

Parish Church of St. Paul, Ipswich
Parish Church of St. Thomas, North Ipswich



Eastertide Resources for use in the home during the
COVID-19 pandemic

10 -23 May

Introduction

The prayers for the next two weeks are based upon those used in the Celtic tradition. The seven days of the week reflect the seven days of the Creation from Genesis which are treated as theophanies or 'showings' of God. The light of the first day, for instance, is seen as an expression of the divine light that is at the heart and origin of all life. The second day reflects the wildness of creativity; the third, the earth's fecundity; the fourth, the harmony of masculine and feminine; the fifth, the goodness of the senses; the sixth, the fathomless mystery of humanity made in the image of God; and the seventh, the stillness that is essential to life's renewal.

Short passages are included for meditation. The oldest forms of meditative prayer in Christian practice consists simply of repetition of words from Scripture in the silence of the heart. In Celtic spirituality this discipline of silent meditation is viewed as opening the eyes of the heart in order to see God in all things.

The meditative passages do not attempt to follow the cycle of readings throughout the year. For those who wish to keep up their Bible reading, a short lectionary is included at the back of the booklet.

Sunday Morning Prayer

I wait for you, O God,
My soul waits
And in your word I hope.
My soul waits for you, O God,
More than those who watch for the morning
More than those who watch for the morning

Psalms 130:5-6

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

Opening Prayer

I watch this morning
For the light that the darkness has not overcome.
I watch for the fire that was in the beginning
And that burns still in the brilliance of the rising sun.
I watch for the glow of life that gleams in the growing earth
And glistens in sea and sky
I watch for your light, O God,
In the eyes of every living creature
And in the ever-living flame of my own soul/
If the grace of seeing were mine this day
I would glimpse you in all that lives.
Grant me the grace of seeing this day.
Grant me the grace of seeing

Scripture and Meditation

With you is the fountain of life
Jesus said, "I am the light of the world"

Psalms 36:9
John 8:12

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Blessed are you, O Child of the Dawn,
For your light that dapples through creation
On leaves that shimmer in the morning sun
And in showers of rain that wash the earth.
Blessed are you
For the human spirit dappled with eternal light
In its longings for love and birth
And its pain-filled passions and tears.

Blessed are you, O Christ,
For you awaken me to life.
Blessed are you
For you stir me to true desire

Pray for the coming day and for the life of the world

Closing Prayer

May the light of God illumine the heart of my soul.
May the flame of Christ kindle me to love.
May the fire of the Spirit free me to live this day, tonight and for ever.

Sunday Night Prayer

“I commune with my heart in the night, I meditate and search my spirit.”
Psalm 77:6

Be still and aware of God’s presence within and all around

Opening Prayer

Out of the silence at the beginning of time
You spoke the World of life.
Out of the world’s primeval darkness
You flooded the universe with light.
In the quiet of this place
In the dark of the night
I wait and watch.
In the stillness of my soul
And from its fathomless depths
The senses of my heart are awake to you.
For fresh soundings of life
For new showings of light
I search in the silence of my spirit, O God.

Scripture and Meditation

“You are my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?” *Psalm 27:1*
“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it”.
John 1:5

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Thanks be to you, O God,
For the night and its light,
For the stars that emerge out of evening skies
And the white moon's radiance.
Thanks be to you
For the earth's unfolding of colour
And the bright sheen of creatures from ocean depths
In the darkness of the world
And in the night of my own soul
Let me be looking with longing for light
Let me be looking in hope

Recall the events of the day and pray for the life of the world

Closing Prayer

May the grace of the night's stillness be mine
May the grace of the moon's guidance be mine
May the grace of heaven's vastness be mine
To renew my soul in sleep
To enlighten my dreams in the night
To open my spirit to eternity
Until the angels of light awaken me
Until the morning angels awaken me

Monday Morning Prayer

"You are wrapped in light as with a garment, O God, you ride on the wings of the wind."

Psalms 104:2-3

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

Opening Prayer

For the morning light
And its irresistible dawning,
For your untameable utterances of life
In boundless stretches of space
And the strength of the waves of the sea
I give you thanks, O God.

Release in me the power of your Spirit
That my soul may be free
And my spirit strong.
Release in me the freedom of your Spirit
That I may be bridled by nothing but love
That I may be bridled only by love.

Scripture and Meditation

You are my strength, O God, and I love you.

Psalm 18.1

Jesus said, 'Out of your heart shall flow rivers of living water.'

John 7:38

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

For the might of your wind on the waters
For the swelling of the open sea
And the rushing of crested waves
Thanks be to you, O God.
For the strength of desire in my body
For the sap of life that flows
And the yearnings for birth and abundance
Thanks be to you.
Restore me in the image of your love this day
That the longings of my heart may be true.
Restore me in the image of your love this day
That my passions for life may be full.

Pray for the coming day and for the life of the world

Closing Prayer

In the beginning, O God,
Your spirit swept over the chaotic deep like a wild wind
And creation was born.
In the turbulence of my own life
And the unsettled waters of the world today
Let there be new birthings of your Spirit.
In the currents of my own heart
And the upheavals of the world today
Let there be new birthings of your mighty Spirit.

Monday Night Prayer

“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.” *Psalm 90:2*

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

Opening Prayer

In the infinity of night skies
In the free flashing of lightning
In whirling elemental winds
You are God.
In the impenetrable mists of dark clouds
In the wold gusts of lashing rain
In the ageless rocks of the sea
You are God and I bless you.
You are in all things
And contained by no thing.
You are the Life of all life
And beyond every name.
You are God and in the eternal mystery I praise you.

Scripture and Meditation

Happy are those whose strength is in you. *Psalm 84:5*
Jesus said, “The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes, so it is with everyone who is born of the spirit.” *John 3:8*

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

For your Spirit woven into the fabric of creation
For the eternal overlapping with time
And the life of earth interlaced with heaven's vitality
I give your thanks, O God.
For your untamed creativity
Your boundless mystery
And your passionate yearnings
Planted deep in the soul of every human being
I give you thanks.
Grant me the grace to reclaim these depths

To uncover this treasure
To liberate these longings
And in being set free in my own spirit
To act for the well-being of the world.

Recall the events of the day and pray for the life of the world

Closing Prayer

O Brother Jesus
Who wept at the death of a friend
And overturned tables in anger at wrong
Let me not be frightened by the depths of passion.
Rather let me learn the love and anger
And wild expanses of soul within me
That are true expressions of your grace and wisdom.
And assure me again that in becoming one like you
I come closer to my true self
Made in the image of outpouring Love
Born of the free eternal Wind.

Tuesday Morning Prayer

“I lift up my eyes to the hills – from where will my help come? My help comes from God, who made heaven and earth.” *Psalms 121:1-2*

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

Opening Prayer

In the beginning, O God,
When the firm earth emerged from the waters of life
You saw that it was good.
The fertile ground was moist
The seed was strong
And earth's profusion of colour and scent was born.
Awaken my senses this day
To the goodness that still stems from Eden.
Awaken my senses
To the goodness that can still spring forth
In me and in all that has life.

Scripture and Meditation

O taste and see that God is good.

I came that you may have life, and have it abundantly.

Psalm 34:2

John 10:10

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

The world is alive with your goodness, O God,

It grows green from the ground

And ripens into the roundness of fruit.

Its taste and its touch

Enliven my body and stir my soul.

Generously given

Profusely displayed

Your graces of goodness pour forth from the earth.

As I have received

So free me to give.

As I have been granted

So may I give.

Pray for the coming day and for the life of the world

Closing Prayer

I have tasted the fruit of the earth, O God.

I have seen autumn trees hang heavily with heaven's gifts.

I have known people pregnant with your spirit of generosity,

Let these be guides to me this day.

And may Mary who knew her womb filled with your goodness

Teach me the wisdom that is born amidst pain.

May I know that deeper than any fallowness in me

Is the seed planted in the womb of my soul

May I know that greater than any barrenness in the world

is the harvest to be justly shared.

Tuesday Night Prayer

“For you alone, O God, my soul waits in silence, from you comes my salvation.”

Psalm 62:1

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

Opening Prayer

O God of the high mountains
O Christ of the fertile valleys
O Spirit of the earth
From whose dark soils burst forth fresh life
And from which my own body and soul are born
Be to me this night
The bestower of grace
Be to my body and soul this night
The generous giver of love.

Scripture and Meditation

The earth is full of your goodness, O God. *Psalm 33:5*
Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a
single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. *John 12:24*

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

For earth's cycles and seasons
For the rising of spring and the growing summer
For autumn's fullness and the hidden depths of winter
Thanks be to you, O Christ.
For the life force in seeds buried in the ground
That shoot green and bear fruit and fall to the earth
Thanks be to you.
Let me learn from earth's cycles of birthing
The times and seasons of dying.
Let me learn of you in the soil of my soul. O Christ,
And your journey through death to birth.
Let me learn of you in my soul this night
And the journey of letting go.

Recall the events of the day and pray for the life of the world

Closing Prayer

Glory be to you O Holy Seed of all that has been born
For earth, sea and sky in vibrancy of colour.
Glory be to you O Light of Life
For your liberation of earth's bound treasures.
Glory be to you I River of delight

Surging through the heart of creation.
Renew me this night in the depths of sleep,
Set free my dreams of the unknown.
Safeguard this time of resting, O God,
Enfold me in the darkness of the night.

Wednesday Morning Prayer

“Awake my soul! I will awake the dawn, and give you thanks, O God.”
Psalm 57:8-9

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

Opening Prayer

Within the rising of the sun
Life rises again within me, O God.
In the dawning of the morning light
You lead me from the mists of the night
Into the clarity of the day.
In the new light of this day
Bring me to a clearer knowing
Of the mystery that first bore me from the dark.
Bring me to a clearer knowing
Of the love from which all life is born.

Scripture and Meditation

Let me hear of your steadfast love in the morning for in you I put my trust.
Psalm 143:8
Jesus said ‘This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.’
John 15:12

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

For the first showings of the morning light
And the emerging outline of the day
Thanks be to you, O God.
For earth's colours drawn forth by the sun
Its brilliance piercing clouds of darkness
And shimmering through leaves and flowing waters
Thanks be to you.

Show to me this day
Amidst life's dark streaks of wrong and suffering
The light that endures in every person.
Dispel the confusions that cling close to my soul
That I may see with eyes washed by your grace
That I may see myself and all people
With eyes cleansed by the freshness of the new day's light .

Pray for the coming day and for the life of the world

Closing Prayer

O Sun behind all suns
I Soul within all souls
Grant me the grace of the dawn's glory
Grant me the strength of the sun's rays
That I may be well in my own soul
And part of the world's healing this day
That I may be well in my own soul
And part of the world's healing this day.

Wednesday Night Prayer

“Yours is the day, yours also the night;
You made the luminaries of the sky
The sun, moon and stars.”

Psalm 74:16

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

Opening Prayer

Glory be to you, O God of the night,
For the whiteness of the moon
And the infinite stretches of dark space.
Let me be learning to love the night
As I know and love the day.
Let me be learning to rust its darkness
And to seek its subtle blessing.
Let me be learning the night's way of seeing
That in all things I may trace the mystery
Of your presence.

Scripture and Meditation

Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation.

Psalm 25:5

Jesus said 'You will know the truth and the truth will set you free.'

John 8:32

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

That you have placed a harmony of lights in the heavens

That night is followed by day

And the glowing of the moon by the glistening of the sun

Thanks be to you, O God.

That you have placed a harmony of lights in my soul

That there is gentleness and firmness of strength

Intuitive knowing and enlightened reasoning

Thanks be to you.

Let me be so sure of your love of harmony in all things

That I seek it in my own depths

And in knowing it in my inner life

Yearn for it in the torn relationships of my world

Man and woman

Black and white

Sun and moon in a harmony of movement

Recall the events of the day and pray for the life of the world

Closing Prayer

In the beginning, O God,

You placed seeds in the womb of the earth.

On the surface of the earth and in its seas and skies

You made male and female of every species

And above the earth

You called the two great lights into relationship

Renew me this night

In the fruitful intermingling that you have woven into creation

That I may wake to the morning

Enlivened by love that I may wake to the morning

Enlivened by love.

Thursday Morning Prayer

“You show me the path of life, O God. In your presence there is fullness of joy.”

Psalm 16:11

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

Opening Prayer

As the light of dawn awakens earth's creatures
And stirs into song the birds of the morning
So may I be brought to life this day.
Rising to see the light
To hear the wind
To smell the fragrance of what grown from the ground
To taste its fruit
And touch its textures
So may many inner senses be awakened to you
So may my senses be awakened to you, O God.

Scripture and Meditation

You satisfy the thirst, and fill the hungry with good things.
Jesus said 'I am the bread of life.'

Psalm 107:9
John 6:35

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

That you formed my body in the darkness of the womb
And fashioned every creature from the soil of the earth
Thanks be to you, O God.
That you knitted into my senses
A thirst for water and a hunger for food
And wove into every living being
Desires for life
And pleasure in their satisfaction
Thanks be to you.
Let me be alert
To the yearnings that you have placed within me
And let me know what will truly satisfy the desires of my heart.
Let me be attentive
To the yearnings that you have planted in every human being

And let me be sure of what will fulfil them.
Let me be guided by your wisdom, I Christ,
Let me be guided by your wisdom.

Pray for the coming day and for the life of the world

Closing Prayer

The vitality of God be mine this day
The vitality of the God of life.
The passion of Christ be mine this day
The passion of the Christ of love.
The wakefulness of the Spirit be mine this day
The wakefulness of the Spirit of justice.
The vitality and passion and wakefulness of God be mine
That I may be fully alive this day
The vitality and passion and wakefulness of God
That I may be fully alive.

Thursday Night Prayer

“As a deer longs for flowing streams so my soul longs for you, O God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.” *Psalm 42:1-2*

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

Opening Prayer

In the darkness of the evening
The eyes of my heart are awake to you.
In the quiet of the night
I long to hear again intimations of your love.
In the sufferings of the world
And the struggles of my life
I seek your graces of healing.
At the heart of the brokenness around me
And in the hidden depths of my own soul
I seek your touch of healing, O God,
For there you reside
In the hidden depths of life, O God,
There you reside.

Scripture and Meditation

You turn a desert into pools of water, a parched land into springs of water.

Psalm 107:35

Jesus said 'I am the resurrection and the life.'

John 11:25

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

When it seem there was no hope

I have seen your light in the eyes of a child.

When it seem there was no joy

I have heard your delight in the voice of a friend.

When it seemed that life was stale

I have smelled the freshness of sunlight on my skin.

When all seemed emptiness

I have touched your presence in the hand of a stranger.

When the future seemed barren

I have tasted life's moisture on the lips of another.

Thanks be to you, O God,

For your embodied love.

open my senses to your presence

That I may love you and care for you in all things.

Recall the events of the day and pray for the life of the world

Closing Prayer

You have given me eyes to see with, O God.,

And ears to hear life's sounds and sorrows

And yet me seeing and hearing

Like my tasting and touching

Are wounded and weakened by failures

As rest can heal the sores of a body

And sleep restores its strength

So may our angels of grace visit me in the night

That the senses of my soul may be born afresh.

Visit my dreams with messengers of grace, O God,

That the senses of my soul may be born again.

Friday Morning Prayer

“It was you, O God, who made my inmost self, you knot me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”

Psalm 139:13-14

Be still and aware of God’s presence within and all around

Opening Prayer

In the morning light, O God,
May I glimpse again your image deep within me
The treads of eternal glory
Women into the fabric of every man and woman.
Again may I catch sign of the mystery of the human soul
Fashioned in your likeness
Deeper than knowing
More enduring than time.
And in glimpsing these threads of light
Amidst the weakness and distortions of my life
Let me be recalled
To the strength and beauty deep in my soul.
Let me be recalled
To the strength and beauty of your image in every living soul.

Scripture and Meditation

You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.
Psalm 51:6
Jesus said “The spirit will guide in into all truth.”
John 16:13

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

That wisdom was born with me in the womb
Thanks be to you, O God.
That your ways have been written into the human body and soul
There to be read and revered
Thanks be to you.
Et me be attentive
To the truths of these living texts.
Let me learn
Of the law etched into the whole of creation

That gave birth to the mystery of life
And feeds and renews it day by day.
Let me discern the law of love in my own heart
And in knowing it
Obey it.
Let me be set free by love, O God. Let me be set free to love.

Pray for the coming day and for the life of the world

Closing Prayer

Glory be to you, O God,
For the gift of life
Unfolding through those who have gone before me.
Glory be to you, O God.
For your life planted within my soul
And in every soul coming into the world.
Glory be to you, O God,
For the grace of new beginnings
Placed before me in every moment and encounter of life.
Glory, glory, glory
For the grace of new beginnings in every moment of life.

Friday Night Prayer

“When I look at the heavens, the work of your hands,
The moon and the stars that you have made;
What are human beings that you are mindful of them,
Children of the earth that you care for them?
Yet you have created us a little lower than the angels,
And crowned us with glory and honour.”

Psalms 8:3-5

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

Opening Prayer

For the night skies opening outwards
Star upon star
Expanse after expanse
Thanks be to you, O God.
For the mystery of your presence

In and beyond all that can be seen
Thanks be to you.
Guide me further this night
Into the inner universe of my soul
Ever opening inwards
Light upon light
New depth after new depth.
Guide me through strange and fearful spaces
Towards the place of your eternal dwelling
And assure me again that in drawing closer to you
I draw closer to the heart of every living being
That in drawing slower to you
I approach the heart of life.

Scripture and Meditation

I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart

Psalm 40:8

Jesus said 'It is the spirit that gives life.'

John 6:63

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

That life is conceived out of passion
And that your passion for life
Has been sown within every human being
Thanks be to you, O God.
For the desires in women and men for children
And the life long yearnings of mothers and father
For the well-being of their sons and daughters
Thanks be to you.
For the hopes of friends for one another
And the cries of whole societies and nations
For justice and freedom for their people
Thanks be to you.
Rekindle in me your passion for life, O God,
Rekindle in me your passion for life.

Recall the events of the day and pray for the life of the world

Closing Prayer

Renew me this night in the image of your love

Renew me in the likeness of your mercy, O God.
May any refusal to forgive
That lingers with me from the day
Any bitterness of soul
That hardness my heart
Be softened by your graces of the night.
Renew me in the image of your love, O God.,
Renew me in the likeness of your mercy

Saturday Morning Prayer

“Long ago you laid the foundations of the earth and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish but you endure; the wear out like garments but you are the same and your years have no end.”

Psalm 102:25-27

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

Opening Prayer

In the silence of the early morning
Your Spirit hovers over the brink of the day
And new light pierces the darkness of the night.
In the silence of the morning
Life beings to stir around me
And I listen for the day's fist utterances.
In earth, sea and sky
And in the landscape of my own soul
I listen for utterances of your love, O God.
I listen for utterances of your love.

Scripture and Meditation

Be still and know that I am God.

Psalm 46:10

Jesus said, 'I give you eternal life, and your will never perish.' *John 10:28*

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

For the night followed by the day
For the idle winter ground
Followed by the energy of spring

For the infolding of the earth
Followed by bursts of unfolding
Thanks be to you, O God.
For rest and wakefulness
Stillness and creativity
Reflection and action
Thanks be to you.
Let me know in my own soul and body
The rhythms of creativity that you have established
Let me know if my family and friendships
The disciplines of withdrawal and the call to engagements.
Let me know for my world
The cycles of renewal
Given by you for healing and health
The pattern of the season
Given by you for the birth of new life.

Pray for the coming day and for the life of the world

Closing Prayer

In the business of this day
Grant me a stillness of seeing, O God
In the conflicting voices of my heart
Grant me a calmness of hearing.
Let my seeing and hearing
My words and my actions
Be rooted in a silent certainty of your presence.
Let my passions for life
And the longings for justice that stir within me
Be grounded in the experience of your stillness.
Let my life be rooted in the ground of your peace, O God,
Let me be rooted in the depths of your peace.

Saturday Night Prayer

“Blessed are you, O God, for you give me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me.” *Psalm 16:7*

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

Opening Prayer

As it was in the stillness of the morning
So may it be in the silence of the night
As it was in the hidden vitality of the womb
So may it be at my birth into eternity.
As it was in the beginning, O God,
So in the end may your gift be born
So in the end may your gift of life be born.

Scripture and Meditation

With my whole heart I seek you, O God, I treasure your work in my heart. *Psalm 119:10-11*
Jesus said ‘Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.’ *John 14:27*

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

For the darkness of the night
Enveloping the earth
Enclosing the day's labour
Thanks be to you, O God
For the quiet that surrounds me
And your promise of peace deep within me
For the stillness of sleep for my body
And the hope of healing for my soul
Thanks be to you.
I bring not only my own weariness
But the tiredness of people who struggle this night.
I bring not only my own pain
But the sufferings of those who cry out.
Hear my soul's prayers for rest, O god,
Hear my heart's plea for healing.

Closing Prayer

The stillness of God be mine this night
 That I may sleep in peace.
 The awareness of the angels be mine this night
 That I may be alert to unseen mysteries.
 The company of the saints be mine this night
 That I may dream of the river of love.
 The life of Christ be mine this night
 That I may be truly alive to the morning
 That I may be truly alive.

Lectionary Readings

Morning Prayer

Easter 5	Ps 116	Rev 21: 1-2, 9-14
Mon 11th	Ps 28	Jn 12: 20-33
Tue 12th	Ps 105: 1-22	Jn 12: 34-43
Wed 13th	Ps 35: 1-17	Jn 12: 44-50
S. Matthias	Ps 80	Mt 7: 15-27
Fri 15th	Ps 37: 1-17	Jn 13: 12-20
Sat 16th	Ps 38	Jn 13: 21-35
Easter 6	Ps 112	Rev 21: 22-22: 5
Mon 18th	Ps 41	Jn 13: 36-14: 7
Tue 19th	Ps 45	Jn 14: 18-31
Wed 20th	Ps 48	Jn 15: 1-11
Ascension Day	Ps 110	Daniel 7: 9-14
Fri 22nd	Ps 51	Jn 15: 12-25
Sat 23rd	Ps 55: 1-12	Jn 15: 26- 16: 11

Evening Prayer

Easter 5	Ps 135: 1-4, 13-21	Rev 10
Mon 11th	Ps 30	1 Cor 7: 12-24
Tue 12th	Ps 105: 23-45	1 Cor 7: 25-35
Wed 13th	Ps 35: 18-29	1 Cor 7: 36-40
S. Matthias	Ps 33	1 Cor 4: 1-13
Fri 15th	Ps 37: 18-41	1 Cor 9: 1-14
Sat 16th	Ps 39	1 Cor 9: 15-27
Easter 6	Ps 66: 1-8	Rev 11: 15-19
Mon 18th	Ps 114	1 Cor 10: 1-11
Tue 19th	Ps 46	1 Cor 10: 12-22
Eve of Ascension	Ps 99	Col 2: 20-3: 4
Ascension	Ps 97	Rev 5: 1-10
Fri 22nd	Ps 52	1 Cor 10: 23- 11:1
Sat 23rd	Ps 55: 13-28	1 Cor 11: 2-16