

Christ Church, Ipswich

Sunday 26th July 2026

Family Worship

Hello, I hope you are well. Let us worship God together:

Call to Worship

We look for God in the dramatic.
We discover God in the ordinary.
Invited by God to slow down,
we freshly open our eyes to slowly see
God's life breaking into our awareness, all around.

A Gathering Prayer

Loving God,
thank you for the wonder
of our interconnected universe,
sustained and held in being by your love.
Tiny seeds nurtured by earth,
that grow into great scrubs,
sheltering creatures.
Barely visible yeast cultures
leavening flour for bread.
Treasures that make life precious and joyful.
Wisdom handed down to us, freshly understood.
Your reign breaks in around us in so many ways;
help us to see and rejoice. Amen.

R&S 405 Angel voices ever singing

1 Angel voices ever singing
round thy throne of light,
angel harps for ever ringing
rest not day nor night;
thousands only live to bless thee,
and confess thee,
Lord of might.

2 Lord, we know that thou rejoicest
o'er each work of thine;
thou didst ears and hands and voices
for thy praise design;
craftsman's art and music's measure
for thy pleasure
all combine.

3 In thy house, great God, we offer
of thine own to thee,
and for thine acceptance proffer,
all unworthily,
hearts and minds and hands and voices,
in our choicest
psalmody.

4 Honour, glory, might and merit
thine shall ever be,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
blessed Trinity;
of the best that thou hast given
earth and heaven
render thee.

Francis Pott (1832-1909) altd.

A prayer of adoration

Father, all time is in your hand, unfolding;
we see so little of it in a lifetime,
yet sometimes it is overwhelming.
God of the kingdom of heaven,
you are our haven in life's storms,
our lifeline in calamity;
we watch and await your coming in power. **Amen.**

A prayer of confession

Lord, we confess that the concerns of the world weigh us down.
 We worry about our needs, our wants, how others perceive us.
 We are so overwhelmed that we fail to riddle the gold from life's dross.
 We turn to you, seeking the assurance that your kingdom is with us and among us;
 help us to discern where it lies, so that we may turn our backs on all else.
 Grant us the patience to seek you and your ways
 with the forbearance you show as you wait for us. **Amen.**

An assurance of forgiveness

Almighty God, although we take forever, you have forever –
 you are the God of Eternity.
 We are slow to seek you,
 slow to learn, slow to grow in faith;
 but when we are faltering,
 you wait sure and steady to forgive us;
 when we are lacking in trust,
 you forgive us and persist in working out your ways despite us.
 Thank you, O God of forgiveness and forbearance. **Amen.**

A prayer of praise and thanksgiving

God, we thank you for teaching us the things that matter,
 the things of true value.
 We praise you that the treasures of your kingdom
 are hidden beneath the mundanity,
 and sometimes the drama, of everyday life;
 and that they are often there in small ways that,
 if nurtured, grow in abundance.
 Thank you for your pearls of wisdom and your seeds of faith.
 Let your Kingdom grow among us.. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Family Talk

R&S 512 Seek ye first the kingdom of God

1 Seek ye first the kingdom of God,
 and his righteousness,
 and all these things shall be added unto you;
 allelu, alleluia:

Alleluia
alleluia, alleluia,
allelu, alleluia!

2 Ask, and it shall be given unto you,
 seek, and ye shall find;
 knock, and the door shall be opened unto you;
 allelu, alleluia:

3 We shall not live by bread alone,
 but by ev'ry word
 that proceeds from the mouth of God
 allelu, alleluia:

Based on Mat 6:33, 7:7 and Deut 8:3
 Karen Lafferty (1948-) alt.
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A prayer for our young people

Epistle Reading**Romans 8:26-39****NT page 146**

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit¹ intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

God's Love in Christ Jesus

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written,

'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

R&S 499 Have faith in God, my heart

1 Have faith in God, my heart,
trust and be unafraid;
God will fulfil in every part
each promise he has made.

2 Have faith in God, my mind,
although your light burns low;
God's mercy holds a wiser plan
than you can fully know.

3 Have faith in God, my soul,
his cross for ever stands;
and neither life nor death can pluck
his children from his hands.

4 Lord Jesus, make me whole;
grant me no resting-place,
until I rest, heart, mind and soul,
the captive of your grace.

Bryn A. Rees (1911-83) altd. © Mrs M Rees

Gospel Reading**Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52****NT page 13***The Parable of the Mustard Seed*

³¹ He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'

The Parable of the Yeast

³³ He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.'

Three Parables

⁴⁴ 'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵ 'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷ 'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Treasures New and Old

⁵¹ 'Have you understood all this?' They answered, 'Yes.' ⁵² And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.'

Reflection

A moment for reflection

Hymn Longing for light, we wait in darkness

1 Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
Light for the world to see.

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

2 Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.
Christ, be our light...

3 Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
Shared until all are fed.
Christ, be our light...

4 Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
Walls made of living stone.
Christ, be our light...

5 Many the gifts, many the people,
Many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
Making your kingdom come.
Christ, be our light...

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Our prayers of intercession

As we recall the Genesis story of Jacob the deceiver becoming the deceived, we pray for all who have fallen prey to deception - romantically, financially or otherwise.
God of justice, help the deceived navigate the emotions maze in the knowledge that you are there amid the mess.

We pray for families, for those rejected by loved ones, parents, siblings, and for those people rejected by society. At the onset of schools' long summer holidays, we pray for parents and grandparents juggling childcare around work. We pray for working parents who have no-one to help them and for children left to fend for themselves for hours at a time.
God of love, help the rejected, the lonely and the neglected to navigate the emotions maze in the knowledge that you are there amid the mess.

We pray for the new Prime Minister, the fourth under King Charles' reign. We pray the Prime Minister and his new cabinet will have the integrity to bring stability and unity to this country.
God of truth and power, guide those in government to navigate the messy maze of politics and be aware of your presence amid the mess.

We pray for our ever-changing climate and the adaptations needed to cope with increasing temperatures. We pray for our farmers reliant on the weather for their livelihoods and for those farmers who have lost crops and grazing pasture due to the wildfires.
God of mercy help us all to navigate the maze of climate change in the knowledge that you are there amid the mess.

We pray for your Church at home and abroad. We pray for Christians around the world having to meet and worship in secret. We pray for all churches here threatened with closure due to falling numbers and revenue. We pray for the churches that are seeing growth and pray for new Christians setting out on their journey of faith.

We pray for your children ministering in this country and abroad. We pray for those in our own communities reaching out to the needy: the hungry, the lonely, the destitute, the victims of crime and the bereaved.

We pray for Christians the world over showing your love and compassion to those in need, especially to those suffering amid conflicts. We think especially of the war in Ukraine, the hostilities in the Middle East, and the famine in Sudan.

God of blessing, mercy and grace, we pray your provision as we navigate the messy maze of life. May your presence with us help and sustain us in navigating the situations we face day by day, knowing that you bring good out of all things. **Amen.**

R&S 489 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart

1 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,
naught be all else to me, save that thou art—
thou my best thought in the day and the night,
waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.

2 Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word,
thou ever with me and I with thee, Lord;
thou my great Father, thy child let me be,
thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.

3 Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight;
be thou my dignity, thou my delight,
thou my soul's shelter, and thou my strong tower;
raise thou me heavenward, great Power of my
power.

4 Riches I heed not, nor earth's empty praise,
thou mine inheritance, now and always;
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
High King of heaven, my treasure thou art.

5 High King of heaven, thou heaven's bright sun,
grant me its joys after vict'ry is won;
heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Ancient Irish poem
tr. Mary E. Byrne (1880-1931)
and Eleanor H. Hull (1860-1935) altd.

A sending out prayer

Loving God,
thank you for your reign breaking in, all around,
for those with eyes to see.
May the light of your love be focused within us.
May we create space in our hearts to treasure it.
And may we be of service to your love, now and always. **Amen.**

The Blessing

And may the blessing of Almighty God,
Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer,
be with you, and those whom you love,
now and always. **Amen.**

The Grace

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all evermore. Amen.**