

Prayers during week commencing 31st May 2020

Praying for Others

Is there someone in your church community who is struggling at this time? You might choose to read Isaiah 43 prayerfully, holding that person in your mind and offering your own praises for God's care for that person.

Praying for our Nation and the World - Joel

The book of Joel (chapter 2 verses 28 – 29) is quoted by Peter in Acts 2. There are parallels for our time: Joel wrote to people who had found material plenty, but in their comfort had lost their passion for serving God. He describes graphically and poetically the devastation and famine which shakes them out of their comfort. Turn back to me, says God, the people of God need to lead the nation back. Then Joel gives the promises from God that they will eat in plenty, praising God and then God's Spirit will be poured out.

Omnipotent God, I pray for your world as we respond to the challenges of Covid-19. May we be shaken where material comfort has been our focus. When governments and scientists cannot protect, may prophets in all nations point the way back to you. May the spiritual hunger of this crisis awaken us all to your grace and your glory.

Praying for Ourselves

Pour out your Spirit on me, O God.

Strengthen me and give me courage,

as you blessed Peter, an ordinary, denying, fisherman.

May I too speak out for you – through prophesy, vision or dreams,

in tongues or interpretation, give me the words of life,

in context and in time, to share your love.

O Spirit of God, fill me, form me, focus me.

Come Holy Spirit, Come.

Amen

SHARING IN PRAYER FOR OUR DISTRICT AND OUR WORLD

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have called you by name, you are mine.

**²When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.**

³For I am the LORD your God,

the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour. (Isaiah 43: 1b-3)

Isaiah 43 offers wonderful words of encouragement and hope. The promises find their purpose in verse 21 which reminds us that our response to all God's graciousness is to declare God's praise.

This week as we pray for our circuits we invite you to pray for everyone across our District: may we be alert to watch and listen for where God's Spirit is moving; and pray for courage to work with God in new ways.

Day	For our District	For our Wider World
Sun 31 st May	Faith communities across our District	Those manufacturing and distributing essential equipment.
Mon 1 st June	District Policy Committee members	President, Vice-President, Secretary of Conference.
Tues 2 nd June	Communities across our District	Communities which are still particular Covid-19 hotspots.
Wed 3 rd June	Darlington Circuit	Voluntary services in our communities.
Thur 4 th June	Middlesbrough & Eston	Police, ambulance, fire and rescue services.
Fri 5 th June	Stockton Circuit	Global tensions caused or exacerbated by the pandemic
Sat 6 th June	Castle Eden Circuit	School governors, teachers and staff.

Lectio divina

during week beginning 31st May 2020

[Acts 2: 1-21](#)

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

2When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

5 Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?' ⁸And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.' ¹²All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' ¹³But others sneered and said, 'They are filled with new wine.'

Peter Addresses the Crowd

14 But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: 'Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. ¹⁵Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. ¹⁶No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ "In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. ¹⁸ Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹ And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist.

²⁰ The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day. ²¹ Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

LECTIO: READING

As you read the words again underline or highlight words which stand out for you. Notice and appreciate what is written.

MEDITATIO: MEDITATING

Place yourself amongst the disciples. What does the passage mean for you today? Which words is Jesus speaking to you?

ORATIO: PRAYER

Respond sharing all you have noticed with God. Listen for God to respond to you.

CONTEMPLATIO: CONTEMPLATION

Be still before God. Invite God to be with you. Give time for the words you have read and the meaning you have found to suggest action in your own discipleship. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what God wants you to see and how to respond.

Lectionary readings for 31 May

Numbers 11: 24-30; Psalm 104: 24-34, 35b; John 20: 19-23

Finding a rhythm of prayer and reflection in lockdown.

At your chosen time each day this week: pause to pray the simple yet transformational prayer: "**Come Holy Spirit, come.**"

Praying with hymns – this week use as prayers the words of hymns from the section beginning at 369 in Singing the Faith, or 279 in Hymns and Psalms.