

Liturgies

*Prayers, meditations and texts
for worship and celebrations in Peace Church*



Peace Church United Methodist



The English-Speaking Methodist Congregation in Munich

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for worship and celebrations in Peace Church*

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1. Morning Prayer

All through this day, Jesus,
help us to be quick to praise,
and slow to criticise,
quick to forgive
and slow to condemn,
quick to share
and slow to refuse to give.
Please, grant that we
may help everyone,
and hurt no one, and find our true joy
in living for others, not for ourselves.
Amen.



2. Morning Prayer: I Freely Offer This Day Into Your Care

Lord God,
I gladly receive this day from you,
it is your gift to me.

I look intently.
Beyond the world of men and women,
I see a beauty that is for me,
and I am blessed.

I listen deeply.
Behind the noise that crowds in
and drowns out,

I hear a gentle silence that is for me,
and I am blessed.

May all I do this day,
all I speak,
and all I think,
be acceptable to you.

May I deal gently with those I meet,
just as you have dealt gently with me.

Lord God,
I freely offer this day into your care,
it is my gift to you.
Amen.

3. A Short And Simple Worship For All Times

Music



Opening Prayer

(All) Lord God,
I gladly receive this day from you,
it is your gift to me.

I look intently.
Beyond the world of men and women,
I see a beauty that is for me,
and I am blessed.

**I listen deeply.
Behind the noise that crowds in
and drowns out,
I hear a gentle silence that is for me,
and I am blessed.**

**May all I do this day,
all I speak,
and all I think,
be acceptable to you.**

**May I deal gently with those I meet,
just as you have dealt gently with me.**

**Lord God,
I freely offer this day into your care,
it is my gift to you.
Amen.**

Song: Lord, listen to your children praying...

Prayer of Approach

Lord, let us not dwell in the past,
nor worry about the future.
We cannot undo what is done.
We cannot foresee what will come.
Let us instead dwell in your peace,
love and be loved,
heal and be healed.
We give the past to you
and rest in your forgiveness.
We give the future to you
and rest in your love.
We live in your light,
open our eyes that we may see.
We live in your love,
let your love flow through us,
to the fulfilment of your kingdom. **Amen.**

Bible Reading & Sharing Thoughts on It

Song: Brother, sister, let me serve you...

A statement of interdependence
*(Spoken in turns by those individuals who would
like to do so)*

I do not stand alone
but with others to support me

I will stand my ground
silence

I do not see the way
but with others to walk with me
I can make my path
silence

I do not possess the truth
but with others to witness
to what they know
I will be able to discern what is right
silence

I cannot master all skills
but with others
who will lend their accomplishments
I can do enough
silence

I cannot carry every burden
but with others to share it
I may bear my own load
silence

I cannot meet all needs
but with others to nourish and replenish me
I will be able to give enough
silence

I do not have limitless choice
but with others to consult
I will make my own choices gladly
silence

I will not always be consistent
but with others to laugh with me
I will regain my equanimity
silence

I am not invincible
but with others to reach out a hand
I may learn from my mistakes and start again
silence

I cannot be perfect
but with others to make up the shortfall
of my imperfections
I can be content to be good enough.

Amen.

Music

Blessing

From where we are to where God needs us.
From the security of what we know
to the adventure of what God reveals,
to refashion the fabric of this world,

until it resembles the shape of God's
kingdom,
because good things have been prepared
for those who love God.

Go in peace.

You are blessed and can be a blessing.

Amen.

Music

4. Meeting God And Helping To Make God's Dream Come True

Loving God,
we offer ourselves to you and to each other.
We all know your wonderful dream
of an earth where all people
can live together as one big family –
as your family.

No matter who we are
and where we come from,
no matter which colours of skin
or which religions we have,
we all belong to you,
and we belong together.

We dream with you God,
of a world without sadness,
pain and sickness,
of a world without violence and war,
a world where we all share the bread
and live in places which welcome all.

We dream of peace and justice for everyone,
and we give ourselves, our lives, our skills
to you to use them to build up
your kingdom.

You call us, God, and you ask
our commitment.
God, give us the courage
to walk in your son's footsteps.
Give us the energy to stand up for justice,
speak out loud for humanity,
and work genuinely for peace.

And hear us when we pray...

...for the
women, men
and children
around the
world who are
fleeing hunger,
poverty and
war in the hope
for a better and
more secure
life.



We bring before you those who are fleeing
through deserts, mountains and seas.
We pray for those who made it into Europe
and are still facing an uncertain future.
We join in the cry of all those who are
seeking a better world.

God, we commit ourselves
to serve you all our days
with an open heart, an open mind
and an open house.
May we be your people, God,
helping to make your dream come true.

Let us pray:

**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.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
forever and ever.
Amen.**

5. Affirmation of Faith

With Mary we believe...

...that God hopes and works for a world
where all shall be included
in the feast of life,
and that in Christ we see how costly it is
to bring that world about.

We believe that God's strategy for a new
world is to put the poorest first,
and that nothing is more important
for God's people
than to bring the poor good news.

We believe that rich and poor alike
can be generous, wise and creative
because all are made in God's image,
and that all are made poorer
when they are left out.

We believe that loving our neighbours
means working for justice,
so that all have a say
in what happens to them.

We believe that God made the good
earth to sustain and delight us,
and that we are called to take care of it
and enjoy it.

We believe that the God of all creation
is at work beyond all boundaries we set,
making common cause
with all who wish to belong.

We long for a time
when the meek shall inherit the earth
and all who hunger and
thirst after justice
shall be satisfied,
and we believe that, despite the
persistence of evil,
now is always the time
when more good can be done
and we can make a difference.

Amen.



6. God's Home Among The People

A prayer based on Revelation 21

Loving God,
whose home is among the people,
dwell with us and hear us when we pray.

We pray today for those who are lonely.
We hope in the promise that the home of
God will be among people:
that God will dwell with us,
that we will be his people and that
God himself will be with us.
We mention in our hearts those we know
who are lonely or isolated.

God, we believe that you are making
all things new.

We pray for those who are crying;
the sad, the depressed and the anxious.
We hope in the promise that God
will wipe every tear from our eyes.
We mention in our hearts those we know
who are sad and who know tears.
**God, we believe that you are making
all things new.**

We pray for those who are experiencing
the consequences of death,
the bereaved and those who are mourning.
We hope in the promise that death and
mourning will be no more.
We mention in our hearts those we know

who are affected by death and mourning.
**God, we believe that you are making
all things new.**

We pray for those who are in pain,
suffering from illness
either physical or mental.
We hope in the promise that
crying and pain will be no more.
We mention in our hearts those we know
who are ill or in pain.
**God, we believe that you are making
all things new.**

We pray for those who are thirsty for truth,
love and grace;

those who seek God and his life
with earnest hearts.
We hope in the promise that God will give
water to the thirsty without cost
from the spring of the water of life.
We mention in our hearts those we know
who hunger and thirst for God.
**God, we believe that you are making
all things new.**

God, your words are trustworthy and true.
You are the Alpha and the Omega,
the beginning and the end.
And this gives us hope.
Amen.

7. Holy Moments – Pastoral Prayer

Gracious and loving God, we give you
thanks for the holy moments.
...the moments when we meet
as sisters and brothers,
when we enjoy each other's company,
when we proclaim our common faith,
when we baptize children,
and when we share our dreams
of a good world of tomorrow.

We give you thanks for the holy moments
in which we meet you, God, or your angels.
Address us, God, call us out,
as you called out Gideon.
Tell us over and over again
that you are with us.
Let this phrase echo in our hearts
in good times and in bad times.
Let us listen to your words
every moment of our lives.

You were quick, God,
to declare peace and calm to Gideon's fears.
Come to us too,
when we are frightened or confused.
Wrap us in your peace,

and send us your courage and wisdom.

God, we ask you to pour your peace,
courage and wisdom on us,
on your children, and on each and everyone
in this church today.
Send them to the people we love,
and to those who are a challenge to us.
Send them into the dark parts of our lives
and our world.
Send them to the trouble spots,
the battle fields, the making centres
and the tables for negotiation.

Fill the whole wide world with peace.
Let your people pluck up their courage,
and act with wisdom.
This we ask in Jesus' name.
Amen.



8. Biblical Meal

Music

Opening

(From Janet Morley, Bread of Tomorrow)

Nobody will stay hungry tonight.
Because tonight we celebrate
the meeting with the Lord.
Tonight we renew our commitment
as people of God.
Nobody will stay hungry.
Amen.

Song / Music

Prayer

(From Jan Berry, Sheffield)

**God of creation, the earth is yours.
And we thank you
for all its beauty and goodness,
its rich and overflowing provision,
the food we eat, the air we breath,
the friends we love and so much more...**

**But then we have claimed this earth
for our own,
plundered its beauty for profit,
grabbed its resources for ourselves.
God of creation, forgive us.
May we no longer abuse your trust,
but care gently and with justice
for your earth and all its creatures.
Amen.**

Song

Stories of Meals...

(From: The 21st Century Children's Bible)

Water and bread in the desert (Exodus 15)

The people of Israel had just escaped from Egypt.

Dancing and singing they praised God. But a few days later the mood in the Israelite camp changed. Moses had led them into the desert. They went for three days

without finding water. When at last they found some, it was undrinkable.

The people complained, and Moses spoke to God.

"Throw that piece of wood into the water," said God. "Then it will taste sweet." Moses obeyed God and the people drank.

They continued to travel through the desert. It was hot and tiring. There was no food and little water.

"We wish we had died in Egypt!" the people said to Moses. "At least we had plenty of food there."

"Tell everyone that I have heard how much they grumble," God said to Moses. "I will make bread rain from the sky, and I will provide quail for my people to eat. There will be enough for everyone."

That evening, the Israelite camp was full of quail, and the ground was covered in a thin layer of white flakes. It looked like frost. It was the bread God had promised, and it tasted like wafers made of honey. The people called the bread "manna".

The widow's oil (1 Kings 17)

A terrible famine haunted Israel and its people.

"Go to Zarephath," said God to Elijah. "A woman who lives there will provide you with food."

When Elijah reached the gates of the town he saw a woman gathering sticks for firewood. "Please, will you give me some bread and water?" he asked.

"I don't have enough for my own family," she replied. "This wood is to cook one last meal for me and my son before we die."

"Don't be afraid," said Elijah. "Make your meal, only give me some bread as well. God promises that if you do this you will have flour and oil for as long as the famine lasts."

The woman did as Elijah asked. Her flour and oil never ran out. And Elijah stayed there for many days.

Food for all (John 6)

One day Jesus went across Lake Galilee and up into the hills with his friends. A huge crowd followed him there, so he taught them about God's kingdom.

Jesus looked at all the people. There were more than 5,000 men, women and children. They were hungry and they had not eaten because they had been listening to him.

"Do you know where we could buy some bread?" Jesus asked his friend Philip. "It would cost a fortune to buy enough bread for all these people," answered Philip.

Then Andrew, another disciple, noticed a boy in the crowd who was clutching five small barley rolls and two fish. He brought the boy to Jesus. "This lad has some food," he said, "but it won't go very far!"

"Ask the people to sit down," said Jesus. The people sat on the grass. Jesus picked up one of the rolls. "Thank you, God, for this food," he said. Then he began to break it into pieces, and passed it around the people. He did the same with the fish.

Everyone ate until they were full up. There was plenty of food. "Pick up what's left," said Jesus to his friends. They collected twelve baskets full of leftover pieces.

Song

Blessing on the meal

(From Scottish Academic Press: Carmina Gadelica)

**Bless to us, O God,
each thing our eyes see.
Bless to us, O God,
each sound our ears hear.
Bless to us, O God,
each odour that goes through our
nostrils.**

**Bless to us, O God,
each taste that goes to our lips;
each note that goes to our songs;
each ray that guides our way,
each thing that we pursue.**



Song / Music

Meal

We share a meal and make sure that when we take food we serve each other, rather than just looking after ourselves...

Thoughts about food...

We can share our own thoughts on food or use the few pieces of information below...

In Bible times most people grew and prepared their own food. Bread was the most important part of any meal, with fruit, vegetables, some cheese or milk, and perhaps a stew made of beans or lentils.

Most people only ate meat on special occasions. Sharing a meal was a very important part of family or community life; and inviting visitors or people who were journeying to stay at your house and share a meal was a strong tradition carried out by all God's people, however poor.

Bread

In Bible times "to eat bread" meant to have a meal. Bread was the most important food for most people and they baked it fresh every day. Poor people used barley flour, those with more money baked with flour from wheat.

Sometimes dough was shaped into rolls or it was cooked flat. Bread could be made by

putting it on flat stones which were heated by an open fire; there were also simple ovens with fire inside, and when the flames had died down and the sides of the oven were hot, balls of dough were placed inside.

Meat

Flocks of sheep and goats were kept for their milk, for drinking and for making cheese and yogurt, as well as for their meat. For most people meat was for special occasions only. Then it was usually boiled or stewed.

Wine

Most water was not safe to drink. So wine was the everyday drink for adults, and milk for children. Most people grew grapevines which they harvested and made into wine.

Fish

In New Testament times, people who lived near the Sea of Galilee, like Jesus and his friends, ate fresh fish. Some of the fish were salted to preserve them and then dried. This meant that they could keep it for longer.

Vegetables

Lentils, beans, onions, leeks, garlic, cucumbers and avocados were prepared, some cooked, for eating.

Olives

This was one of the most important crops. Olives were eaten for food, but the oil was used for lighting, cooking, medicine and skin care.

Fruit

In the hot, sunny climate, grapes, figs, dates and mulberries grew well. People ate these fresh or dried them and pressed them into cakes.

Eating and drinking together was something very important in the Bible. The Bible is full of stories of people sharing food – the necessary for life.

Jesus often celebrated meals with his friends... they ate and drank and told their stories. They shared their lives...

That is how, shortly before Jesus' death, communion came about – a meal to remember Jesus and his way of loving, living and dying...

Christians from now on should show how life could be on this earth and how the beginning of the kingdom of God felt: and one important thing always was sharing ... Just as we do it tonight.

9. Communion Liturgy: Jesus Was Always The Guest...

Communion Hymn

Invitation

Jesus was always the guest.
In the homes of Peter and Jairus,
Martha and Mary, Joanna and Susanna,
he was always the guest.
At the meal tables of the wealthy
where he pled the case of the poor,

he was always the guest.
Upsetting polite company, befriending
isolated people, welcoming the stranger,
he was always the guest.
But here at this table,
he is the host.
Those who wish to serve him
must first be served by him.
Those who want to follow him
must first be fed by him.
Those who would wash his feet
must first let him make them clean.
For this is the table where God
intends us to be nourished;

this is the time when Christ
can make us new.

Confession and Pardon

**Eternal God,
maker of the skies above,
lowly Christ,
born amidst the growing earth,
Spirit of life,
wind over the flowing waters,
in earth, sea and sky, you are there.
O hidden mystery, sun behind all suns,
soul behind all souls,
in everything we touch,
in everyone we meet,
your presence is around us,
and we give you thanks.
But when we have not touched
but trampled you in creation,
when we have not met
but missed you in one another,
when we have not received
but rejected you in the poor,
forgive us and hear us ask for mercy.**

Hear now the words of Jesus for all who are
truly sorry and seek to renew their lives:
Your sins are forgiven. Go in peace; come
and follow me.

The Peace

The Story of the Last Supper

Blessed is our brother Jesus,
who walks with us the road
of our world's suffering,
and who is known to us
in the breaking of the bread.
On the night of his arrest Jesus took bread
and having blessed it he broke the bread
and gave it to his disciples, saying,
This is my body given to you.
In the same way he took wine
and having given thanks for it
he poured it out
and gave the cup to the disciples, saying,
This cup is the new relationship with God,
sealed with my blood. Take this and share it.

Let us pray:

**Loving God, through your goodness
we have this bread and wine to offer,
which earth has given
and human hands have made.
May we know your presence
in the sharing of this bread,
so that we may know your touch
in all bread, all matter.
We celebrate the life that Jesus has
shared among his community through
the centuries, and shares with us now.
Made one in Christ
and one with each other,
we offer these gifts
and with them ourselves,
a single, holy, living sacrifice.
Amen.**

The Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you,
and also with you.
Lift up your hearts,
we lift them up to God.
Let us give thanks to God,
it is right to give both thanks and praise.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**



Prayer of Consecration

Hear us, O Christ,
and breathe your Spirit upon us
and upon this bread and wine.
May they become for us your body,
vibrant with your life,
healing, renewing and making us whole.
And as the bread and wine
which we now eat and drink
are changed into us,
may we be changed again into you,
bone of your bone, flesh of your flesh,
loving and caring in the world.
Amen.

Giving the Bread and Cup

Look, the body of Christ is broken
for the life of the world.
Here is Christ coming to us
in bread and in wine.
The gifts of God for the people of God.

Share Bread and Grape Juice with
each other

Blessing at the End of Communion

Many grains were gathered together
to make this bread,
many grapes were mixed
to make this wine.
So we who are many, and come from many
places, are one in Christ:
May the peace of Christ be with you.
Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray:
**In gratitude, in deep gratitude for this
moment, this meal, these people
we give ourselves to you.
Take us out to live as changed people
because we have shared the living bread
and cannot remain the same.
Ask much of us, expect much from us,
enable much by us,
encourage many through us.
So, Lord, may we live to your glory,
both as inhabitants of earth
and citizens of heaven.
Amen.**

10. Communion Liturgy: The Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed...

Invitation

Come, people of God,
your hunger is never better satisfied
than at God's table.
Come to enter into unity with one another,
and with all those who seek
the presence of Jesus Christ
through the breaking of bread
and the sharing of wine.
Come and let us confess
what separates us from God
and from one another.

Prayer of Confession

(All) **O loving God,**
as we gather at your table we are aware
that sometimes our love grows cold.
**We come to you
with everything we have:
We bring our chances and possibilities,
we bring our fears,
our faults and our failing.
We bring what we have and what we are,
and we confess our many limitations.
We ask you: forgive us.
Whenever we don't listen to your words
– open us.
Wherever we grow hard toward ourselves
and others – move us.
Whenever our sorrows and fears seem
stronger than your loving care for us –
strengthen our faith.
That is what we ask.**

Words of Assurance

Be sure of this:
God never abandons us.
In Jesus Christ he gives us the living word,
the bread of life, the strength for peace.
We can live new lives and
enrich ourselves and others. Amen.

Passing the Peace

Let us share God's peace with each other
in our own words and with our own signs.

Words of Institution

(Pastor) The Lord Jesus –

***(All)* We believe has risen, light for the world, bread of life.**

on the night when he was betrayed –

**betrayed of love, betrayed of peace
by one of his friends:
there in the Garden of Gethsemane
he betrayed Jesus with a kiss.**

took a loaf of bread, and when he had given
thanks, he broke it –

**even the one who had betrayed him was
given bread, a sign of life:
unworthy in the eyes of others,
Jesus gave him the bread,
he did not break up the friendship.**

and said, this is my body that is for you –

**a piece of bread, the body of Christ,
a small amount of food
that means everything: Jesus Christ,
bread, hope, peace.**

Do this in remembrance of me –

**Yes, we do remember Jesus;
we want to receive him again.**

In the same way he took the cup also after
the supper –

**A cup filled with precious drink:
You shall live! Jesus says.**

saying, this cup is the new covenant in my
blood –

**drinking from the cup:
share the community with Christ,
know that his death was not in vain.
Killed by men, justified by God
he enables us to reconciliation.**

Do this, as often as you drink it, in
remembrance of me. For as often as you eat
this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim
the Lord's death until he comes. Amen.

Please, come. Eat and drink and taste the
kindness of God. Keep his love in your
hearts and minds. Come, the table is
prepared for you.

Breaking the Bread

The bread which we break is a sharing in the
life of Christ. It will strengthen you.

The cup from which we drink is a sharing in
the suffering of Christ. It will give you hope
always.

Sharing the Bread and Cup

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**
The blood of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

**Loving God,
in this place, at this table
we have touched, we have tasted
and we have heard
the signs of your love for us,
grant that we may go away from this
house filled with our love for you
and overflowing with your love
for those who are around us
and who share our lives.
In the name of Jesus: Amen**

11. Foot Washing Prayer

God, we praise you for the way
that again and again
you overwhelm us with your love,
and that you go on reaching down to us
to lift us, to guide our steps,
and to help us to begin all over again.

We praise you for the demonstrations
of your love in Jesus,
for the patterns he shows us,
the ways he opens for us,
for the new way of life
which we can live following him.
So often we are unable to love each other
and we find the cost of caring
too much to bear.

We do not find it easy to forgive those
who have hurt us, let us down
and spoilt our lives.
We do not find it easy to understand
how it is that your love for humankind
is so deep and so real
that there is nothing anyone could do
that would mean you'd stop loving us
and wanting the best for us.
We praise you that your love
is strong and demanding and requires
a strong and courageous response.

God, we praise you for your love in Jesus,
challenging all our definitions,
overturning all our stereotypes.
Wondering, amazed,
in Jesus Christ we see you:
the king of the universe,
washing dirty feet;
the creator of heaven and earth,
hungry, cold, and tired;
the saviour and healer,
wounded with the pain of the world,
the almighty lord,
found with the weak and vulnerable.

God, help all people to be strong in the love
and liberty Jesus has shown us,
so that all can follow the same pattern
of service in weakness:
with the inner security that frees them
from the drive to seek power or recognition;
with the confidence to give those whom
they serve dignity,
and with the patience that does not try to
impose their will on others,
but works and waits for justice
here and everywhere.

God, we ask you that through your spirit
you touch our hearts, our minds, our lives.
God, set us free to be the people
you always meant us to be.
Flood our lives with your love and life.
Amen.

12. Good Friday: Pebble Meditation

Look at your pebble.
See how it is shaped and coloured.
Feel it.
Feel the rough and smooth patches.
Feel whether it is warm or cold.
Feel its weight.
Think of the journey your pebble
has made...
Broken off from a larger piece...
Pounded by the force of the water...
Used to build...
Thrown in anger...

At some point picked up
and brought here...
Now it lies in your hand.

Let the pebble become a way of thinking
of your own journey.
Reflect on how you have been shaped...
...rounded... battered... rubbed off...
What has washed you out?
Marked you? Hurt you?
What weighs hard on you?

Remember your journey...
and offer back to God
the places and times that hurt.
The worn and rough patches, the burdens,

the times when you didn't get it right,
when you failed and made mistakes,
when you went the wrong way,
said the wrong word,
made the wrong decision...

What is it that weighs on you?
...that you would love to give back to God?
If you like, write it on your stone
and give it back to God.
Place it at the foot of the cross...



If you are a child, you may want to paint on
your stone: something colourful and
beautiful – a flower maybe –
and also place it at the foot of the cross.
Come now to the foot of the cross...

Prayer

God in Christ, you travel with us in faith
towards the hard places in our souls.
You know the agony of pain, guilt and hurt.
You know our frightened faces.
You know the frustration and the anger.
You know the sadness
and the grief deep within us.
They are stumbling blocks within ourselves
in our travelling, O God.
We take these stones
and lay them at the foot of the cross
which is able to bear the weight
and the wounding for us. **Amen.**

13. “Remember Me” Prayer

God, in our prayer today,
let us adore and remember the love and care
your son Jesus had for everyone.
We give you thanks for his great example
of sharing with people,
of standing with the outcasts,
the poor and needy of his day.
There were no conditions placed on
who Jesus welcomed and invited,
who he shared with and who he loved.
We give thanks for Jesus' hospitality
and try to be similarly hospitable.

And when we pray we want to pray
for ourselves, for everyone in this church
today, for the whole wide world.
With the stories of Zacchaeus, of Simon,
of the Marys and Judas,
we remember in prayer all those
who have lost their jobs,
or felt that they could no longer, in all
conscience, stay in the job they were doing,
those who have lost friends,
those trying to lead a different life
and those who support them.

We pray for all those who are excluded:
because of their gender
or sexual orientation,
because of their race, colour or creed,
because of their social standing.
We pray for all who have an empty place
at their table:
because of the death of a loved one,
because there has been a family rift,
because someone is in hospital or care.

We pray for all people,
who open their homes to others,
who welcome the stranger,
who give their time to listen to others.
And we pray for all those who despair:
those who, in a split second, made a wrong
choice and live with the consequences;
those who are wrongly imprisoned;
those who take their own lives in despair;
those who cannot accept forgiveness;
those who cannot forgive themselves.

We thank you for your great forgiveness,
and for the uplifting and overwhelming
knowledge that all have a place
at Jesus' table. **Amen.**

14. Easter Prayers – Jesus, we long to see you...

Jesus, we long to see you.
Open our eyes,
as we wonder at your resurrection
and the hope you have given us.
We remember the appearances you made
to those close to you
on that first Easter long ago,
and we pray that our eyes too,
may be opened to your presence.

We long to see you.
And we think of the women
who went to your tomb,
so sad and wanting to be near you,
even in their disillusionment.
You appeared to them in the form of angels,
proclaiming the good news
of your resurrection;
and the women, full of joy, rushed back
to tell the good news.
We offer ourselves this Easter,
and ask for your reassurance
to help us reach out to the communities
in which we live and work.
We pray that we will make a difference
to other people's lives
by sharing all that you have given us;
that, through grace, lives may be changed
by your presence.

We think of Mary
who loved you so much
and took such risks to be close to you.
We think of how you recognised her need to
see you – how you helped her stop weeping
simply by saying her name.
We name before you those we know
to be in special need at this time -
those who are sick, lonely and afraid...
Enfold them with your love and presence.
Be close to each of them,
and to others not known to us
but known to you.

And we think of Thomas,
so full of doubt.
Yet you recognised his need
to be reassured by your presence.
We offer you our concerns for our world.
Sometimes it is hard to see your presence
in events that unfold.
Comfort us and take away our doubt
as we pray for reconciliation
and hope in the world in which we live.

We think of Peter,
the rock on which you built your church,
so full of assurance and commitment
and then so afraid and upset
to have betrayed you.
Yet you appeared to reassure him
of your love
and commanded him to feed your lambs.
We think of the church worldwide
and the church here.
Give us reassurance
of your guiding direction.

Jesus, we long to see you.
We think of Cleopas and his friend
who walked their lonely road to Emmaus,
a journey of sadness
after all the events of Holy Week.
Yet you walked beside them
and shared with them –
opening their eyes to your presence
in the breaking of the bread at supper.
Journey alongside all those
who have lost a loved one.
Fill them with the peace
of the Easter people,
and help them move on in their lives.

Jesus, we long to see you.
And we ask you, let others see you too.
Let them feel your nearness,
and let them be transformed
by your presence in their lives.
Jesus, we long to see you.
And we thank you for your presence
with us now and always.

Amen.

15. With Thomas Here We Stand...

Jesus Christ, here we are
with our gifts and our talents.
We dedicate them to you
and to your amazing way of loving, living,
suffering and rising from the dead.

With Thomas we stand
in doubt, disbelief, and despair.
We often can't see or sense you.
We wish we had the experiences
of the first disciples.
It is not always easy believing in you,
believing in God, believing in his
loving plans for this world.

Many of us identify with Thomas
in his pain and his fear.
Like Thomas we need to be taken seriously
in our pain, because only then
may we experience resurrection.
We see in you hope of new life and
possibilities of change – in our individual
lives, but also for the whole world.

We look at the world and bring before you
its complex sadness:
We bring before you the poor
and the oppressed,
the injustice and the wars worldwide.
We bring before you the millions in the
world who must go hungry today.
We pray for the exploited and marginalized,

the persecuted, the imprisoned,
and the tortured...
We bring before you those disappeared,
abused, enslaved and killed...
We pray for the refugees around the world,
hoping for a better life elsewhere, and then
dying on their way into promised land...
We remember all the regions
torn by war, hate and violence
of which we read in the newspapers daily.
We cannot forget the stories full of cruelty
and inhumanity we come across all the time.

Jesus, we hear your promise
that we are not alone –
even in the darkest moments.
You can work in us and through us.
You can use us and you need us.
So take us, and make us willing followers
of your great dream for all humankind.
Jesus, into your hands
we commend our earth,
ever threatened with disaster,
and all the situations that we have prayed
about, or have remembered in the silence of
our hearts today.

Strengthen our will for peace and justice;
direct and govern the leaders of the nations;
uphold and sustain all persons and
movements that strive for peace and justice;
increase our faith in a world, where 'love
and faith will meet, righteousness and peace
will embrace'. **Amen.**



16. Prayer On The Sunday After Easter

God of love and light,
on this Sunday morning after Easter,
we come to you, singing alleluias,
celebrating new life all around us,
not quite believing it all,
but going along with it, just the same.

We celebrate the doubters
and questioners among us,
who simply keep our faith real,
who demand that we live our believing into
faith that works towards justice and peace,
and making sure that the hungry are
nourished and loved.

We celebrate the saints among us,
whose courageous faith
flies without a safety net,
reminding us that true discipleship
is risky and radical
in the face of a world held hostage by greed,
love of power, and denial.

We are your Easter people, God.
Doubters, saints, sinners, questioners,
spiritual and religious,
who skip, run, and stumble on the journey.
We pray that you might open our ears
and eyes to your call,
Amen.

17. Love And Resurrection Prayer

Christ Jesus, your love and your resurrection
are making our life worth living.
They are giving us light and hope.

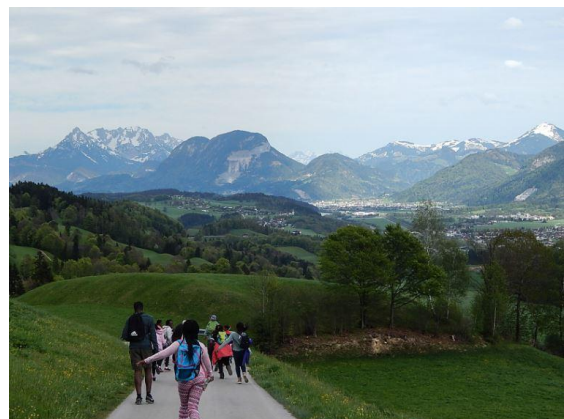
As Mary did, we know pain and fear
and sorrow,
but as she did, we hold fast to a future
beyond all hardships.
We ask you for the ability to carry on
whatever life is asking of us.
We want to live your way and be witnesses
of your overwhelming love.
We belong together
because it is you who connects us.
And in our togetherness lies our strength.

As Mary did, we want to be fearless and
faithful and tell the world that you are alive.
You have guided us through
good times and bad,
and therefore we commit ourselves
to serve you all our days
with an open heart, an open mind
and an open house.

God, today we pray for your world.
We remember with sadness the divisions
and the bitterness in the world,
the fear, the anger, hate and distrust;
and we ask you to help us and others
to bring about a beginning of love and hope.

We pray for the country we live in,
and for the countries we come from.
We pray for the leaders of the nations.
We pray for the governments around the
world, - particularly for those who are
seeking for justice and peace.

God, we pray for the community
in which we live.
We pray for our neighbours,
and we remember all those who are sad,
lonely and afraid.



We pray for all who are angry and disappointed, frustrated, stressed and bitter. We pray for all who are facing losses, who mourn, and whose lives are filled with sadness. We pray for all in any special need.

And we remember all those who are facing times of uncertainty, rejection and fear. We ask for love, care and compassion between people, we ask for hope and joy to fill their lives.

God, we also pray for ourselves – for each and everyone in this church today. We bring in silence before you all the joys and concerns just shared... *silence...*

May your love, God, guard our hearts, rule our minds, and guide our footsteps. **Amen.**

18. God – Carer Of Us All Prayers

Loving God, carer of us all, as we cannot meet in person at the moment we remember each other in prayer, and we light candles for each other.

We pray for the world, your world, and we ask you to send your care into people's lives.

We pray for the community in which we live, and we ask you to fill our lives with your love.

We pray for the nations and countries, the leaders and governments around the world, and we ask you to shower on this world your wisdom.

We pray for all people who are sick and suffering and ask you to wrap them in healing.

We pray for everyone who is sad, lonely or afraid, and we ask you to show them the joy of life.

We pray for all people who are hungry, unemployed or in any other special need. Let them meet people who care for them and share with them. Let them meet us.

We pray for those who are frustrated, stressed or bitter,

and ask you to embrace them with hope.

We pray for all who are angry and disappointed. May they be filled again with laughter and joy.

We pray for people who carry heavy burdens in one way or another. May they receive the strength that only comes from you.

We pray for all those who are facing rejection and injustice. May they be touched by your loving care, and may they be filled with courage and persistence.

We pray for all people who want to or have to change something in their lives but must accept that changes often take longer than expected. Pour out on them your peace and your patience.

Send your care to all the people today. Be our loving parent, call us by our names and make us whole. **Amen.**



19. Worship The God Who Is With Us On The Journey...

Music

Call to Worship

Life is a journey on many different roads
but God is always with us.

Sometimes we lift our faces to the sun
and God is with us.

But then there is the hard journey
through pathways of pain
and fears in dark places,
but God is with us.

Nothing can separate us
from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Amen.

Song or Music

Opening Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

Loving God,
we have come together in this place
with Jesus Christ in our midst.
Our hands are open to receive,
our hearts are open to give,
our minds long to learn,
and our souls reach out to one another,
when we pray:

**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. And lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
forever and ever.**

Amen.

Stories & Readings

All-Age Reading: Food for all

One day Jesus went across Lake Galilee and up into the hills with his friends. A huge crowd followed him there, so he taught them about God's kingdom. Jesus looked at all the people. There were more than 5,000 men, women and children. They were hungry and they had not eaten because they had been listening to him.

'Do you know where we could buy some bread?' Jesus asked his friend Philip. 'It would cost a fortune to buy enough bread for all these people,' answered Philip. Then Andrew, another disciple, noticed a boy in the crowd who was clutching five small barley rolls and two fish. He brought the boy to Jesus. 'This lad has some food,' he said, 'but it won't go very far!'

'Ask the people to sit down,' said Jesus. The people sat on the grass. Jesus picked up one of the rolls. 'Thank you, God, for this food,' he said. Then he began to break it into pieces and passed it around the people. He did the same with the fish. Everyone ate until they were full up. There was plenty of food. 'Pick up what's left,' said Jesus to his friends. They collected twelve baskets full of leftover pieces.

Song or Music

Psalm Reading: Psalm 23

You are my shepherd, oh God;
I need nothing more.
You let me lie down in green pastures;
you lead me beside still waters
where you revive my spirit.
You guide me in the right paths,
for you are true to your name.
Even if I walked through a valley
as dark as death
I would fear nor harm;
for you are at my side.
Your staff and crook give me courage.
You spread a table for me
under the eyes of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup brims over.
Goodness and kindness unfailing

will follow me all my days.
I shall make my home in the house of God
for as long as I shall live. Amen.

Old Testament Reading: Exodus 16

The whole congregation of the Israelites set out from Elim; and Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt. ²The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. ³The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, “I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. ⁵On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days.” ⁶So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, “In the evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, ⁷and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your complaining against the LORD. For what are we, that you complain against us?” ⁸And Moses said, “When the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, because the LORD has heard the complaining that you utter against him—what are we? Your complaining is not against us but against the LORD.”

⁹Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, ‘Draw near to the LORD, for he has heard your complaining.’” ¹⁰And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. ¹¹The LORD spoke to Moses and said, ¹²“I have heard the complaining of the Israelites;

say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’

¹³In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp.

¹⁴When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground.

¹⁵When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat”.

Sharing thoughts and stories of being fed and guided by God...

Music

Prayer

God of healing and transformation,
we hunger and thirst for your abundant life.
We bring you our sorrow
and ask for the bread of joy;
we bring you our despair
and ask for the bread of hope;
we bring you our weariness
and ask for the bread of inspiration.
Meet us here.
We need the bread of heaven to sustain us
as we journey to find our way,
that we may be one with you.
In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen**

Music or Song

Blessing

Bless to us, O God,
the road that is before us.
Bless to us, O God,
the friends who are around us.
Bless to us, O God,
your light which is within us now
and for ever more. **Amen.**

Music

20. Candle Light Prayers

Call to Worship

May the light and peace
of Jesus Christ our Lord be with you.
May we see the light of God
in our darkness.
We wait for God's loving kindness
in the midst of all these people here today.
We praise God's name
which reaches the ends of the earth.
God's hands are filled with saving justice,
and we receive it gladly. Amen.

Music or Song

Introduction

We gather here to ask God
to help us walk in his light.
And we give thanks for Jesus Christ
who came into the world to bring light
into people's darkness, and help them live
their lives in happiness and peace.
In our Candle Light Prayer today let us light
candles against the darkness in this world...

Candle Light Prayer

Loving God, we give you thanks
for your light in this world.
Thank you for candles and flames
which turn darkness into light.
Thank you for moon and stars
which light up the night.
Thank you for the sun
which gives us day and helps us
to see the colours of the rainbow.
Thank you for Jesus,
who came to be a light for the world.
We light candles for the people near and far
who live in dark times, in sad times,
in hard times...

We light a candle against the darkness of
sadness and despair. (*1st candle*)
We light a candle against the darkness of
loss and death. (*2nd candle*)

We light a candle against the darkness of
fear and pain. (*3rd candle*)

We light a candle against the darkness of
homelessness. (*4th candle*)

We light a candle against the darkness of
violence and war. (*5th candle*)

We light a candle against the darkness of
racism and exploitation. (*6th candle*)

We light a candle against the darkness of
hunger and illness. (*7th candle*)

Thank you, God, for sending light
into these and many other areas
of darkness in this world.
Let us be a light to others and fill their lives
with happiness and peace.

And hear us when we pray together:

**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. And lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
forever and ever.
Amen.**

Song

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 9: 22

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a
great light; those who lived in a land of deep
darkness – on them light has shined.*

New Testament Reading: John 8:12

*Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light
of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in
darkness but will have the light of life."*

Music

Let us then bring our faults and failures into
his light and confess them in faith.



Confession and Pardon

Eternal God, maker of the skies above,
lowly Christ, born amidst the growing earth,
Spirit of life, wind over the flowing waters,
in earth, sea and sky, you are there.
O hidden mystery, sun behind all suns,
soul behind all souls,
in everything we touch,
in everyone we meet,
your presence is around us,
and we give you thanks.
But when we have not touched
but trampled you in creation,
when we have not met
but missed you in one another,
when we have not received
but rejected you in the poor,
forgive us and lead us out from darkness
to walk as children of light. **Amen.**

In the tender compassion of our God,
light shines upon those who dwell in
darkness and shadow, and will guide their
feet into the way of peace.
Hear now the words of Jesus
for all who are truly sorry
and seek to renew their lives:
Your sins are forgiven. Go in peace;
come and follow me.

Sharing Thoughts on Light, Jesus
Being the Light...

Music or Song

Prayer Time

Let us light a candle for people who live in
darkness and need. Let us share their names
and situations with the group...
(You need a tray and tea lights)

Prayer

Loving God, sender of light, in this time of
winter we pray for the world, your world,
and we ask you to send your light into
people's lives.

We pray for the community in which we
live, and we ask you to send into our midst
the light of your love.

We pray for the nations and countries, the
leaders and governments around the world,
and we ask you to send all of them the light
of your wisdom.

We pray for all people who are sick and
suffering, and ask you to send the light of
your healing.

We pray for everyone who is sad, lonely or
afraid. Please shine with your light in their
lives and make them bright.

We pray for all people who are hungry,
unemployed or in any other special need.
Let them see the light of hope and change.

We pray for those who are frustrated,
stressed or bitter, and ask you to send your
light in the form of visions and dreams
which enable them to carry on.

We pray for all who are angry and
disappointed. May they see the light of
laughter and joy.

We pray for people who carry heavy
burdens in one way or another. May they be
strengthened by seeing your light.

We pray for all those who are facing
rejection and injustice. May they be touched
by the light of forgiveness.

We pray for all people who want to or have to change something in their lives, but must accept that changes often take longer than expected. Meet them God, with your great light of patience and give them peace.

God, send your light of protection and guidance to each and everyone who we love and who we care for.

Shine on us with your light, God.
Let us be light to others. This we ask in Jesus' name who came to the world to be light for the people in darkness and to bring justice to the nations. **Amen.**

Music or Song

Blessing

God, may we recognise you
in those we meet.
As people over the centuries kept God's
light shining in times of darkness,
may we be light for those in need.
As Jesus grew and became strong and wise,
may we grow in wisdom and wonder
and joy. **Amen.**

Music

21. Evening Prayer With Children

Music

Opening

A: I will light a light
in the name of the Maker,
who lit the world
and breathed the breath of life for me.

B: I will light a light
in the name of the Son,
who saved the world
and stretched out his hand to me.

C: I will light a light
in the name of the Spirit,
who encompasses the world
and blessed my soul with yearning.

All: **Three lights,
for the God of love.
God above us,
God beside us,
God beneath us.
God in us.
Amen.**

Song and/or Bible Story

Giving Thanks for the Day –
Candle Light Prayer

All: **Dear God, it's good to know you.
I can trust you.
You are always there for me.
Thank you!
I may be small, God,
but I am not too small
to be your friend.
I want to be in your family
and live with you today
and all days of my life.
Amen.**

Song or Music

Blessing

Bless us, God,
bless the moon above us,
bless the earth beneath us,
bless our friends and families,
bless those we love
and those who love us.
and let us sleep peacefully this night
and all nights.
Amen.

22. A Selection Of Blessings

Go into the world.
You are the body of Christ.
God grant you the eyes of Christ
to perceive human need,
Christ's hand to heal,
and Christ's heart to love,
through the power of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

I send you out into the world
in the power of the Spirit of Christ
to walk through the darkness
and uncertainty
towards the joy of Easter Day.
Go in peace.
Amen.

The world is always waiting
for our touch and our tenderness.
So, go with courage
into the costly path of Christ,
go with imagination
into the creative life of God,
and go with freedom
into the life of the Spirit.
Amen.

O Pilgrim God,
come with us on our journey
come with your saints and prophets
and angels
come with your bread and wine and stories
come be our light, our hope, our healing
come lead us safely on our life journey
to the place where we belong.
Amen.



In the business of our days, God,
challenge us with your integrity and grace,
and embrace us always
in your strong healing love.
May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all, evermore.
Amen.

Go now,
not to serve yourself,
but to serve others;
not to seek your glory,
but the glory of God the Father;
and so may all you are and do
make him known,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

O Lord Jesus,
stretch forth your serving hands
in blessing over your people,
to heal and restore,
and to draw them to yourself
and to one another in love.
Amen

