

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, SIGHTHILL

20 AUGUST 2023

PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER

A SUNDAY SERVICE DEDICATED TO PRAYING FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

He is Lord

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTbhnTeF4yE>

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: God of all creation,

All: we thank you for this world

And for all your good gifts to us.

Leader: God of safe harbour,

All: when we are afraid we come to rest ourselves in your love.

Leader: God of mission and provision,

All: give us our daily bread and prepare us for service in your kingdom.

Leader: Let us worship God.

OPENING HYMN:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwuDSw-9cUQ>

Holy holy holy
Lord God Almighty
Early in the morning
Our song shall rise to Thee

Holy holy holy
Merciful and mighty
God in three persons
Blessed Trinity

OPENING PRAYER

Leader: God of the story, God of the conversation, we are here. We are here to hear your voice In each other's voices. We are here to see you in each other's insights. Jesus, we are here

All: We are here for you.

Leader: We are here – we who are tired, and we whose energy is boundless; we who are burdened with worry, and we who are excited about the future. We who are strangers and we who are old friends. Jesus, we are here

All: We are here for you.

Leader: We are here – we who have come full of questions, and we who have come full of faith; we who have come eagerly and we who are reluctant. We creatures of habit, and we who are restless. Jesus, we are here

All: We are here for you.

Leader: God of the story, God of the conversation, meet us here, in silence and sound, in stranger and friend, in challenge and comfort, in new and in ancient, in the mundane and in the surprising. Jesus, we are here

All: We are here for you. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

BIBLE READINGS: JOHN 17:18-21, JAMES 5:16

OFFERING/HYMN: GOD WILL MAKE A WAY

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fCd_fNFOhQI&t=18s

PRAYERS

PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH

You who led your people through the wilderness to the promised land, who carried the faithful through the throes of Good Friday, to the joy of Easter Day:

Hear us as we pray for your people today, in this land and at this time...

- When we fear what lies ahead,
- when we feel overwhelmed by the task of pointing people to your love and mercy:
- Remind us that you are a living God,
- still at work,
- still planning and promising...

When our heads go down and our shoulders droop:

Lift our eyes that they may look into yours and see there a love that will not ever let us go. Amen

PRAYER FOR OUR CONGREGATIONS

Pray For:

- places where there is growth – that this will be encouraged and lessons shared
- places where new initiatives must be tried – for risk-takers and pioneers
- places where there is fragility and loss – for God to be present in our vulnerability
- places where difficult decisions may need to be made.

Dear God, we pray for our congregation. May worship be truthful, passionate and honouring to you. Whether in ancient hymns or new songs, may we unite in praise and offer our whole lives as worship to you.

In our life together may we encourage where there is struggle, celebrate where there is joy, grow together in our understanding of the Good News, be unafraid to challenge, honest enough to confess our mistakes and may we remain hopeful as we dream dreams.

In our mission make us bold and adventurous. In our weakness may we know your strength. May we have the great joy of seeing others come to faith in you. May we be resilient in our pursuit of justice and have the humility to share in the work with others.

May our congregation be a place where the gifts of many are united in common purpose, where all are allowed to flourish and be valued, where together we are built into a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit, as together we grow in love. AMEN

PRAYER FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

Pray For:

- local schools – Nursery, Primary and Secondary, Colleges and Universities, for pupils, students and staff
- local healthcare practices, hospitals and care homes
- leaders – Councillors, community leaders, MPs and MSPs
- change – especially where there are inequalities to be challenged, where the most vulnerable must find a home.

Dear God, we pray for our communities: the people we are called to love, the people amongst whom we

work; us, together, within our communities; every one known to you and loved by you.

Grant us discernment that we might know how to serve in practical and spiritual ways, that we might more fully understand the lives of others, that we might embody the love of God in everything we do as part of these communities.

Grant us courage to stand with those on the margins, to challenge inequalities, to fight injustice and to be a light in the darkness.

Grant us humility, to recognise the poverty of our understanding and the depth of your wisdom, to acknowledge the riches of your grace and your endless desire to renew, as today, your presence renews our lives.

May our community be a place where the gifts of many are united in common purpose, where all are allowed to flourish and be valued, where together we are built into a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit, as together we grow in love. AMEN

PRAYER FOR OUR CHURCH

Pray for:

- the regional church where 46 Presbyteries help the church to flourish locally
- the work of councils and committees who implement decisions of the General Assembly
- the General Assembly that it might discern where God is leading us
- all the people who make up these bodies
- the Church of Scotland's engagement with the world of politics and issues of justice
- the Council of Assembly's work with others to produce a Radical Action Plan. Please pray for this challenging work. Pray for all to hear God and to respond with action.

Dear God, we pray for our Church: many parts yet one body under the authority of Jesus Christ. From north to south, east to west, help us build your Kingdom, to see lives transformed.

May our Presbyteries be places of inspiration, support and encouragement. Give to them a vision for what church could be. Help them to see the possibilities and to have the courage to reach out in faith.

When faced with difficult decisions grant them wisdom and grace. May our councils and committees seek to support congregations and presbyteries.

With dedicated staff and enthusiastic volunteers may they be a force for good throughout our land. May the Church of Scotland be a place where the gifts of many are united in common purpose, where all are allowed to flourish and be valued, where together we are built into a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit, as together we grow in love, Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: ON CHRIST THE SOLID ROCK I STAND

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhVwVHC6_n0

BENEDICTION AND SANG AMEN

Leader: God in our stories and in our conversations. We have met with you as our journeys have come together for a time. We have each heard the story of another, holding for a while that which is not ours. Seeing you in the face of another, hearing you in the voice of another, Knowing you in our midst; and so...

All: May we continue to see you, hear you and know you, as we journey on.

AND MAY THE GRACE...