

**Night Prayer At Home,
All Saints' Cottenham
with Rampton
Sunday 24 October 2021**

Preparation

The eternal God
is your refuge,
and underneath are the everlasting arms.



Deuteronomy 33.27

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.
Amen.

Our help is in the name of the Lord
who made heaven and earth.

Take a moment to think about the day gone by, giving thanks for what was good and bringing to God those times that need His forgiveness.

Lord God,
We have sinned against you;
We have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing
and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore us to the joy of your salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Take a moment to thank God that through Jesus' sacrifice we are forgiven.

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

Psalm for Sunday 24 October 2021
Evening Prayer

Psalm 119.121-125

I have done what is just and right;
O give me not over to my oppressors.

Stand surety for your servant's good;
let not the proud oppress me.

My eyes fail with watching for your salvation
and for your righteous promise.

O deal with your servant according to your faithful love and teach me your
statutes.

I am your servant; O grant me understanding,
that I may know your testimonies.

Scripture for Sunday 24 October 2021
from Morning Prayer

Luke 14.1, 7-11

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely. When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honour, he told them a parable. 'When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honour, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, "Give this person your place", and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, "Friend, move up higher"; then you will be honoured in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.'

Short talk



A banquet hosted by the Queen for President Trump.

Where would you be sitting if you were a guest here? What does it mean to serve? What can we learn from the wisdom of children?

Last week in Junior Church we looked at Mark chapter 10. James and John wanted to be the two most important people with Jesus in his kingdom (or rather what they thought his kingdom would be like).

Tonight's readings both include ideas of servanthood and status.

The psalmist is wondering how to understand and how to serve God.

Jesus's parable is about everyone's status before God and how we see each other in community.

Here's what our young people said last week in answer to some starting questions:

Why do James and John (and maybe some Christians today) think they are more important than others?

Some of their answers:

James and John thought like that because they'd travelled with Jesus for a long time.

There are different statuses in church.

Also there are normal people.

But everyone is as important as each other.

What do you think are the most important jobs in the church today?

Some of their answers:

The vicar – they lead the church.

The choir – they help the singing.

The churchwardens – they do lots of things such as unlocking the church and getting ready for the communion.

Sides-people – they say hello to people and get books ready.

**'Whoever wants to be great must become a servant'. What does Jesus mean?
How can that work today?**

Some of their answers:

If you want to be a good person you need to help others.

You'll have to work for success.

And not let power go to your head.

Caveat alert! Clearly in a 15 minute discussion in Junior Church we couldn't explore every aspect of what church means. But their answers are interesting.

If you are in the list above, how do you feel?

The children see you as most important.

That's very affirming.

And possibly humbling too?

If your role is missing from the list above it does not mean it is not valued. I hope not, anyway, because they didn't mention Junior Church leaders!

Both adults and children do notice how people serve others not just on Sundays but on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays too.

The psalmist prays:

*I am your servant; O grant me understanding,
that I may know your testimonies.*

Jesus says in his parable:

...when your host comes, he may say to you, "Friend, move up higher"; then you will be honoured in the presence of all who sit at the table with you.

Here's a prayer by Janet Morley to help with those times in our lives when we're really not sure where we stand (or sit). We pray for confidence in God's presence, whatever our status in society.

Honour and respect

When honour and respect
are not daily what greets me;
when my work is unvalued,
my needs dismissed,
or my voice unheard,
teach me my dignity.
For with you, O Lord,
I have confidence,
and in your presence
I shall never be put to shame.

Amen.

Intercessions for ourselves and for others

God of our ancestors,
whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation and whose love reaches to the ends of the earth,
grant us your grace,
that in serving others as you serve us
we may remain steadfast in commitment and generous in our care,
that the world would glimpse in our actions
a reflection of your constancy and tenderness,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

We give thanks for those who serve patiently and quietly, over the years.

Today we especially give thanks for Jean, Cheryl's mother, for her years of service to church life and to Romsey Mill in Cambridge.

We pray now for healing.

God of love, in whom all our wounds are healed and our suffering is soothed,
send into our spirits your healing mercy.

We pray that all that is hurting within us
may be comforted
and all that is broken within us made whole.

We pray for our own healing.

Silence.

We pray that we might bring words of encouragement, hope and peace, to
others in their need.

We pray for the grace and care to listen to and encourage others.

We name them to you, God.

Silence.

Be present, O merciful God,
and protect us through the silent hours
of this night,
so that we who are wearied
by the changes and chances
of this fleeting world,
may rest upon your eternal changelessness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

Collect

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy;
may Your holy angels dwell with us
and guard us in peace,
and may Your blessing be always upon us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Conclusion

In peace we will lie down and sleep;
for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.

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

The Lord bless us and watch over us;
the Lord make His face shine upon us and be gracious to us;
the Lord look kindly on us and give us peace.
Amen.



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