

# Encircled by prayer

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Calls to worship

# Calls to worship

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## Every family

Come, let's worship God.  
God who is mystery,  
God who is not contained by any one religious system  
God who is certainly not contained by our minds and hearts.

Come, let's worship God  
God who wills dignity for every family, every person.  
God who lies at the heart of each life and speaks to the depth of each heart.  
God who is constant adventure,  
Constant movement  
Constant presence!

Come let's worship God  
Let's be filled with awe, wonder and that profound grace  
Seen in Jesus, the carpenter.  
The Holy Child.

John LI Humphreys

## Christ is our Lord

Christ is our Lord  
Christ is our King  
alive, though crucified,  
seated, on the throne of grace,  
present with us now.  
Christ is our servant,  
Christ is our beloved.

Vaughan Jones

## Lord, our loving God

Lord, our loving God,  
whose ways are mysterious  
and yet whose love is deep and tender;  
you provide for all our needs.  
Make yourself known to us as we worship you now:  
give us words to praise you,  
hearts to love you and minds to know you.  
Help us to offer all to you,  
and to know your mysterious presence with us  
as we gather in your name.

Duncan Tuck

## **Coming near to God**

Come near to God and he will come near to you (James 4:8)

Lord God, we come to worship you (this morning/evening) with your command to draw near to you ringing in our ears. It sounds so obvious, Lord, so simple, but we find it so difficult. A thousand trivial things get in the way, such as our appetites, the television, our hobbies, or even the tickle we have in the small of our back. Help us this morning, Lord, to forget all these, and to bring you our whole attention so that we can hear you speaking to us. And when we have heard, help us to obey.

Amen.

Jennifer Martin

## **Seeking the lost sheep**

Then the good shepherd calls his friends and neighbours together and says to them, 'I am so happy I have found my sheep. Let us celebrate.' (Luke 15:6)

We are so grateful Lord God (this morning/evening) that you never abandon us to our wilfulness and our stupidity. Many times, Lord, we deserve to be left in the messes we have created for ourselves. But you gently come to seek us and, like the good shepherd, disentangle us from the bramble patches into which we have fallen and set us on our feet again. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts that you never give up on us.

Amen.

Jennifer Martin

## **A deep awareness of each other**

Lord Jesus, we come to you this morning not as individuals, but as your whole people -1.4 (e)0. (n)12.9 5[(h)3.5 6s.5 (13(J3 (i)522 Td(Jenn(u)7.5 (t a)6.5 384.152.9 (v)2.)-5.5 (h

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### **Abundant gifts**

Dear God

You are not just generous but extravagant, and we cannot put a price on the abundant gifts we receive from you like love, faith, truth and hope. Their value cannot be measured in money – they are what makes life worth living and we thank you for them. And while these gifts are not for sale, nor for trading – they are for sharing; so with the inspiration and courage of the Holy Spirit, help us to share them with others.

Amen.

Carolyn Smyth

### **Loving God**

Loving God

You are more generous to us than we can grasp  
because you breathe new life into us.  
You sent Jesus to show us how to live it to the full.  
This offering is one way we can thank you;  
help us to find others ways,  
this coming week,  
as we go about our daily lives.

Amen.

Carolyn Smyth

# Prayers of approach and thanksgiving

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## We're a mixed bag!

We're a mixed bag of people!

From different places, with myriad concerns and preoccupations.  
Some of us have worked all night; some of us are just waking!  
There's happiness here, and there are all sorts of painful  
experiences here, too.

There's one thing we have in common

Somehow we're drawn, yes there's habit and routine and discipline  
But more there's the sense we must look beyond  
Beyond ourselves, beyond our business, beyond our tight-knit community

There's all the depth of human love, of human grief, of human hope, here.

This binds us together, because it points us beyond ourselves.

We come because in our smallness, we glimpse a world  
which is magnificent

We glimpse into the breadth, and length, height and depth  
into the Divine bursting into and out of human life.

John LI Humphreys

## An invocation



## Presence

We come into your presence,  
to be aware of you with us.  
You are always aware of us,  
always sensitive to our needs and joys.  
You invite us to be with you,  
to have a place near you.  
Your presence is joy, light, comfort,  
your nearness is holy, awesome, wonder.

In the play of sunlight through rainbows,  
in the sounds of music and laughter,  
in the touch of friends and loved ones,  
in the sweet perfume of blossom,  
in the taste of bread and wine,  
your presence is known.

But also in the warm dark,  
in the silence,  
in the solitude,  
in the scent of fear,  
in the sourness of tears,  
you are with us,  
your presence surrounds us.

As we come before you,  
we realise our faults,  
we remember our sins,  
we feel remorse for our selfishness,  
we repent and feel ashamed.

You welcome us,  
you greet us with a smile,  
you forgive and renew,  
you give us new hope, new life.  
You love us into your presence.

We bless and thank you.

We praise and adore you.

We enjoy being with you,

and with each other, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

## **Be present**

We call on the purpose of God to enfold us now.  
God, be present in our activity and our stillness.  
We call on the presence of God to be with us now.  
God, be present in our gathering and in our parting.  
We call on the power of God to meet us now.  
God, be present in our thinking and our speaking.

Faithful God, you are loyal to your people always,  
forgive our betrayals of you and of each other.  
Covenant God, you remember your people always,  
forgive our forgetfulness of you and of the poor and the broken.  
Active God, you love your people always,  
forgive our failure to do your will and to cherish creation.

Living God, be present in power to fulfil your purpose  
In the name and Spirit of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

Amen.

Terry Oakley

## **God is God**

We receive God's love, God's grace, and God's mercy;  
but that is not why we worship.  
We come to see friends, those known and yet met;  
but that is not why we worship.  
We come to sing songs and hear music together;  
but still, that is not why we worship.  
Nor do we worship to earn forgiveness and love;  
these are free to all who ask.  
We worship because God is God,  
no other reason is needed.  
Hear our worship, loving Lord,  
and accept our gifts however we offer

## In God is life

In God is life,  
Created life, Moulded life, Real life.  
In Christ is life,  
Abundant life, Forgiven life, Real life.  
In the Spirit is life,  
Vibrant life, New life, Real life.  
Come, open yourself to receive life.  
Life in all its fullness.  
The gift of God to all who accept.  
Receive the Real life of God,  
through Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Nigel Warner

## God of new beginnings

God of new beginnings,  
we give thanks for a new start for us with you today  
we give thanks for a new start for relationships at home,  
we give thanks for a new start for the poor of the world.

God of forgiveness  
we give thanks for the Good News we hear in Jesus Christ  
the Gospel of mercy for all who have done wrong;  
we give thanks for the hope of a new millennium,  
a time to create peace and justice for all,  
we give thanks for the joy we find in the Church  
a community of love and support for all.

God of missions  
we give thanks for your promise of new life  
we give thanks for your purpose of justice  
we give thanks for the power to make all things new.  
in the name and the spirit of Jesus we pray.  
Amen.

Terry Oakley

## God of time

God of time,  
We thank you for the moments of sunrise and sunset,  
with their brilliant colours of promise.  
We thank you for moments of stillness  
when we know peace and tranquillity  
We thank you for moments of joy and laughter  
with their sense of shared hope.  
We thank you for moments of truth  
when we know wonder and awe.  
We thank you for moments of sadness  
with tears shed for love.  
Help us to find in each moment  
your promised gift of life abundant  
and your presence with us now.

Terry Oakley

## God who is...

God who is love,  
before time, beyond time

## Praise the God of new things

God puts a new song into our mouth,  
are we willing to sing it?  
God puts and new heart into our bodies,  
are we willing to use it?  
The love of God empowers and enthuses,  
are we willing to accept the gift?  
Let us praise the God of new things,  
whose gifts are abundant and whose faithfulness is great.

Amen.

Nigel Warner

## Be our new life

God of creation  
mystery  
and the holy place  
draw us to yourself

God of the Word  
incarnate  
spoken  
enacted  
be our strength

God of love  
forgiveness  
and the power of tenderness  
be our new life

Amen.

Alasdair Pratt

## Hold us today

Hold us today.  
Make us aware of your loving arms, under and around us.  
Tease out our tense muscles, our secret thoughts,  
our stubborn minds.  
Help us to trust you through and through.  
May we be honest in our worship  
allowing the people we are to push through  
all the layers of pretence we paint over the top.  
And may we allow you  
to strip away all that is unloving,  
dishonouring or hurtful  
that we may grow in you  
as we should.

Duncan Tuck



God, forgive us when we have been selfish.  
Help us to seek forgiveness from those we have hurt.  
Help us to forgive when others say sorry to us.  
Help us to forgive ourselves and to move on  
with confidence in your love.

Terry Oakley

## **One-in-three God**

Father God who is our life, be with us.  
Christ who is our guide, walk with us.  
Spirit who is our strength, uphold us.  
One-in-three God, sharing each moment,  
bless and hallow this worship,  
cleanse and mould our hearts,  
that we may praise you alone,  
because of who you are,  
and for opening our eyes to see.

Duncan Tuck

## **Great big beautiful God**

Great big beautiful God –  
we are so glad to be here  
with you and with each other  
celebrating our life together as your people.

[In a moment of silence we tell you the things  
we want to give praise and thanks for today](#)

Thank you for this breathtaking, fragile world we live in  
and for the possibility of responding to you through it –  
in wonder – and intimacy  
in humility – and delight.

Thank you that the world is full of difference,  
where people

    experience you differently

    worship you differently

    serve you differently.

Help us not to use their differences as excuses to build walls that separate,  
but rather to use them to see the world  
as a kaleidoscope of colours and patterns,  
where everyone is linked to their neighbours,  
bound together by your strong love





## **We are here because you called**

Creating God,  
Fashioner of a universe so vast that mathematics can scarcely comprehend it,  
yet so delicately small that physicists can barely imagine it,  
we adore you.

Redeeming God,  
Leading your people from the oppression of Egypt,  
Offering new possibilities in Babylon  
Laying bare the structures of sin on Golgotha  
and inviting us to the new life of the third day,  
we adore you.

Sustaining God,  
Provider of manna,  
Giver of dreams to the old and visions to the young,  
Reconciler of Babel's diversity  
by the gift of the Spirit,  
we adore you.

We are here because you called, and we followed.  
We are here so that you may make us what you would have us to be.  
So we pray, loving God,  
take us in our brokenness and bewilderment,  
and in our excitement and anticipation.  
Accept our hopes, quell our fears,  
and make us one in Christ Jesus,  
for he it is who invites us to feast on bread and wine,  
his life,  
the world's salvation.

Amen.

David G Cornick

## **Come, let us return to God**

Come, let us return to God,  
singing songs of love  
wonderful and true.

Come, let us turn to God  
lamenting our sin  
sharing our sorrow and shame.

Come, let us turn to our neighbours  
confessing our wrong  
seeking forgiveness and offering peace.  
Come, let us turn ourselves  
away from pride and envy  
towards humility and service

Holy God, maker of all, have mercy on us.  
Jesus Christ, Servant of the poor, have mercy on us.  
Holy Spirit, breath of life, have mercy on us.  
May God forgive us, Christ renew us,  
and the Spirit enable us to grow in love.

Turn again, O God, and give us life;  
that your people may rejoice in you.  
Create in me a clean heart, O God;  
and renew a right spirit within me.  
Give us again the joy of your help;  
With your Spirit of freedom sustain us.

Amen.

Terry Oakley

## Thank you loving God

We thank you, loving God  
For our families who care for us,  
Who give us food and money,  
Hugs when we need them,  
And welcoming places for parties and friends.  
*All* **Thank you loving God, for all that helps us  
To feel we belong in your world.**

We thank you, loving God,  
For the homes we live in,  
For comfortable beds, teddy bears and computers,  
And places where we can relax and be ourselves.  
*All* **Thank you, loving God for all that helps us  
To feel we belong in your world.**

We thank you, loving God,  
For the friends we enjoy being with,  
Who share their things with us,  
People we can turn to when we need help.  
*All* **Thank you, loving God, for all that helps us  
To feel we belong in your world.**



God who has formed each of us with our abilities and failings with our passions and weaknesses we take this time to listen to reflect to think. We know that we have done wrong things. We have failed to go beyond the right to do the best. We have been narrow in our circle of love and care Forgive us. Jesus has come to bring us life in all its fullness. Our sins are forgiven in his name. Amen.

Lesley Charlton

## **To be here as our whole selves**

Let us make sure that we are here as our whole selves. Lord, if we think there are parts of our lives that you know nothing of, forgive us. If there are parts of ourselves that we pretend do not exist, disabuse us of any idea that you would be ignorant.

If we think that there was anyway that anything we have done would mean that we were excluded from your presence, forgive us. Lord as your people in all our imperfections we come.

God of love we know that you forgive us.  
God of justice we know you demand more from us.  
God of kindness we know you would guide us.  
Thank you.

God we have met you this week.  
In the shout for help and the offer of an extended palm.  
In the whisper of comfort and the wise pr.e 41.5 005(n)13apFFGQj4avqUÂKs2Tex3.3 004





## Confession 2

We confess guilt, Lord.  
Guilt for the things we have done  
and said  
and thought  
and that are yet to be forgiven.  
Guilt for the things we have done  
and said  
and thought  
and from which we have already been forgiven.  
Free us from guilt, we pray,  
and set our feet upon your path of freedom.

Amen.

Nigel Warner

## Forgive us for the wasted moment

Forgive us,  
for the wasted moment  
spent selfishly or just filling time;  
for the hurtful moments  
caused by our words or actions;  
for the thoughtless moments  
lacking in love;  
for the destructive moments  
when we let our anger rip;  
for the missed moments  
frozen by hesitation and doubt.  
Help us now and every moment  
to try to live as Jesus lived,  
fully present, fully human, full of love.

Amen.

Terry Oakley

## In steady pilgrimage

How complex life is,  
Always we face challenges that seem beyond us.

We are caught in a web of relationships  
Which too often become sterile,  
Or irritating  
Or just a formality.

We face work which is demanding  
Too often with impatience  
And little joy  
Watching the clock.

We hear the cries of a broken world,  
Too often with despair  
Or a sense of futility  
As though we can do nothing to help.

And so we seem to ourselves  
Shallow people  
Just ticking over the calendar  
And not going anywhere.

That is not what you created us to be.

Grant us the spirit of hope infusing our lives,  
So that what we have been  
May not determine what we shall become.  
In Christ, may we draw closer to you  
In steady pilgrimage.

Bernard Thorogood

## Living the life of a Disciple

Loving Lord,  
we try hard to live the life of faith,  
and yet we are told time and again  
that we could do it better.  
Encourage us, we pray, where we have got it right;  
so that we can continue to live for you.  
Encourage us also where we have not got it right;  
so that we might better live for you.  
We pray that our life of faith  
through worship, prayer, and mission  
will show other people the great love you have for them.  
Make us into lamps of your love,  
and our church into the lamp stand that allows the light to be seen.

Amen.

Nigel Warner



## Prayers of assurance

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### God, lover of all

God, lover of all,  
We come to you in our vulnerability,  
Our desperate hopes and fragile new beginnings,

*All* **Touch us with your Spirit's tenderness and make us whole.**

God, lover of all,  
We come to you with our sense of relationships broken and damaged,  
Our disjointed efforts to mend what is torn and restore trust

*All* **Touch us with your Spirit's harmony and make us whole.**

God, lover of all,  
We come to you with our awareness of poverty and division  
Our broken attempts to repair community

*All* **Touch us with your Spirit's healing and make us whole.**

God, lover of all,  
We come to you with our knowledge of oppression and abuse,  
Our struggles against prejudice and exclusion,

*All* **Touch us with your Spirit's justice and make us whole.**

Jan Berry

### Assurance of forgiveness

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## Variations of forgiveness

Heavenly God,  
forgive us ... our trespasses  
the times we have gone wrong,  
failed in what we promised,  
missed the goal, fallen short of the best,  
drifted away from the course we should have followed.

Forgive us ... our sins  
the hurt we have caused,  
the hate we have shown, the harm we have carried out,

Forgive us ... our debts  
for the love we have received,  
for the opportunities we have been given,  
for the beauty we have experienced,  
for the freedom we have enjoyed.

God forgive us, Christ renew us and  
Spirit of God enable us to grow in love.  
Help us to forgive others,  
their trespasses against us,  
their sins against us,  
their debts against us,  
So may we live in peace,  
with you and with your neighbours.  
In the name and the Spirit of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Terry Oakley

### Absolution

The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance,  
that Christ Jesus came in to the world to save sinners.

1 Timothy 21:15

Let us all, with St Paul, truly acknowledge this in our hearts and believe in  
Christ. Thus, in His name, I proclaim unto you the forgiveness of all your sins,  
and declare you to be loosed of them on earth, that you be loosed of them also  
in heaven, in eternity.

Amen.

Martin Bucer's 1539 Liturgy

## Prayers of commitment

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## Bless our children

Bless our children, loving Lord,  
that as they leave for their classes  
they will draw closer to you,  
and that we will not be held back from your love  
by their absence.

Amen.

'Let the children come to me,' spoke our Lord.  
Draw them to you through their classes, O Lord,  
so that the whole family of God might be enriched.

Amen.

Give us life, O Lord,  
as these children have life.  
Life in all abundance.  
And teach them in their time together,  
drawing them to you.

Amen.

Nigel Warner

## Living God you challenge us

[A covenant prayer for an all-age congregation](#)

There is the Leader with the congregation divided into two groups of children and adults

*Leader* Living God, you challenge us.  
*All* **You call us each by name.**  
*Leader* Your challenge reaches us:



# Global voices

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For intercessions

## Tomorrow is God's agenda

There are so many things happening:  
Places to be, people to see!  
And how the people rush, rush, rush on pavement and road,  
in shop and in pub.

Sometimes we're torn between this place and that,  
between this group and that.  
Life is more complicated than ever it was.  
Text and email, mobile phone and the rest,  
is it easier to be in touch?  
Was life simpler when people stayed in their community,  
and knew their place?

But that has never been true.  
Changes were afoot from the earliest stories of the Bible:  
Abraham leaving home at a ripe old age,  
Moses often on the move, half the time scarred and  
certainly harassed!  
Amos, Micah, Jeremiah and the rest.

Jesus and then Peter and Paul, the





## The glory is yours

The glory is yours, God, Creator,  
life breather,  
giver of such a good creation,  
full of beauty, sustaining our life.  
We give thanks to you,  
for our life, our relationships, our loves and our hope,  
for your image obscured but still visible in humankind.

The glory is yours, God, Renewer,  
making all things new.  
We give thanks to you for the living promise of New Jerusalem,  
for new heaven and new earth,  
for relationships recreated,  
for the broken mended and tears wiped away.

The glory is yours, God, in Jesus Christ,  
crucified and raised.  
We give thanks to you for new life already begun,  
for the promise alive and your image made clear,  
for all that is, now being changed by love's victory.

Peter Trow

## May we live by grace

As God's creation, the world bears the marks of God.  
Here we think of the world as a body, a child of God.

Ploughing a field we scratch the skin of God;  
Polluting a river we stain the blood of God;  
Exterminate a species and we break God's finger;  
Build bigger cities and we load God's back;  
Oppress the poor and we beat God's children.

Creator God, may we love the world,  
your amazing gift to us,  
for we meet you in all creation.  
Help our eyes to see you in the mountains,  
our ears to hear your voice in the waves,  
and our hearts to respect your gift.

In Christ we know that we are one family  
in the house of the world.  
May we live, by grace, as your children.

Bernard Thorogood

## Small in terms of the world

God, each of us is small

even the fattest and most muscled of us.

We are not among the important people in the world.

We pray for the leaders of countries and big companies,  
people who have lots of power and responsibilities

For people who think that all there is, is to get more and more things.

We pray for those who are small,

for those who are small in the terms of the world, hungry people,  
poor people, homeless people and children.

God, each of us is big even the weediest and skinniest of us.

We are big in the sight of those people who love us.

We are big in your sight.

We pray for those people who have nobody who loves them  
and ask that you would make us more loving.

And we thank you for your loving us and we pray that the  
life we live may be worthy of that love and how far you have  
gone to show your love.

Thank you God that it is OK to be small with you and we do  
not have to pretend and we do not have to grab attention.

We pray in Jesus name

Lesley Charlton

## Peace in our communities

The uniform is a cause for fear and derision.  
Expectations about bias abound.  
Ordinary men and women doing their job are turned into  
operatives of the state.

Let us hold up before God those who are involved in keeping  
law and order in our town/city  
Those who are concerned with letting the weakest be  
protected and the vulnerable secure.  
May our police work without prejudice and in the context  
not of what is easiest or quickest but the bigger picture.

We pray for those who feel they have not been treated fairly.  
For all those who have made mistakes that they may have  
the maturity and courage to admit it and that we may allow  
them a second chance.

The smartphone is offered for sale for £30. It fell off the back of a lorry.  
Silence is kept when the shouting is heard through the wall  
and the mysterious bruises appear next day.  
'Nobody will ever know' becomes the basis of morality.

We pray for ourselves aware that we too are responsible for  
keeping the peace in our society. We get the justice that we  
work for, that we resource.  
May we be wise citizens able to see the picture beyond me  
and mine to think of us and the needs of others.  
We pray in Jesus name

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## Respond to love and care

The songs of our world call us to respond to your love and care.  
To respond to your love for all.  
What music shall we sing? What music shall we offer?  
The drum beats out a strong rhythm.  
The boom boom boom speaks of marching, pacing, going  
forward and going to war.  
For those who fight; for those who wait to fight.

*All* The tune is in the air the melody clear and catchy every one sings along  
**For those whose lifestyle is easy, pleasing, causing envy**  
May there be substance rather than all life being froth  
May there be generosity from those who have food, stability,  
love and peace in their land.

The notes jar; there is no order and rhythm no tune and no pacing  
for those whose lives demand attention for the wrong reason.  
The ones who cannot manage, those in debt, those who are  
disruptive neighbours, those who cannot cope as parents, those who  
will never be able to work for they do not have the skills or the discipline.

The music from a different place a different age sounds from a different country,  
yuk don't mention country.  
Lord there are so many differences how are we to live together.  
How are we live together as your people on the earth?

Then there will be the songs of heaven.  
Tunes that angels sing.  
For those on the earth who can hear them. The dying.  
Those who they will leave behind.

Lord we would sing your songs for ever  
We say our prayers in Jesus name

Amen.

Lesley Charlton

## Commitment for Life

Heavenly Father, when we have our worrying times and concerns enable us to  
think of people living in the developing countries where their hardships and worries  
are so much greater than ours. Help us to work for world-wide justice especially  
where water supplies are needed to give better health; where impoverished land  
needs to be nourished so that farmers can grow food for themselves and the  
markets. Help us to work for debt relief and to encourage our supermarkets to  
promote Fairtrade goods so that life can be improved for everyone.  
Amen.

Pamela Pavitt

## **God of Justice**

God of Justice, we pray for our world where trade is unfairly balanced against so many people.

We know that some people live in luxury while others struggle to exist and work hard to scratch a living.

Help us to think each time we turn on a tap to run pure water that other people walk mile upon mile to collect a bucket of water which is polluted. Lord, help us to campaign for clean water for all people.

We pray that international organisations may learn to seek your standards of justice and influence the world with the á f wM â

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The notes jar; there is no order and rhythm no tune and no pacing.  
For those whose lives demand attention for the wrong reason.  
The ones who cannot manage, those in debt, those who are disruptive  
neighbours, those who cannot cope as parents, those who will never be able  
to work for they do not have the skills or the discipline.

The music from a different place a different age sounds from a different country,  
yuk don't mention country.  
Lord there are so many differences how are we to live together.  
How are we live together as your people on the earth?

## **Jesus who meets our hungers**

Jesus, who meets our hungers – we would be fed by you

Jesus, able to meet everyone's hungers – we all would be fed by you

Empty, alone, hungry, desolate



Why do we go on hurting one another  
and smashing so much that is precious  
and polluting air and sea?  
Is the world getting wiser  
or more peaceful  
or more just?

It is hard for me to understand, God of the ages.  
Take my small life  
and let it be on the side of peace  
and justice and healing  
Jesus, don't let me forget  
the power of One.

Bernard Thorogood

## The face of God

In Jesus we see the face of God  
Not in my face, not in your face  
My face and your face always have a mask  
The smile, the frown, the politeness, the pre-occupation  
Our masks mask the face of God  
Our masks mask the freedom of God  
Our masks mask the love and grace of God  
In Jesus we see the face of God  
And Jesus saw beyond the mask

Jesus saw the face of God in  
the hungry,  
the thirsty,  
the stranger,  
the naked,  
the sick,  
the prisoner  
Jesus saw that the least of these sisters and brothers, too,  
mask the face of God.

let's look at each other – let's look for the face of God  
let's not even pretend God stops here.

We commit ourselves to look for the face of God in each and all.

John LI Humphreys



## God's invitation to all

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Let's celebrate the God who is in the nature of human life.  
Let's celebrate the divine which is human life  
Let's rejoice in beauty to appreciate possibility  
Let's celebrate the mystery of love!

John L I Humphreys  
(amended 2019)

## **Prayers for hope**

## The body of Christ

That's us, the church!  
How gross it is.  
No longer lithe and supple,  
Full of energy,  
Now twisted and deformed,  
Lethargic in the extreme.

Once I dreamed  
As all young men do  
Of a vibrant renewed Church.  
United yet not uniform.  
Exhibiting its rich diversity  
In all aspects of life.

Can we break free  
From the 'straight jacket'; of tradition.  
Remove ritual's noose  
That would choke  
Any out reach of the spirit,  
Beyond the enmeshing structures.

Uniting together with one mission,  
Affirming all we hold in common,  
Spelling out the differences,  
Respecting each other in love,  
Acknowledging our ignorance  
About each other and our faith.

If we are unft  
Our bodies suffer  
Likewise with the Church.  
Shed the weighty burden  
Of out-moded structures and customs  
Adopt a healthy spiritual diet.

As Christ's human body  
Was broken and scarred,  
So the Church bears signs  
Of conflict and dissent.  
Yet healing is possible  
Gained through his timeless victory.

Y Mochyn Daear

## The Church

Lord, we pray for the Church

Christians facing persecution and physical danger

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## The calling of the Church

Loving Lord,  
you have called us to follow you as disciples,  
in our life together and as individuals,  
through worship, prayer and mission.  
Be with us as we seek to live this call.  
Give us the strength and enthusiasm to live the life you have called us to live.  
Help us as we seek to care for and nurture people,  
as we challenge areas of injustice that we find,  
and as we seek to serve you in our service of other people.  
In all that we speak, think, and say,  
be with us Lord.  
So that the people we meet and serve will not see us,  
but will see you in us.  
We do all that we do for you,  
Holy and life-giving Lord.  
Your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven

Amen.

Nigel Warner

## Deeper discipleship

Master,  
teach us to be your disciples,  
to follow you through thick and thin,  
never to deny that we know you,

## Relationships

There are people, as you know, God, who are married and wish that they were single. People who feel that they have the wrong partner. People who have changed and their partner has not. People who have stayed the same and their partner has altered.

We hold them up before you.

There are people, God, as you know, who are single and wish they were married. People who said no, when they should have said yes, people who have never met the right one, or never recognised that one. People who have made a vow that they now regret.

We hold them up to you now.

Those whose marriages are close to collapse. Those who left the heart of their partner years ago and now will leave their home. Those who are coming to terms with their new singleness, some with relish, some with pain.

People who have been divorced for years.

People who are happily married.

People who are happily single.

Today there are people, as you know, God, trying to decide whether to commit to a particular person or whether to run away. May they go the right way.

Amen.

Lesley Charlton

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**Now is the time**

Now is the time.

Do it now.

Lord there are some running out of time.

Terminally ill.

Those who strain the patience of the people who carueicret oll4u kf th10 (o (v)16.9 (o)0.6 (

Those who cannot find work.  
Cannot find a role, who are in a strange country and they do  
not know how it all works.

Lord take our time.

We know that we waste it doing things



## Meeting new people

Everything around me says that appearances matter.

The photos, the models, the film stars, the ads.  
All say what you look like is the key to success.  
If your hair is just so, and your skin is a peach,  
and your suit is the colour that's right for today.  
You can spend on a nose job or develop your bust,  
it's as though life is a beauty and fashion parade.

But it's false, it's a con.

What is on the outside is never the key  
to the heart and the mind and the spirit,  
that is the real person, the real me.  
It's not the outside that counts when the chips are down  
and we face a disaster.  
Then it's the courage and the steadiness  
that will lift us up on our feet again.  
It's not the outside that counts  
when we are sick and need good nursing.  
It's not the hair style that matters  
when we want to be forgiven.

So, God as you don't judge by the outside,  
may I never be trapped that way,  
but be able to meet everyone  
of all races and ages and faces  
and clothing and accents  
as people with hearts and minds  
that take time to understand.  
And may that be how people see me.

Bernard Thorogood







## Praising God with senses

God of all,  
we gaze with wonder at the world.  
We hear the beauty of the songs of birds and whales.  
We smell the perfumes of the flowers and the tang of the sea.  
We touch the softness of wool, the velvet of redwood bark.  
We taste the succulent fruits and crunchy nuts.  
We speak with people from all over the world and send our greetings into space.  
We know that there are people in need, including ourselves.  
We mourn the loss of some species of the variety of life on earth.

But above all,  
we praise you and your purpose of love in all things,  
we offer our sorrow and remorse  
for what we have done to break the unity of what is;  
we ask for forgiveness  
and the faith to try again  
to live in the way that is acceptable to you,  
loving to our neighbours  
and gentle with the earth.  
in the name and Spirit of Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

Terry Oakley

## A countryside patchwork

Thank you, Creator God, for colours.  
Thank you, for the shades and tones of our countryside ...  
the red of poppies in a field of grain;  
the yellow of rape set in its own field  
the brown of a ploughed field  
the lush greens of well-watered meadows  
the mixture of green and brown in the woodland;  
the myriad colours of wild flowers.  
Thank you for the patchwork of colours  
and for the gift of eyesight  
to enjoy this bounty of nature.

Pamela Pavitt

## Somerset sunset

## Prayers before a meeting

Come to me all who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.

Rest, rest, we have not got time to rest.  
There is so much to do.  
There are papers and discussions and plans.

Come and rest  
Rest, rest, we cannot rest  
There is mission and vision and purpose  
There is decline in numbers and balancing the budget  
Don't you know, God, how desperate the situation is?

God who spoke and the world was.  
God who turned on the lights and blew the waters apart.  
God of order and the rhythm of life  
We live in your presence.  
Rushing through our days busy getting on doing your will,  
so busy that we do not have time to work out what it is.  
We who live hurtling towards death, you are all around us.

We are your people, we wait upon you.

We are your sinful people, we confess.

The God of justice is also the God of mercy  
who has come among us in Jesus.  
Receive your forgiveness and hear again  
the call to come and follow.  
In Jesus name.

Lesley Charlton

# Faith

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## I believe

I believe that God, who is Love  
is at the heart of the world.  
I believe that we are meant by God  
to live a life of love,  
sharing God's gifts,  
caring for the world.  
I believe that Jesus is God living with us,  
showing God's way of loving  
in a human life.  
I believe that Jesus shows me  
that although I do wrong things  
I am still accepted and loved by God.  
I believe that Jesus died to show this truth  
to me and all the world  
I believe that Jesus rose from death,  
by God's power,  
to show that love is stronger than hate,  
and life is stronger than death.  
I believe that God's Spirit is alive now,  
calling me and everyone  
to join the people who follow Jesus,  
to carry on his work,  
and make the world  
as God wants it to be.  
So I give myself to God.

Trinity Church (United Reformed/Methodist,  
Bedlington, Northumberland)

'5b'U f a Uh]cb

we believe in God – the Shorthand

Shorthand for justice and love  
Shorthand for dignity and compassion  
Shorthand for humanity's deep spiritual yearning  
Shorthand for courage, beauty, and extra miles

the Shorthand of parent-language, of creator-language  
speaking of the divine permeating all life.

the Shorthand of son-language  
speaking of the intimacy of this God  
the human-being-Jesus expressing love and grace,  
beyond imagining

the Shorthand of spirit-language  
speaking of the on-going desire  
to reach for tomorrow's day  
to be the doers of beauty and the tellers of good.

(Ask the congregation to add some other words for which the word 'God'  
is 'Shorthand')

John LI Humphreys

## A litany of faith

In the drone of bees in the heather  
And the drone of distant chainsaws in the forest  
*All* **God bides with creation.**

In the clicking of grasshoppers in the high pastures  
And the clicking of keyboards in the office  
*All* **God bides with creation.**

In the teeming life of an ants' nest  
And the teeming chaos of the city  
*All* **God bides with creation.**

In the theatre of a livestock mart  
And the drama of the courtroom  
*All* **God bides with the people.**

In the high tops of Torridon  
And the tower blocks of Motherwell  
In the concrete canyons on the city's edge  
And the ghost towns and wastelands of decaying industries  
*All* **God bides with the people.**

In the spreading deserts of Africa  
And the drowning islands of the Pacific  
In the world's shanty-towns and disputed territories  
In the hospital wards and in the battlefields  
In the wars of oppression and the wars of liberation  
*All* **God bides with the people.**

In prison cells and stock exchanges  
In power stations and chain stores  
In Zimbabwe and Kabul, Sudan and Cyprus  
In Ramallah and Colombia, Kashmir and Beijing  
In Manhattan and Westray, Sri Lanka and Eriskay  
In Easterhouse and Harlem

*All* **God bides with the people.**

In the cycles of the seasons  
In the buzz of insects





**Fear**

**Music**

Those who dwell in the secret place of the Most High

- All* **From Fear to Hope**  
From Sadness to Determination
- All* **From Fear to Hope**  
From Illness to Well-being
- All* **From Fear to Hope**  
From Ignorance to Understanding
- All* **From Fear to Hope**  
From Poverty to Fullness
- All* **From Fear to Hope**  
From Brokenness to Unity
- All* **From Fear to Hope**  
From Violence to Safety
- All* **From Fear to Hope**  
From Loss to Restoration

For you God bridge the gap from fear to hope.

### *Reading*

#### *The silent peace with candles*

#### *The Eucharist*

Communion may be celebrated

### *Music*

### *Blessing*

May the everlasting Father himself take you  
In his own generous clasp  
In his own generous arm  
May the everlasting Father shield you  
East and West wherever you go.  
Amen.

Charity Hamilton

### *In love you...*

In love you freely created,  
you expressed yourself in light and dark,  
day and night, sea and land, in a multitude of life.  
You gave us your image to reflect your glory;  
you filled us with your goodness to love one another;  
you honoured us with responsibility to care for your creation.

#### *Silence*

In hope you freely acted  
you released us from slavery and oppression,



## **Our prayer for you** Ephesians 3:14-21

We pray to the Father,  
our Father and yours,  
that he may be strength and staying power  
in your lives, through the Spirit,  
so that you may have steady faith  
rooted deep in your hearts.

And may the Spirit  
hold you in fellowship

And from the heart of the city  
flows the river of good water,  
    living water,  
    healing water,  
so no-one need be thirsty ever again.

Wonderful God, may we see this vision too  
and live this vision  
in the community of faith.

Bernard Thorogood

## **To touch and to heal**

Lord Jesus, you reached out to touch and to heal.  
Praise to your Holy Name.  
For those who need healing.  
Ill, unhappy, bereaved.

Lord Jesus, you reached out to heal.  
For those who feel the lack human of human touch,  
marriages where intimacy died years ago,  
people who seek more.

Lord, your touch healed and restored.  
We pray for those who have been abused,  
for those who are the victims of violence.

Lord, our prayers are not just for individuals  
but communities as well.  
Where there is bloodshed and neglect.  
Where some have too much and others not enough.

Lord, touch each one of us and may we receive your healing.  
In Jesus name we pray.

Lesley Charlton

## The laying on of hands

Come Spirit Come,  
come with love;  
come with compassionate healing powers;  
descend now;  
transform weakness into strength;  
doubt into searching;  
failure into resurrection;  
come Spirit come;  
call, renew,  
strengthen your servant  
surround and protect with love.

In the name of the Father  
and of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Vaughan Jones

## Look forward

Look back, not with regret at missed opportunities,  
but with thankfulness for what has been.

Look forward, not with fear at what may or may not come,  
but with excitement at the possibilities.

And be grateful for what is today.

Brian Hudson



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

He opened our eyes to the wonder around us  
and through him the birds of the air and the lilies of the field  
preached to us of Love.  
Yet he was made a cause of stumbling:  
when he was lifted up,  
iron from the earth nailed him to the wood of a tree  
and he offered up his lifeblood



## Eucharistic prayer for love

Holy and blessed are you, gracious and merciful God:  
you loved the world so much that you gave your only Son  
to bring us life abundant and lead us to eternal life.

He was with you in the beginning  
when your Spirit brooded over the waters  
and brought forth into life all that has being.  
You bound yourself to Israel, to be your bride,  
but she was unfaithful to her Beloved  
and would not keep the Law or heed the Prophets.

So in love you sent your Son, born of woman:  
in love he came, forgiving sins, healing hurt,  
opening doors long closed, warming hearts long cold.

By John he was baptized in water  
and in his own lifeblood, for our sins.

Therefore with all your people in heaven and on earth  
we sing the triumphant hymn of your glory:

*All*

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

For love was all his Passion; love drove him to the Cross.

In that hour of darkness Love strove with death  
and shone and could not be extinguished.

In love for us he rose, a bright Sun,  
to banish fear and burn away all evil;

he ascended to the Father that we might rise with him.

In love the Holy Spirit that he sent to dwell in our hearts and to glorify us with his gifts.





## Eucharistic prayer

Based on 'En una noche oscura' ('On a dark night')  
by St John of the Cross (1542-91)

God, our way, our truth, our life:  
we bless you that you call us from the prisons of the self  
to travel onward through the dark night.  
Your ways are far beyond our understanding,  
yet you shine within us,  
more brightly than the midday sun.  
We bless you for the journey of faith:  
of old you led your people  
in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.  
Through the long night of our fears and doubts  
you travel with us;  
you gently call us onward  
to taste the joys you have prepared for us.  
In your Son you walked our earthly way,  
drank deep of our tears and laughter,  
and passed through the chill waters of death.  
Yet still the bright flame of your love shone forth:

'This cup is the new covenant in my blood.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.  
For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup,  
you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.']  
Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

*All* **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

In joyful union with him  
may we embrace our world with love,



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## **Communion**

Let this service be conducted informally.

Let there be a circle of people around the table. If the service is to be held in a room with pews, people should at least be close to each other. One loaf (or roll of bread) and common cup(s) are appropriate.

This service assumes there has been the reading and proclamation of/reflection on the Scriptures.

Be flexible about the order in which elements of worship are introduced. Be conscious of sights, sounds, touch, smells and taste which will also contribute to the atmosphere of worship.

'Voice' indicates a single speaker, preferably not the same person throughout.

### **Gathering around the table**

*Voice* So many people are invited here, drawn here because there is friendship, welcome and belonging here. We are invited because we are the focus of love which is Divine. God is within each, and because God is within each, God surrounds each. Our breath is the Spirit of the Holy.

In silence, hear each other, hear God's breath.

Invite silent prayer: Who is the neighbour I find it difficult to imagine at this table?

*Voice*

## **Deep community**

*Voice* At the heart of the Jewish faith lies the ancient understanding of the Hebrew people that they were rescued from harsh slavery by a God who listened to their plight. Moses and Joshua led them to the Promised Land. It was God.

When Jesus sat for what we call the Last Supper with the women and men who were his closest companions and friends, they thought on Moses and Joshua. And at the Passover of the Last Supper the land of Palestine was occupied. There was no freedom in the Promised Land. Some expected a fantastic release from this occupation.

*Voice* Jesus talks about the meal as life. It is a meal to celebrate life. Jesus speaks about giving himself because life is so important. This is not to persuade God that life is important. Jesus knew that God already showed that as he sprung out of almost everything and everyone that Jesus saw! The sower, the mustard seed, the farmer, the servant and the unjust steward, were for Jesus stories about God.

The prostitute, the poor, the untouchable, the foreigner and so many more who were the least of his sisters and brothers and in whom Jesus found it so obvious to look for what God is like.

*Voice* This meal is cruel. We know life has cruel, painful and distorting moments. Crucifixion is close. There is a highly charged emotion. How intimately Jesus offers his friends food. Through generations of welcome and rescue from isolation and destitution food has been a constant symbol of the good host and acceptance.

*Voice* We know too that life is meant for living to the fullest possible measure. This means that the richness of life is expressed very differently by each of us. We are different people; we grew differently. The depth of community, the prophetic nature of our community is that God who is at the centre of our being speaks through each person to be met more fully by our being together. The meal is one in which we receive the welcome of God, the trust of God and the commitment of God. This meal is the example of how the whole of human life can be.

## **Breaking bread**

*Voice* Words of institution: 1 Corinthians 12

*Voice* These are not words to make us cower. They are the down-to-earth giving of one individual to another, the giving of God to you. The invitation is open; the purpose is to make us look at each other and at the world with love, hope and faith.

Bread is a basic commodity for life. Food is vital. Jesus spoke of himself as food, not physical food but nourishing commitment of God.





*Voice* Let's look at each other.  
What does God see?  
The present, future and hope of humanity!

*All* **Let's go and be  
a people of grace  
a people of hope  
a people of justice  
a people of love**  
**A people for the world.  
A people for God.  
Let's go!**

John LI Humphreys

## Communion prayers

### Prayer of confession

Loving God,  
we are ill at ease in your presence  
unless we can be assured  
that the faults we carry with us are truly forgiven.  
We have become too familiar with them  
and too easily excuse them  
as not being grievous or significant.  
But now we see  
that they stand between us and you and each other  
and we regret the harm they do.  
Therefore, again, we beg forgiveness  
and ask you, for your sake, to mend us. Amen.

### Prayer of approach

Lord Jesus,  
whose table this is,  
you make clear how much you want  
to share fellowship with us.  
But it seems remarkable  
that you should still seek our company  
when our friendship and loyalty  
are so often in doubt.

Open our hearts to welcome you  
with gratitude  
that is as great and deep  
as your grace and mercy towards us.  
Look upon us gathered here,  
the flock you still shepherd  
and for which you laid down your life. Amen.

Duncan Wilson

## Prayer after Communion

We have received God's food,  
bread that is life for the spirit  
and wine that marks a new covenant.

Glory be to God the Father

We have received Christ in our hands,  
his self-sacrifice, his obedience,  
his living presence with us now.

Glory be to God the Son

We have been touched by the Spirit,  
making holy what is ordinary,  
and renewing us in our journey of faith.

Glory be to God the Spirit

Here we have joined all who follow Jesus,  
across all divisions of race, language, politics,  
across all generations,  
to be part of the worshipping church of God.

as it was, is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end.  
Amen.

Bernard Thorogood

### The heartbeat of God based on Ezekiel 11:19-20

To be used as a meditative part during a Eucharist

(Sound of a slow drum beat)

Listen to the heartbeat of God.  
Remember that God is with you, close by,  
close enough for you to hear the heartbeat of love  
that courses through the universe.  
Close enough to you.  
So close that, at times,  
you could almost imagine it is your own heartbeat.  
Know that God's heart beats with care and compassion for you –  
despite your faults, your mistakes,  
your insecurities and failures.  
Know that God is concerned about you.



**Reading: Matthew 25:37-40**

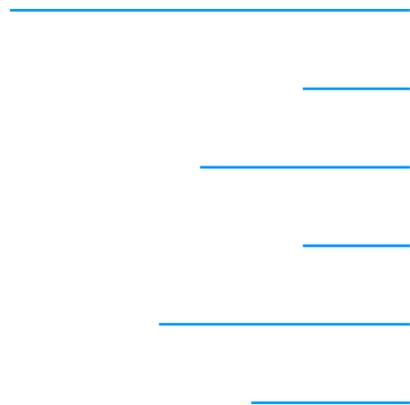
God of the least of these,

*All* **We come to you**

h'c'c Yf'c i f'gY' jY

*All* h'c c V !

*All*





**Psalm of praise**

**And he delivers them**

**Reading: free choice**

**Music**

**A refectio**

**Music**

**Silence**

**Some things to think about ...**

Whose eyes will weep for the poor ... ?  
Whose hands will reach out in love ... ?  
Whose heart will break for the broken ... ?  
Now these eyes will weep for the poor.  
These hands will reach out in love.  
This heart will break for the broken.  
My hands will reach out in love.

**The peace**

**Eucharist**

**Blessing**

May the God of all things  
Bless you in your brokenness that you may reach out,  
Bless you in your shame that you may be compassionate,  
Bless you as the outcast,  
Bless you with his touch.  
Amen.

Charity Hamilton







## **Bless, protect and guide**

Bless, protect and guide each one of us here,  
and each one whom we love,  
and each one who needs our love,  
and to you, Blessed God, be glory and honour and praise.  
now and forever.  
Amen.

Terry Oakley

## **May the strength of God...**

May the strength of God surround us;  
the promise of God protect us;  
and the grace of God guide us;  
so may we be markers of God's mercy  
to those whom we love and serve  
Amen.

Terry Oakley

## **The light of God lead you**

The light of God lead you;  
the presence of God protect you;  
the goodness of God go with you;  
this day and every day.  
Amen.

Terry Oakley

## **All our generations**

The blessing of the God  
of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David  
of Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Bathsheba  
of Jesus, son of Mary and Joseph  
be with us and all our generations  
now and forever.  
Amen.

Terry Oakley

## **The unity of your whole creation**

God, Maker and Lover of us all  
Help us to live and breathe with the life of your Spirit,  
That we may work with you  
Towards the unity of your whole creation.  
Amen.

Jan Berry

## **For the freedom of the whole creation**

May the God in whose image we are made,  
Strengthen us in our struggle,  
Embrace us in our weakness,  
And inspire us with hope for a different future:  
As we work, separately and together  
For the freedom of the whole creation.  
Amen.

Jan Berry

## **Spontaneous love of the creator**

The spontaneous love of the creator renew us;  
The sacrificial love of the Christ reconcile us;  
The sanctifying love of the Spirit restore us;  
and blessing of grace, mercy and peace  
be on us and all whom we love,  
this day and for always.  
Amen.

Terry Oakley

## **God of strength, of truth and of love**

In the darkness, God, source of strength,  
be present with us to guard and protect,  
rest and encourage.

In the dawn, God, spring of truth,  
reveal yourself to us to inspire and guide  
refresh and renew.

In the daylight, God, spirit of love,  
show us the way to justice and peace,  
unity and joy.

Terry Oakley

## **Living God**

Living God,  
may our hearts feel the beat of your love for all;  
may our hands reach out to each other in healing;  
may our lips be open to drink in the delight of life;  
may our ears hear the agony of inhumanity;  
may our eyes see Christ in the stranger.  
Breathe your Spirit into us  
so that we are filled with the life of Christ.  
Amen.

Terry Oakley

## **Bring us to new life**

God of creative beginnings – bring us to new life;  
Saviour with healing hands – make us whole;  
Spirit of wisdom – send visions to old and young.  
With grace, mercy and peace bless us and those around us,  
This day and each day.  
Amen.

Terry Oakley

## **May the God of peace sanctify you entirely**

May the God of peace sanctify you entirely;  
and may your spirit and soul and body  
be kept sound and blameless  
at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

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