

COMPLINE

An Order for (Evening) Night Prayer



The ancient office of Compline gets its name from a Latin word meaning 'completion' (completorium). It is above all a service of quietness and reflection before rest at the end of the day. It is most effective at the ending of the day as you prepare to go quietly to bed.

ONE to TWENTY-ONE

Circuit Minister: Rev'd Audrey D Browne

BASINGSTOKE AND READING METHODIST CIRCUIT

Introduction

Over the past few weeks, I have been praying and reflecting particularly at the close of each day. I have found the Psalms especially reassuring and comforting in these tough and uncertain times. I have been writing down my night prayers in a structured way, in the hope that I can share them with you, and that you will find in them something helpful. In one of our evening services at Trinity we had discussed different styles of liturgy, and, '**Compline**' —*An Order for (Evening) Night Prayer* was mentioned. This short time of structured prayer, offers the opportunity to calm oneself in God's presence and to commend the day that has gone, and the night, to God's safe keeping. In these times of structured (evening) night prayers, I used a mixture of the church's liturgy from varying traditions, and my own personal inspiration from Scripture, along with *hymns/songs/choruses* that came to mind.

In these unprecedented times, I want to rest in God's WORD – for it is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path (*Psalm 119:105*).

Each page offers an 'Order for (Evening) Night Prayer'

(...) gives the flexibility to expand the prayer points using your own words.

If you don't know the (hymns/songs/choruses), choose one that's on your heart, or just say the words aloud prayerfully.



Know that the LORD is journeying with you

AND

May you be drawn into special moments of prayer with the LORD!

1) The LORD ALMIGHTY grant us a quiet night and a perfect end. **Amen**

Our help is in the name of the LORD
Who made heaven and earth.

Because Christ has passed through the time of suffering, he is able to help those in time of trial. Come to the LORD, your GOD, for he is gracious and merciful.

**Most merciful GOD
We confess to you,
Before the whole company of heaven
and one another,
That we have sinned in thought, word
and deed,
And in what we have failed to do.
Forgive our sins,
Heal us by your Spirit
And raise us to new life in Christ. Amen**

GOD, make speed to save us
Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever. Amen

Into your hands, O LORD, I commend my spirit,
Into your hands, O LORD, I commend my spirit

For you have redeemed me, Lord of Truth
Into your hands, O LORD, I commend my spirit

Keep me as the apple of your eye,
Hide me under the shadow of your wings.

Psalm 1

**Save us, O LORD, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ
and asleep may rest in peace.**

Let us offer our prayer with all GOD'S people through Jesus Christ our LORD, Who-ever lives to pray for us.

- We pray for the needs of the world.....
- We pray for the church.....
- We pray for all in trouble or distress.....
- We pray for family, friends and ourselves....

GOD, we commend these and all our prayers to you this night, through Jesus Christ our LORD. **Amen**

In peace we lie down and sleep,
For you alone, LORD, make us dwell in safety.

Abide with us, LORD Jesus.
For the night is at hand and the day is now past.

As the night watch looks for the morning.
So do we look for you, O Christ.

**The LORD bless us and watch over us;
the LORD make his face shine upon us
and be gracious to us; the LORD look kindly on us
and give us peace: through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen**

2) Be swift, O GOD, to save us.

Come quickly, LORD, to help us.

GOD was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself and has entrusted us with the message of reconciliation.

LORD, accept our sorrow for our sins,

**Forgive us for our faults of thought and word,
For what we have done, and for what we have failed to do.
Restore us to the likeness of your Son,
and grant us that peace which passes all understanding, through Jesus Christ our LORD. Amen**

If we confess our sins, GOD is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Amen. Thanks be to GOD.

Collect

Almighty and merciful GOD, you hate nothing you have made, and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts, so that when we turn to you and confess our sins we may receive your full and perfect forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our LORD. **Amen**

HP 273 – Rock of Ages

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be confirmed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect. {Romans 12:1-2}

Silence

GOD and Father of all, as this day ends we offer up its hours in praise to you. As we take our rest, unite us, by your Spirit, in praise of Christ our LORD, the Alpha and Omega, the First and Last, in whom we make our prayer. **Amen**

- Christ, through whom all things were made
- **Sustain all creation**
- Christ, exalted in the lowest and the least,
- **Give us humility.**
- Christ, present in the poor and the oppressed,
- **Fill us with compassion.**
- Christ, forsaken in the hungry and the homeless,
- **Minister to them through our hands.**
- Christ, present where two or three are gathered,
- **Be known among us.**
- Christ, present in word, sacrament and sign,
- **Grant us your peace.**

The Lord's Prayer

LORD our GOD, at the ending of this day, and in the darkness and silence of this night, cover us with healing and forgiveness, that we may take our rest in peace; through Jesus Christ our LORD. **Amen**

We will lie down in peace and take our rest;
For you alone, LORD, make us dwell in safety.

May the souls of the faithful, through the mercy of GOD, rest in peace and rise in glory. **Through Christ Jesus. Amen**

3) At the ending of this day, let us acknowledge GOD'S presence here with us, in this place, in our lives and in the world:

Silence

Come bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD,

Who stand by night in the house of the LORD!

Lift up your hands to the holy place,

And bless the LORD.

May the LORD, Maker of heaven and earth,

Bless you in love.

If GOD is for us, who can be against us?

Who or what shall separate us from the love of GOD that is in Christ Jesus our LORD? {Romans 8:31&35}

Dear GOD...

We repent the wrongs we have done:

Silence

We have wounded your love.

GOD, heal us.

We stumble in the darkness.

Light of the world, transfigure us.

We forget that we are your home.

Spirit of GOD, dwell in us.

Eternal Spirit, living GOD, pardon our transgression, and make our hearts one with yours, through Jesus your Son.

For the Word of GOD among us,

We give you thanks and praise!

For the Word of GOD before us,

We give you thanks and praise!

O GOD, who created the night and the day, the One who never slumbers nor sleeps; flood us with your holy presence, that in this night, as throughout this day, we may be filled with your peace: Amen

LORD GOD, Creator of the day that has passed, thank you for all who shared in it, enabling us to see you afresh; for your presence in all that has happened, and for your Spirit guiding us in your will.

We bring to you all who will struggle with sleep this night, those who do not sleep comfortably; the many whose hunger will make sleep difficult; those who are fearful to close their eyes; the sick, the troubled and the depressed.

We bring to you those who stay awake so that we may sleep... we commit into your gracious keeping all whom we love...those who hold power and influence...all children and young people who look forward to tomorrow...the aged, many of whom dread another new day...and those who will pass into eternity this night.

We bring all our worries, cares and prayers to you; in the name of Christ. Amen

Psalm 90

Living LORD, as you have guided, led and blessed us today, may your love calm our fears, your Spirit keep us safe; and your grace give us rest this night.

I will lie down in peace and take my rest.

For it is in GOD alone that I dwell unafraid. Amen

Christ be within us to keep us,

Thanks be to GOD

His divine Spirit dwells in us,

Thanks be to GOD. Amen

4) Merciful GOD, at the ending of this day, if we have not loved you with our whole heart, or our neighbours as ourselves. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, forgive us what we have been, accept us as we are, and guide what we shall be; through Jesus Christ. **Amen**

The New Zealand Prayer Book

Make us pure in heart to see you; make us merciful to receive your kindness and to share our love with all your human family; then will your name be hallowed on earth as in heaven.

Support us, LORD, all the day long, until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over, and our work done; then LORD, in your mercy, give us safe lodging, a holy rest and peace at the last.

GOD our judge and our companion, we thank you for the good we did this day and for all that has given us joy. Everything we offer as our humble service. Bless those with whom we have worked, and those who are our concern.

The Book of Common Prayer (1979)

O GOD, your unfailing providence sustains the world we live in and the life we live: Watch over those, both night and day, who work while others sleep, and grant that we may never forget that our common life depends upon each other's toil...

Keep watch, dear LORD, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, LORD Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; all for your Son Jesus Christ our LORD. **Amen**

The New Zealand Prayer Book

LORD, it is night. The night is for stillness. Let us be still in your presence, O GOD.

It is night after a long day. What has been done has been done; what has not been done has not been done. Let it be. The night is dark. Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives rest in you.

The night is quiet. Let the quietness of your peace enfold us, all dear to us, and all who have no peace. The night heralds the dawn. Let us look expectantly to a new day, new joys, and new possibilities. In the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our LORD. **Amen**

HP 705 – vs 1 & 6

Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in endless praise.

Take my love, my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure-store;
Take myself and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-79)

Philippians 4:8, 9

...whatever is true,
Whatever is honourable,
Whatever is just,
Whatever is pure,
Whatever is pleasing,
Whatever is commendable,

If there is any excellence and if there is any praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned...and the GOD of peace will be with you.

The grace of our LORD Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit; rest, remain and abide with us all: **through Jesus Christ your Son, our Saviour and our LORD. Amen**

5) LORD GOD, tonight, I lay bare before you, for you know me perfectly, you remember that I was created.

Silence

Psalm 139

HP 648 - *John Ellerton (1826-93)*

The day you gave us, Lord, is ended,
the darkness falls at your behest;
to you our morning hymns ascended,
your praise shall sanctify our rest.

We thank you that your church,
unsleeping, while earth rolls onward into
light, through all the world her watch is
keeping, and rests not now by day or
night.

As o'er each continent and island
the dawn leads on another day,
the voice of prayer is never silent,
nor dies the strain of praise away.

The sun, that bids us rest, is waking
our brethren 'neath the western sky,
and hour by hour fresh lips are making
your wondrous doings heard on high.

So be it, Lord; your throne shall never,
like earth's proud empires, pass away;
your kingdom stands and grows forever,
till all your creatures own your sway

Some brief thoughts on Psalm 139

This Psalm is a prayer asking GOD to examine the heart and see its true devotion. David is adamant of his loyalty to GOD. He takes delight in asking GOD to examine his life and soul. David is acutely aware that GOD knows every thought, word and deed; and that nothing is hidden from GOD – for it is GOD who formed him in the dark concealment of his mother's womb. David begins and ends this Psalm with GOD searching and knowing.

In the confidence of GOD'S concern for the smallest detail of human living, we offer our prayers for the world and ourselves.

We pray for those who find themselves in despair this night...

We pray for those whose days are formed of fear and longing...

We pray for those whose thoughts are too weighty to bear...

We pray for those who don't know that they are valued...

We pray for those who lack confidence in the future...

We pray for those who suffer the effects and stigma of mental illness...

We pray for parents who have no food to feed their children...

We pray for children living in war zones and places of conflict...

We pray for carers who long for a break and a rest...

We pray for people living with guilt of past action.

We pray for people living with a difficult diagnosis or the burden of grief...

We pray for those in our church community who need comfort...

We pray for ourselves. Help us to remember that we are wonderfully made...

GOD of Grace:

**Hear our prayer,
through Jesus Christ your Son,
our Saviour.**

Michael Youngson (adapted)

Our father, who art in heaven...

May GOD who knows us intimately and cares for us passionately, bless us this night, and keep us in his rest until the morning light: through Jesus Christ His Son our Saviour. **Amen**

6) Do not let your hearts be troubled.
Believe in GOD, believe also in me. (*John 14:1*)

Here am I, LORD, I've come to do your will.
Here am I, LORD, in your presence I am still.

Silence

I lift up my eyes to the hills— from
where will my help come?
My help comes from the LORD, who
made heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot be moved; he
who keeps you will not slumber.
He who keeps Israel will neither
slumber nor sleep.
The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is
your shade at your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day, nor
the moon by night.
The LORD will keep you from all evil; he
will keep your life.
The LORD will keep your going out and
your coming in from this time on and
for-evermore. (*Psalms 121*)

HP 525 – vs 1 & 2 Anonymous

Kum ba ya, my Lord, kum ba ya
Kum ba ya, my Lord, kum ba ya
Kum ba ya, my Lord, kum ba ya
O Lord, kum ba ya.

Loving GOD, I/we offer my/our prayers to
you this night in faith, through Jesus Christ
your Son, our LORD, who-ever lives to
pray for us.

- I/we pray for the world...
- I/we pray for the church...
- I/we pray for all who found this
day difficult...
- I/we pray for loved ones...
- I/we pray for myself/ourselves...

HP 525 – vs 3 Anonymous

Someone's praying, Lord kum ba ya
Someone's praying, Lord kum ba ya
Someone's praying, Lord kum ba ya
O Lord, kum ba ya.

GOD of compassion and mercy,

we give you thanks for all that has given
us life and joy and hope this day: and, we
commend to your gracious care, all that
has taken-away life and energy and virtue
from us this day.

Through Jesus Christ your Son, our Saviour
and our LORD, who-ever lives to pray for
us.

'The Lord's Prayer'

Silence

**Calm me/us, O LORD,
as you stilled the storm.
Still me/us, O LORD,
keep me from harm.
Let all the tumult within me/us cease.
Enfold me/us, LORD, in your peace.**

The peace of GOD
be over me/us to shelter me/us,
under me/us to uphold me/us,
about me/us to protect me/us,
behind me/us to direct me/us,
ever with me/us to save me/us.

The peace of all peace
be mine/ours this night
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy
Spirit. **Amen**

*Celtic Daily Prayer,
Holy Bible,
Hymns and Psalms*

7) LORD GOD,
You are my refuge and my strength,
my shield and my hiding place.

Psalm 91

HP 524 - *Annie Sherwood Hawks (1835-1918)*

I need thee every hour,
most gracious Lord;
no tender voice like thine
can peace afford.

*I need thee, O I need thee;
every hour I need thee!
O bless me now, my Saviour,
I come to thee.*

I need thee every hour,
stay thou nearby;
temptations lose their power
when thou art nigh.

I need thee every hour,
in joy or pain;
come quickly, and abide,
or life is vain.

I need thee every hour;
teach me thy will,
and thy rich promises
in me fulfil.

Lord GOD, I/we commend to your
gracious care:

Your church...
Your world...
All who need your healing touch...
All who need your guidance...
All who need your love in Jesus...
All who need hope...
All who need to know you are
there...
All who doubt your existence...
All who are afraid...
All who are oppressed...

Silence

To you gracious GOD, we offer our prayer,
through your Son Jesus Christ, in the life-
giving Spirit, be all honour and glory and
power forever and ever. **Amen**

Caim (encircling) Prayer

Celtic Daily Prayer

Circle me/us, LORD.
Keep comfort near and
discouragement afar.
Keep peace within and turmoil out.

Circle me/us, LORD.
Keep protection near
and danger afar.

Circle me/us, LORD.
Keep hope within
keep despair without.

Circle me/us, LORD.
Keep light near
and darkness afar.

Circle me/us, LORD.
Keep peace within
and anxiety without.

The eternal Father, Son and Holy Spirit
shield me/us on every side. **Amen**

Silence

LORD our GOD,
at the ending of this day, and in the
darkness and silence of this night, cover us
with healing and forgiveness, that we may
take our rest in peace;
through Jesus Christ your Son, our Saviour
and LORD. **Amen**

*Celtic Daily Prayer, Holy Bible,
Hymns and Psalms, Methodist Worship Book*

8) I will lie down and take my rest;
for you alone, LORD, make me dwell in
safety. Into your hands I commend my
spirit, for you have redeemed me, O
LORD, GOD of truth.

Psalm 4:8, 31:5

LORD when everything trembles
give me a firm foundation;
faith founded on facts,
prayers founded on your presence,
life founded on your love,
peace founded on your power.

David Adam

Psalm 23

HP 69

The King of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never.
I nothing lack if I am his, and he
is mine forever.

Where streams of living water flow,
my ransomed soul he leadeth;
and where the verdant pastures
grow, with food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish, oft I strayed,
but yet in love he sought me;
and on his shoulder gently laid,
and home, rejoicing, brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill,
with thee, dear Lord, beside me;
thy rod and staff my comfort still,
thy cross before to guide me.

Thou spread'st a table in my sight;
thy unction grace bestoweth;
and oh, what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!

And so through all the length of
days, thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy
praise within thy house forever.

*Henry Williams Baker (1821-77)
based on Psalm 23*

LORD GOD, the day ends, darkness
descends, now Lord let troubles cease,
let your servant depart in peace.
Labours are over, my task here done,
now LORD your victory be won.

LORD GOD, I/we offer our prayers to you
this night on behalf of your **church...**, your
world... and **my/ourselves...**: I/we pray
for:

Those in need of guidance...
Those who live in lack...
Those in need of refreshment, rest
and restoration...
Those who need to know your
righteousness in Christ Jesus...
Those who fear death and evil...
Those who need to know you are
with them...
Those who need your comfort and
your support...
Those who need your provision...
Those who need your protection...
Those who need to experience
your eternal goodness...
Those who need to be welcomed
into your house (family)...

Pause for quiet personal reflection

While I sleep, O LORD,
let my heart not cease to worship you;
fill my sleep with your presence,
while creation itself keeps watch,
singing psalms with the angels,
and taking up my soul into its paean
(*hymn*) of praise. Through Jesus Christ
your Son, our Saviour. **Amen**

St Gregory of Nazianzus (c.330-389)

Some words based on Psalm 141:2

9) The LORD has granted his loving kindness in the daytime; and now in the night season will I sing of him. Let my prayer be set forth in your sight, O LORD, as incense; and let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice, now and always.

Lancelot Andrews (1555-1626)

HP 642 – vs 1 - 3

Glory to thee, my God, this night,
for all the blessings of the light:
keep me, O keep me, King of kings,
beneath thine own almighty wings.

Forgive me, Lord, for thy dear Son,
the ill that I this day have done;
that with the world, myself, and
thee, I, ere I sleep, at peace may
be.

Teach me to live, that I may dread
the grave as little as my bed;
teach me to die, that so I may
rise glorious at the awful day.

Psalm 27

HP 642 – vs 4 - 5

O may my soul on thee repose,
and with sweet sleep mine eyelids
close; sleep that shall me more
vigorous make to serve my God
when I awake.

When in the night I sleepless lie,
my soul with heavenly thoughts
supply; let no ill dreams disturb my
rest, no powers of darkness me molest.

Light of the world,
Enter into the depths of our lives.
Come into the dark and hidden places.
Walk into the storehouse of our memories.
Hear the hidden secrets of the past.
Plumb the very depth of our being.
Be present through the silent hours,
And bring us safely to your glorious light.

David Adam

O LORD, our light and our salvation,
remove fear far from us, when we are
afraid, be the strength of our lives, be our
confidence and our sure support.

We desire you O LORD, to live in your
presence all the days of our lives, to
behold your awesome beauty, and to learn
of your ways.

LORD hide us in your pavilion, protect us
in the secret place of your presence, and
keep our feet on your firm foundation.

Never leave us nor forsake us, O GOD of
our Salvation – do not let us lose heart, let
us see your goodness that lasts for-ever
and ever.

Silence

O LORD GOD, we commend to you this
night your church... your world... loved
ones and friends... through your Son,
Christ Jesus, our Saviour and LORD:

Thank you Lord for hearing us and
answering our prayers! **Amen**

Rev'd Audrey D Browne

HP 642 – vs 6

Praise God, from whom all
blessings flow; praise him, all
creatures here below; praise him
above, ye heavenly host: praise
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Thomas Ken (1637-1711) alt.

10) LORD GOD, at the ending of this day, here I am LORD; in your presence I am still.

Silence

Colossians 1:9-18

Some prayers based on Paul's Letter to the Colossians
Response after each verse:

Risen and exalted Christ,
Keep us in your love.

LORD, GOD, at the ending of this day we pray for your church, that we may be encouraged and united in love. Help us not to judge one another by external things, but to seek the way of Christ in our lives and in the world.

We pray for members of our church family (and others known to us) who are ill in body, soul or spirit, that they may be made strong by the strength that flows from Christ's glorious power, so that they may endure all things with patience, and joyfully give thanks to God the Father, who will enable us to appear with Christ in Glory.

LORD, we give you all the things in our lives and in the world that make us worry and distrust your ability to take care of us (political uncertainty, issues of justice around the world, personal and family issues, or the coronavirus...), we give you all the things that seek to pull us away from you and hinder your transforming work in our lives.

We pray for your creation spoilt by human behaviour... oceans, rivers, forests and fields, animals and plants, the atmosphere..., LORD, we pray for the time when you will bring in your renewal to the whole created order, so that all creation may come and worship at your glorious feet.

We pray for families everywhere, that they may know the joy and peace of having Christ at the centre of their home.
We pray for those who create work and for those to whom we are held accountable at work.

We pray for those who have challenges at work, and for those who have no work.
Give us all a sense of purpose in everything we do, so that each of us regardless of socio-economic status may know meaning in our lives.

We give thanks for those who have gone before us in Christian hope, may we learn from their good example of faith in Jesus Christ. We pray for those on their journey out of this world, that they may be welcomed into the eternal hope you have secured for us in heaven.

LORD, GOD, may your WORD find foundation in our lives, so we may learn your wisdom and grow and mature in the faith of Jesus. Clothe us with the virtuous garments of your mercy, kindness, patience, forgiveness and love, so that the peace of Christ may rule in our hearts with all thankfulness: and, may all that we are, and aspire to be, bring glory and honour to your Son, Jesus Christ our Saviour and LORD. **Amen**

Rev'd Audrey D Browne

StF 78 – *Henry Smith (b. 1952)*

Give thanks with a grateful heart
Give thanks to the Holy One
Give thanks because He's given
Jesus Christ, His Son (rept.)

And now let the weak say,
"I am strong"
Let the poor say, "I am rich
Because of what the Lord
has done for us" (rept.);
Give thanks.

GOD, we offer up to you the hours of this night. Keep us in the peace and safety of your Son Jesus Christ, through the blessed Holy Spirit. **Amen**

11) LORD GOD, as the night watches are upon us, so also, let your loving kindness watch over us to keep us safe.

Psalm 63:3-7

Song: *Maranatha Music*

Thy loving-kindness
Is better than life
Thy loving kindness
Is better than life
My lips shall praise Thee
Thus will I bless Thee
I will lift up my hands unto Thy name.

I lift my hands up
Unto Thy name
I lift my hands up
Unto Thy name
My lips shall praise Thee
Thus will I bless Thee
I will lift up my hands unto Thy name.

LORD GOD, your loving kindness is precious to me. My life is nothing without you! For you satisfy every longing of my soul. I remember your faithfulness when I lie down; your goodness watches over me. My soul rejoices under your protecting wings.

Rev'd Audrey D Browne

I am no longer my own but yours.

Your will, not mine, be done in all things, wherever you may place me in all that I do and in all that I may endure; when there is work for me and when there is none; when I am troubled and when I am at peace. Your will be done when I am valued and when I am disregarded; when I find fulfilment and when it is lacking; when I have all things, and when I have nothing. I willingly offer all I have and am to serve you, as and where you choose.

Methodist Covenant Prayer (abridged)

Prayers: *Rev'd Audrey D Browne*

GOD, we give you thanks for the gift of water, and we pray for those who don't have this precious gift...

GOD, we pray for your church, that you will help us to be salt and light in the world, adding flavour and shining the light of Christ in the dark places of the world...

GOD, we pray for those who need your joy and healing, that by your Holy Spirit you will pour out your oil and wine in their lives.

GOD, we give you thanks that you have given us the keys to the kingdom, and that our names are written down in the Lamb's Book of Life...

GOD, we pray that your kingdom will be seen and felt in the everyday circumstances of our lives, bringing new life and vitality in the barren places of the world and our lives...

GOD, we pray that the seed of your word will grow in our hearts, and bring forth an abundant harvest of righteousness, joy and peace...

GOD, we pray for those for whom life seems complicated, and who are finding life difficult for whatever the reason. May they know your loving care, comfort and sustenance in their lives...

GOD, thank you for your daily provision in our lives, whether great or small... thank you that you are the same GOD, yesterday, today and for evermore.... through Christ Jesus your Son, our Saviour. **Amen**

Silence

LORD GOD, send peaceful sleep to refresh our tired bodies. May your help always renew us and keep us strong in your service. We ask this through Christ our LORD.

The Liturgy of the Hours

12) Find rest, O my soul, in GOD alone: for my hope comes only from GOD, whose goodness is everlasting.

HP 566 - *Martin Rinkart (1586-1649)*

Now thank we all our God,
with hearts and hands and voices,
who wondrous things has done,
in whom his world rejoices;
who from our mothers' arms
has blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.

Psalm 136

O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us;
and keep us still in grace,
and guide us when perplexed;
and free us from all ills,
in this world and the next.

GOD, our Father, we thank you for this day.

Thank you for those who have given us guidance, counsel, advice and good example.

We thank you for those in whose company the sun shone even in the rain, and who brought a smile to our faces even when things were grim.

We thank you for those in whose company the frightening things were not so alarming, and the hard things not so difficult.

We thank you for those whose presence saved us from falling into temptation, and enabled us to do the right thing.

We thank you for those whom it is a joy to be with, and in whose company the hours pass all too quickly. We thank you for happy times to be to us for ever happy memories.

We thank you for the times of failure to keep us humble, and to make us remember how much we need you.

Most of all we thank you for Jesus Christ, who in the daytime is our friend and our companion, and who in the night is our pillow and our peace.

Hear this evening thanksgiving for your love's sake.

William Barclay (1907-1978)

Silence

All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given;
the Son, and him who reigns
with them in highest heaven;
the one eternal God,
whom earth and heaven adore;
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore.

LORD, I/we thank you for your **church...**
for the **world...** for **all those I/we love...**
and for all that you have blessed me/us with...

Lighten our darkness,
LORD we pray;
and in your mercy defend us
from the perils and dangers of this night;
for the love of your only Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen**

The Alternative Service Book 1980

13) LORD of both light and dark, we raise to you our evening prayer. Be present in these silent hours and keep us in your gracious care.

Psalm 61

Song – based on Psalm 61

Hear my cry, Oh Lord,
attend unto my prayer.
From the end of the earth
will I cry out to Thee.
When my heart is overwhelmed,
lead me to the Rock,
that is higher than I...
that is higher than I...

For Thou hast been,
a shelter for me.
And a strong tower,
from the enemy.
When my heart is overwhelmed,
lead me to the Rock,
that is higher than I...
that is higher than I...

A reflective prayer based on Psalm 61

LORD GOD,

You hear me when I call to you,
for there is no distance in prayer.
You hear me from the farthest end of the earth. You take notice of my cry.

When my heart is overcome with anguish,
I will run to you for shelter, my high rock.
For you are a strong tower, a mighty fortress in times of adversity.

I will stay in your protective presence,
I will trust in your loving embrace.
For you O LORD are my hiding-place,
my Sanctuary, my Rock, my GOD.
You are my heritage, O my GOD
I fear your name.

I want to live in your presence
all the days of my life,
surrounded by your mercy and truth for-
ever and ever...

Rev'd Audrey D Browne

Silence

LORD, thank you for the gift of your WORD...,
I/we ask for the healing of this nation
and all the nations of the earth...
LORD, teach the nations to govern
themselves with honesty, respect for
one another and sensitivity to the
needs of the poor and the vulnerable...
LORD, may we know your presence in
the daily living of our homes and in all
our relationships...
LORD, we pray for those who have lost
trust in your WORD, for those who find
your WORD difficult to accept or to
understand...
LORD, we pray for those who are sick
or sad in body mind or spirit, for those
who are in trouble or in distress...
We give thanks for all those who have
completed their earthly life in faith...
Thank you LORD, for the glorious hope
you have set before us... and for
hearing our prayer through your Son
Jesus Christ, our Saviour. **Amen**

Rev'd Audrey D Browne

Silence

Lighten our darkness,
we beseech thee, O LORD;
and by thy great mercy
defend us from all perils
and dangers of this night;
for the love of thy only Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen**

Charles Villiers Stanford

14) LORD GOD, you are my glory and the lifter-up of my head. The night is here LORD, I will rest securely in you my GOD, my shield and my defender.

Psalm 3

Song – based on Psalm 3:3

Thou, O Lord, art a shield about me
You're my glory
You're the lifter of my head
Thou, O Lord, art a shield about me
You're my glory
You're the lifter of my head

Hallelujah
Hallelujah
Hallelujah
You're the lifter of my head

Hallelujah
Hallelujah
Hallelujah
You're the lifter of my head
The Maranatha! Singers

Some Brief thoughts based on Psalm 3:

David wrote Psalm 3 when he fled from his son Absalom. Although threatened by many foes, the Psalmist prays confidently to the LORD, who never fails to hear and answers his prayer. The Psalmist says that GOD is the source of his glory and dignity – attributing all that he is and has achieved to GOD.

This night I pray for:

The hungry...
The refuge...
The prisoner...
The exploited...
The marginalised...
The homeless

Silence

Those without work...
Those persecuted for their faith...
Those treated unfairly because of their unchangeable external features...
Those who find it difficult to fit in...

Silence

The lonely...
The depressed...
The sad...
The rejected...

Silence

LORD GOD, thank you for all the resources you have given us in the world, enough for all to have their needs met adequately.

LORD GOD, help me to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with you, my God.

Micah 6:8

LORD GOD, help me to let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Amos 5:24

LORD GOD, help me to love you with my whole heart, and soul, and strength and mind; and my neighbour as myself.

Luke 10:27

For you LORD GOD are a sun and shield; you bestow favour and honour. No good thing will you withhold from those who walk uprightly.

Psalm 84:11

Our Father...

LORD, of both light and dark, I commend to you this night; all my thoughts, words, actions and feelings. As I take my rest this night, be my shield and my glory, and the lifter-up of my head at morning light: through Jesus Christ your Son. **Amen**

15) This night, O LORD, we raise a song of thanksgiving to you. We offer up the day that has passed as a sacrifice of praise to your name, O GOD of our Salvation.

Jonah 2 - Jonah's Prayer

Song based on the Psalms

I cried to the Lord,
in my distress,
I cried to the Lord,
and he heard my prayer,
he lifted me up,
and now I am free,
O glory to God,
he lifted me.

Some Brief thoughts on Jonah's song of Praise

Jonah's prayer is a Psalm of thanksgiving to GOD for his deliverance from the depth of the sea. He recalls his 'prayer for help' as he was sinking into the depths of the sea. Jonah feels he deserves death, but he is grateful for the extraordinary mercy YAHWEH (GOD) has shown to him. The language of Jonah's Song of Praise suggests that Jonah was perhaps familiar with the Psalm Writings of Israel.

Silence

LORD GOD, I/we offer up our prayers to you this night on behalf of your **church...**, the **world...**, our **loved ones... ourselves...**
We pray for:

Those who are in distress...
Those whose livelihoods are at sea...
Those who are in danger at sea...
Those who feel alone and isolated...

Silence

Those who feel forgotten by GOD...
Those who feel threatened by the circumstances of life...
Those who feel their life and strength are ebbing away by sickness and disease...
Those who are dying and those who are bereaved...
Those in the depths of despair...

Silence

Those whose life circumstances are weighing them down...
Those who choose to look to GOD amidst their engulfing circumstances...
Those who remember GOD'S love in the midst of life's perilous circumstances...

LORD GOD, help me to cling to you and to the grace you offered the world in your Son Jesus Christ. I will offer my sacrifice of thanksgiving to you and will not forget your deliverance. For my salvation comes only from you, O my God and my Saviour!

Rev'd Audrey D Browne

ALMIGHTY GOD,
who, by the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, dispelled the darkness of the world and gave light to all peoples; protect us as the darkness descends, and keep us ever in your light, and continue to enlighten our lives by your great glory. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen**

David Adam

The glory of the LORD shines upon you/us, and scatter the darkness from before your/our path, that you/we may ever walk in his light. **Amen**

David Adam

16) LORD GOD, tonight, I/we thank you for your unfailing love and faithfulness. I/we offer up praise unto your matchless name, for you alone make me/us lie down in peace.

Psalm 100

Song (*chorus*)

The Lord is good,
His mercy endureth for ever and
ever, I will stand up and sing praise
hallelujah, for I know the Lord is
good.

Steve Brock

Psalm 100 is a Psalm of thanksgiving that calls GOD'S people to glad worship of YAHWEH who is Israel's Maker, and, to bless YAHWEH for his goodness.

OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

Teach us to pray

The Lord's Prayer – Matthew 6:9-15

By Rev'd Michael Youngson

Our heavenly Father,
like a Mother and a Father you love
us unconditionally.

We worship your name, you are
holy and worthy of all our praise.
Your kingdom come, your realm of
love, peace and wisdom be real,
here and now.

Your will be done, on earth as it is
in heaven, help your children in the
way of obedience, that creation
will be restored.

Give us each day our daily bread,
grant us food for our bodies, your
word for our spirits, and your Son's
body and blood for our growth in
grace.

Forgive us our wrong doing, your
generous grace is more than we
deserve.

As we forgive those who have
wronged us, help us to reflect your
mercy and to love our enemies.
Do not bring us to a time of trial,
and protect those we love.

Rescue us from evil, help us to
fight for justice and good in the
world.

For the kingdom, the power and
the glory are yours.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, our
Saviour. **Amen**

LORD GOD, tonight **I/we pray:**

- For the church... its members, lay-leaders, ministers and ecumenical partners...
- For the world... political leaders, local authority, community leaders and all who make decisions that affect the lives of all citizens...
- For those who go to bed hungry, wake up hungry and do not know where the next meal will come from...
- For those who are spiritually hungry and thirsty...
- For those who feel offended by others' words and action.
- For those who deliberately offend others and for those who inadvertently offend others...
- For those we find it difficult to get along with and to love...
- For those we find it easy to love and get along with...
- For those going through difficult times in their lives...
- For those who speak up for the poor, the weak and the voiceless...

Silence

LORD GOD, send peaceful sleep to refresh our tired bodies. May your help always renew us and keep us strong in your will for us. We ask this through Christ our LORD. **Amen**

The Liturgy of Hours (adapted)

17) LORD GOD, tonight I/we will rest securely in your protection, for you are my/our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

Psalm 46

Hymn - vs 1 & 4 – Martin Luther

A mighty fortress is our God,
a bulwark never failing;
our helper He amid the flood
of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
doth seek to work us woe;
his craft and power are great,
and armed with cruel hate,
on earth is not his equal.

That Word above all earthly
powers,
no thanks to them, abideth;
the Spirit and the gifts are ours,
thru Him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go,
this mortal life also;
the body they may kill;
God's truth abideth still;
His kingdom is forever.

Some Brief thoughts on Psalm 46

The impression one gets is that Psalm 46 is referring to an event still quite vivid in the minds of the people. It speaks of the sure confidence of those who trust in the LORD in the midst of physical dangers; and specifically, the security that comes from GOD'S presence in the midst of the dangers of war. There is an invitation to reflect on GOD'S activity in the earth. This Psalm was the inspiration for Luther's hymn (*see above*). God is indeed a strong and unshakeable castle!

LORD GOD, our refuge and strength, you are always with us. We have no need to fear the troubling situations of life, for your encompassing presence surrounds us.

We will delight in your constant outpouring and refreshing blessings that make our hearts glad, and allow us to flourish like a beautiful spring garden.

At the break of day, O GOD, we will rise securely in your help and your deliverance, for we are confident that you will dispel the darkness of night, and usher in the light of dawn. For the LORD ALMIGHTY is with us, YAHWEH, the HOLY ONE of Israel is our fortress.

We are confident LORD that we will see your activity in the earth and in our lives. You GOD will one day make war to cease, when you bring the fullness of your kingdom of peace and harmony upon the earth.

One day LORD, you will say to the nations "Enough! For it is time to acknowledge that the LORD is GOD – I will be exalted above the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

LORD GOD, we commend to you tonight all who are affected by the ravages of war, conflict and hostility, that you LORD ALMIGHTY, will be with them and be their unshakeable fortress. **Amen**

Rev'd Audrey D Browne (based on Psalm 46)

O Almighty and Everlasting God, how terrible is this world, it openeth its mouth to swallow me up, and I have so little trust in Thee. How weak is the flesh – and Satan how strong! Faithful and Unchangeable God, help me against all the wisdom of the world. In no man do I vainly put my trust, all of man is uncertain, all that cometh of man fails. Hearest Thou me not? Art Thou dead? No, Thou only hidest Thyself. Thou hast chosen me for this work. Act then O God! Stand at my side, for the sake of Thy Well-Beloved Jesus Christ, Who is my Defence, my Shield and my Strong Tower.

Martin Luther (1483-1545 – German Reformer)

Preserve us, O Lord, in our waking hours, and guard us throughout the night, that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace. **Amen**

18) LORD GOD, although weeping may last throughout this night, I know that your joy will rise in my heart as the morning sun rises in the sky.

Psalm 30

Song – based on Psalm 30

Weeping may endure for a night,
but joy comes in the morning *(rept.)*.

Hallelujah for the joy,
Hallelujah for the tears,
Hallelujah for the joy,
joy comes in the morning.

Some brief thoughts

Psalm 30 is a Song of Praise publicly celebrating the LORD'S deliverance from the threat of death – probably brought on by illness (vs 2 'you healed me').

In 1 Chronicles 22:1-6, David dedicated both property and building materials for the temple, and may well have intended for Psalm 30 to be used at the dedication of the temple itself. If this is the case, vs 2-3 of Psalm 30 would refer to David's predicament in 1 Chronicles 21:17-30. Perhaps 'favour' in vs 5 of Psalm 30, is an echo of 'mercy' in 1 Chronicles 21:13; and, vs 6 of Psalm 30 would refer to David's sin of misplaced trust in a large superior army.

In such communal setting, the "I" of this Psalm becomes the corporate "person" of Israel - a common mode of speaking in the Old Testament. A commitment to praise underpins this Psalm.

(vs 1-3) give an introductory announcement of the occasion for praise. (vs 4-5) give a call to the gathered worshippers. (vs 6-10) give some expended recollection of GOD'S gracious deliverance. (vs 11-12) GOD answers – and, David vows to praise GOD for ever.

(Some prayers based on Psalm 30)

LORD GOD, my Deliverer, this night I pray for those who feel trapped by the situations of life, that they may know your deliverance in their lives.

LORD GOD, I called to you and you answered me; I pray for those afflicted by illness, that they may know the touch of your healing hands.

LORD GOD, I cried to you from the depths of despair, and you heard me and brought me back from the brink of death. I pray for those who feel their lives ebbing away by the distresses of life, that they may know that you hear the cries of those in distress.

Thank you Lord that your anger lasts only for a moment, but your favour lasts a lifetime. I pray for those who weep this night that they may know your joyous favour as morning comes.

LORD GOD, I pray for those who put their trust in others or things or status. I pray that they may know that true security comes only from you, and that it is only your favour that will cause them to stand firm.

Do not hide your face from me, O GOD, lest I am dismayed, but be merciful to me and help me. For you, GOD, can turn around misfortune and clothe me with your everlasting joy, so I can praise your name for ever and ever.

Amen

Rev'd Audrey D Browne

This night may Christ our Healer, Deliverer and Saviour scatter the darkness before us, that we may rest in peace and rise as children of the light, now and always.

Amen

19) LORD GOD of Israel, tonight I make my prayer to you. I offer up to you this day, and commend to you the hours of this night; keep me in your gracious care until the morning light.

The Prayer of Jabez – 1 Chronicles 4:9-10

Jabez was honoured more than his brothers; and his mother named him Jabez, saying, "Because I bore him in pain." Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, "Oh that you would bless me and enlarge my border, and that your hand might be with me, and that you would keep me from hurt and harm!" And God granted what he asked.

Some brief thoughts

We don't usually read the genealogies in the Bible; however, the Biblical Narrator often inserts brief historical notes into the genealogical record for a reason. Whenever there is an interjection in the Biblical genealogical record, it's because the Narrator wants us to take notice of something – Jabez literally means *he gives pain* – but he got special attention because of his faith. He did not allow his birth circumstances to dictate his destiny.

HP 683 – *Ray Palmer (1808-87)*

My faith looks up to thee
Thou Lamb of Calvary
Saviour divine, now hear me while I pray,
take all my guilt away, O let me from this
day, be wholly thine

While life's dark maze I tread,
and griefs around me spread
be thou my guide, bid darkness turn to
day, wipe sorrow's tears away, nor let me
ever stray, from thee aside

May thy rich grace impart,
strength to my fainting heart,
my zeal inspire; as thou hast died for me,
O may my love to thee, pure, warm, and
changeless be, a living fire.

Some prayers based on Jabez' prayer

O GOD of Israel, to you this night I lift up my voice; hear the cries of my heart and answer me.

Bless me and enlarge my territory — so that my life can be a witness to your grace and mercy. I pray for those who feel that they lack progress in their lives, that you will open up doors of opportunity for them to enter, so they too can be a blessing to their families, communities, and the world.

Let your hands be with me — that I may know your leading in my life even in the difficult times, so I may fulfil your purpose for me. I pray for those who don't know your leading, that by your Holy Spirit you will reveal yourself to them, by dreams, conversations and the everyday circumstances of life, and draw them unto yourself.

Keep me from harm — in body, soul and spirit. Hide me under your protection for your tender mercy's sake. I pray for those in danger, that you will spread your protecting wings over them, that they may know your safety, and draw them unto yourself, that they may know that it is you who is watching over them.

So that I will be free from pain — that I may know your comforting and loving embrace at all times. I pray for those who don't know your love in Jesus Christ..., for those who don't know your peace which passes all understanding... for those who don't know your unmerited favour in their lives..., That they may encounter you in their lives in both ordinary and extraordinary ways.

God please grant me this request—for your mercy's sake, through your Son Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

Rev'd Audrey D Browne

To you merciful GOD, I offer my prayer, trusting in your tender mercies to keep me safe until the day breaks and the sun rises. Through Jesus Christ your Son who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

20) LORD GOD, my heart rejoices in you this night, for you have heard my prayer and delivered me. To you I offer my praise, my Rock and my GOD.

1 Samuel 2:1-11

Song - Songwriter: Lenny Leblanc

There is none like You, no one else can touch my heart like You do, I could search for all eternity long, and find, there is none like You.

There is none like You, no one else can touch my heart like You do, I could search for all eternity long, and find, there is none like You,

There is none like You, no one else can touch my heart like You do, I could search for all eternity long, and find, there is none like You.

I could search for all eternity long and find, there is none like You.

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Some brief thoughts on Hannah's Prayer

Hannah's Song of Praise and Thanksgiving to GOD sets forth the ways of GOD as she understands GOD; and, contains her theology of GOD in the form of praise and thanksgiving. She speaks prophetically at a time when Israel was about to enter an important new period of its history, with the establishment of kingship, through her son Samuel. The source of Hannah's joy is not in her child, but in GOD who answered her prayer for a child.

LORD GOD, I delight in your deliverance, you are the transcendent GOD – the GOD who knows.

LORD GOD, you arm the weak with strength and provide food for the hungry. You open the barren womb and fill the empty with good things.

LORD GOD, you have power over life and death, you make rich and you make poor, you humble and you exalt.

LORD GOD, the earth belongs to you, you guard the feet of your people, and you silence those who are against you.

LORD GOD, it is by your favour and not by strength or might that one prevails, for you bring down all who oppose you.

LORD GOD, you will judge the ends of the earth, you give strength to those who do your will, and you exalt those you choose.

Rev'd Audrey D Browne

Joni Eareckson Tada (1949)

LORD Jesus, the weaker I am in this wheelchair, the harder I lean on you. And the harder I lean on you, the stronger I discover you to be. Keep my heart strong, my soul stirred, my vision clear and my enthusiasm fresh to help others know you this way. Help me to boast in my affliction so that others might delight in theirs. Your power and peace is worth it all; and your glory, worth more. Jesus, in short, I would rather be in this chair knowing you this way, than on my feet without you. And at journey's end, may I testify, one more time, that your grace was enough. **Amen**

Joni was born in Baltimore, Maryland; she was paralysed by a car accident in 1967.

She's a writer, singer and convention speaker; she inspired millions to trust in God and his sovereignty.

This night, may the GOD of life be with me/us, the GOD of love protect me/us, the GOD of light go before me/us, this night until morning light: through Christ Jesus his Son, our Saviour and LORD. **Amen**

David Adam (adapted)

21) In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we raise our evening prayer to you, our Triune GOD, who loves us in his Son Jesus Christ.

Psalm 51

HP 697 – vs 1, 3, 4

Just as I am, without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed for me
And that Thou bid'st me come to thee
O Lamb of God, I come, I come

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind
Sight, riches, healing of the mind
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find
O Lamb of God, I come, I come

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve
Because Thy promise I believe
O Lamb of God, I come, I come

Charlotte Elliott (1789-1871)

Some brief thoughts on Psalm 51

"You desire truth in the inward being, therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart".

David has acted contrary to what GOD desires and to what God has been teaching him deep within. David knows that GOD wants him to have moral integrity, but he is ever conscious of the tension within him. So, it is with a deep sense of personal shortcoming that David yearns for God's truth and wisdom deep within – to be right with God and to be steadfast in that rightness.

A Prayer from E.B. Pusey (1800-82)

Be not weary of me, good LORD, and let me not be weary of myself, or of trying to conquer myself.

I am all weakness. But Thou art almighty, and can put forth Thy strength perfectly in my weakness. Make me truly to hate all which You hate, fervently to love all which You love; make me truly sorry, for love of You, that I have so often offended You, and so mightily transform me, through Your grace, that I may no more offend You; through Jesus Christ. **Amen**

Silence

Some prayers based on Psalm 51

GOD, your unfailing love reaches me even in times of weakness, and your compassion never fails. You are proved right when you speak, and just when you judge. You search for truth deep within me and you want to teach me wisdom. GOD you will not despise the sacrifice of a broken spirit.

- I pray for those who live under the burden of shame and guilt...
- Those who need your mercy and pardon...
- Those who don't know you love them and want to forgive them...
- Those who need to be restored and reconcile to you and others...
- Those who need joy and a willing spirit to sustain them...
- Those who need to be refreshed and renewed by you...
- Those who need to know what it's like to sing your praise again...
- Those who need to see their work and life prosper to your praise, O GOD...

Rev'd Audrey D Browne

GOD our creator, by whose mercy and might the world turns safely into darkness and returns to light: we give into your hands our unfinished tasks, our unsolved problems and our unfulfilled hopes, knowing that only those things which you bless will prosper. To your great love and protection we commit each other, and all for whom we have prayed, knowing that you alone are our sure defender; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

The Book of Common Worship, Church of South India, (adapted)