LOVED**?

Prayer

God our Father, Lord of all, thank you for every thing that you have given me this and every day. Thank you, above all, for the wondrous story of salvation that your Son made possible by his birth, by his life, by his death and by his resurrection. Pour out your promises on your people, by the power of your Holy Spirit and in the name of that same Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.