

# 11<sup>th</sup> August 2024 – Morning Service

## THE Prayer

Kingswinford All-Age Planning Team

### Call to Worship

We gather together to worship God

**Who comes to us when we least expect it**

**Who calls us out of the safety of our ordered lives**

Who connects with us through prayer

And invites us to join Him in the adventure of faith.

**Let's worship God together.**

### Lord's Prayer Drama

<b>Person</b>	Our Father, who is in heaven....
<b>God</b>	<i>(interrupting as soon after 'Our Father' as possible)</i> Yes?
<b>Person</b>	Don't interrupt me! I'm praying
<b>God</b>	But you called me.
<b>Person</b>	Called you? I didn't call you. I was praying. Our Father who is in heaven...
<b>God</b>	There, you did it again.
<b>Person</b>	Did what?
<b>God</b>	Called me. You said, "Our Father who is in heaven." Here I am. What's on your mind?
<b>Person</b>	But I didn't mean anything by it. I was, you know, just saying my prayers for the day. I always say the Lord's Prayer. It makes me feel good, sort of like getting a job done.
<b>God</b>	All right. Go on.
<b>Person</b>	Hallowed be your name...
<b>God</b>	Hold it! What do you mean by that?
<b>Person</b>	By what?
<b>God</b>	By "hallowed be your name"?
<b>Person</b>	It means...it means.... Good grief! How should I know what it means? It's just part of the prayer. <i>(pause)</i> By the way, what does it mean?
<b>God</b>	It means honoured, holy, wonderful.
<b>Person</b>	Ah, that makes sense. I never thought about what hallowed meant before. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
<b>God</b>	Do you really mean that?
<b>Person</b>	Of course! Why not?
<b>God</b>	What are you going to do about it?
<b>Person</b>	Do? Nothing, I suppose. I just think it would be rather good if you got control of things down here the way you have up there.
<b>God</b>	Have I got control of you?
<b>Person</b>	Well, I go to church.
<b>God</b>	That isn't what I asked you. What about that bad temper? You've really got a problem there you know!
<b>Person</b>	Stop picking on me! I'm just as good as some of those hypocrites down at the church!
<b>God</b>	Excuse me, but I thought you were praying for my will to be done? If that is to happen, it will have to start with the ones who are praying for it. Like you, for example.
<b>Person</b>	Oh, all right! I guess I do have a few hang-ups. Now that you mention it, I probably could name some others.

<b>God</b>	So could I.
<b>Person</b>	I haven't thought about it much until now, but I really would like to cut out some of those things. I really would like to know how to be free.
<b>God</b>	Good! Now we're getting somewhere! We'll work together, you and I. Some real victories can be won. I'm proud of you!
<b>Person</b>	Look, Lord, I need to finish this up here. This is taking a lot longer than it usually does! Give us this day our daily bread.
<b>God</b>	You probably need to cut down on the bread and try some vegetables as well!
<b>Person</b>	Hey! Wait a minute! What is this? Here I am doing my religious duty and all of a sudden you break in and remind me of all my faults!
<b>God</b>	Praying is a dangerous thing. You could end up changed, you know. That's what I'm trying to bring across to you. You called me, and here I am. It's too late to stop now. Keep on praying. I'm interested in the next part of your prayer. <i>(Pause)</i> Well. go on!
<b>Person</b>	I'm scared to...
<b>God</b>	Scared of what?
<b>Person</b>	I know what you'll say!
<b>God</b>	Try me and see
<b>Person</b>	Forgive us our sins as we have forgiven those sin against us
<b>God</b>	What about Peter Brown?
<b>Person</b>	See! I knew you would bring him up! Why, Lord he told lies about me, and he cheated me out of some money. I swear that I'll get even with him.
<b>God</b>	But your prayer. What about your prayer?
<b>Person</b>	I didn't mean it.
<b>God</b>	Well, at least you're honest! But it's not much fun carrying around that load of bitterness inside, is it?
<b>Person</b>	No, but I'll feel better as soon as I get even! Have I got some plans for old Peter!
<b>God</b>	You won't feel any better. You'll feel worse. Revenge isn't sweet. Think of how unhappy you really are. But I'll change all that.
<b>Person</b>	You will? How?
<b>God</b>	Forgive Peter just like I have forgiven you. Then the hate and sin will be John's problem and not yours. You may lose the money, but you will have settled your heart.
<b>Person</b>	It doesn't sound easy, but deep down, I know it would be worth the effort. Thank you, Lord, for helping me work through this. <i>(Pause – and then speaking very fast so God cannot interrupt again!)</i> And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory for ever and ever. AMEN.

## Introduction and Part 1 of THE Prayer

This morning we are thinking about the Lord's prayer – looking at it closely and considering what it means for each of us to pray those words which are so familiar to so many. So, to begin at the beginning.....

*Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be your name*

So – how do we go about 'hallowing God's name'? Well, to hallow means to honour as holy, to bless, to revere, to worship, to glorify – so we are going to do that in prayer and then in song.

## Prayer of Praise

You are the God who formed us, **We praise your glorious name.**

You are the God who loves us, **We praise your glorious name.**

You are the God who forgives us, **We praise your glorious name.**

You are the God who saves us, **We praise your glorious name.**

You are the God who calls us, **We praise your glorious name.**

You are the God who empowers us, **We praise your glorious name.**

You are the God who sends us, **We praise your glorious name.**

## StF 40 – Blessed be the name of the Lord

1) Blessed be the name of the Lord,  
Blessèd be the name of the Lord,  
Blessèd be the name of the Lord,  
Most high. *(Repeat)*

2) Glory to the name of the Lord,  
Glory to the name of the Lord,  
Glory to the name of the Lord,  
Most high. *(Repeat)*

*Ch) The name of the Lord is  
A strong tower;  
The righteous run into it  
And they are saved. (Repeat)*

3) Holy is the name of the Lord,  
Holy is the name of the Lord,  
Holy is the name of the Lord,  
Most high. *(Repeat)*

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## StF 77 – Give thanks to the Lord

1) Give thanks to the Lord, our God and King:  
His love endures forever.  
For He is good, He is above all things.  
His love endures forever.  
Sing praise, sing praise.

*Ch) Forever, God is faithful  
Forever, God is strong  
Forever, God is with us, forever  
Forever, God is faithful  
Forever, God is strong  
Forever, God is with us, forever, forever*

2) With a mighty hand and an outstretched arm,  
His love endures forever  
For the life that's been reborn  
His love endures forever  
Sing praise, sing praise,  
Sing praise, sing praise

3) From the rising to the setting sun,  
His love endures forever.  
By the grace of God, we will carry on.  
His love endures forever.  
Sing praise, sing praise  
Sing praise, sing praise

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## Part 2 of THE Prayer

Moving on to.....

*Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*

In our opening sketch we heard God telling the pray“er” that if His kingdom is to come on the earth then it will have to start with the ones who are praying for it. We regularly pray this line – so what does it mean? Well it doesn’t mean that it is just going to happen without any input from us. Rather it means that we are called to work together with God and with one another following the example of Jesus. As Rev Alan often says, we are to get involved in the mess and muck of life. We are expected to listen to God’s will; to respond to His will; to do His will, wherever and whenever we can.

Think for a moment about the kingdom values you have shown to others, or have been shown to you, this last week.....some suggestions might be: *Peace; love; service; humility; grace; mercy* (although this is not an exhaustive list!).....

If we pray “Your Kingdom Come – Your will be done” then we need to pray it in expectation that it will happen. So before we spend time in our prayers of intercession, let’s just pause quietly, allowing the power and presence of God to fill our minds and souls, so that we are ready to hear and respond and do our part in fulfilling God’s will here on earth.

## **Prayers of Intercession**

*The kingdom of God is justice and joy, for Jesus restores what sin would destroy*

Almighty God, we pray for your world. Too often we see oppression, injustice and discrimination; we see war, hatred and misuse of power. We ask for a blessing on charities and individuals who stand up for your people. Grant them your wisdom to fight on with courage and determination, knowing that you lead and support them in every move they make. Make us bolder too, as your church, to step out and speak up for those whose voices are drowned out by the big noises of this world.

Your kingdom come; **Your will be done.**

*The kingdom of God is mercy and grace, the prisoners are freed, the sinners find place*

Lord of all, we pray for the world-wide church; our district; circuit and your church here. We pray for those who guide, teach and lead your people within your church - ministers, local preachers, worship leaders, stewards, teachers; and for all those who live out your teaching in their daily lives, reflecting your love wherever they are. Send your Spirit upon us that we may be renewed in our work of serving you and filled with joy and enthusiasm to share the good news of the gospel.

Your kingdom come; **Your will be done.**

*The kingdom of God is challenge and choice*

Lord, living your way is not easy. Guide us in our daily lives; help us to make the right choices by involving you in our decision making. We pray too for all those in positions of authority throughout the world. May we all be willing to listen to that still, small voice which urges us to speak and act truthfully, even if it means being humble and making a sacrifice.

Your kingdom come; **Your will be done.**

*God's kingdom is come, the gift and the goal, in Jesus begun, in heaven made whole*

Heavenly Father, we praise you for your kingdom promises that will be fulfilled in heaven. Until then we pray that you will help us to follow the example of Jesus and demonstrate the working out of these promises here and now that all may come to know you and experience life in all its fullness.

We pray for all those who are weighed down with worry, illness, grief, loneliness, insecurity. We especially remember those listed today in our prayer book/on our hearts today:.....

May the weary and heavy laden know your comfort and peace, that they may have the faith to hand their troubles over to you. Bless all who work to improve the health and wellbeing of your flock. Give them patience, love and strength to share the load.

Your kingdom come; **Your will be done.**

Holy God, we know that you will respond to the needs of your children. If that means you call us to help, then we pray that we will hear and respond willingly. Open our ears to hear; our eyes to see; and our hearts to respond to the needs of our world. Amen.

We continue our worship with STF 407 – Hear the call of the Kingdom. The author of this hymn – Stuart Townend – has said this.... *Thematically it’s a response to God’s call for us to worship, to live for Him, and to share His love with those around us. As we are filled with His passion and power, we will see the life-changing power of the gospel at work in the whole world. It’s a song of celebration and commitment!*

## StF 407 – Hear the call of the kingdom

1) Hear the call of the kingdom,  
Lift your eyes to the King;  
Let his song rise within you as a fragrant offering  
Of how God, rich in mercy,  
Came in Christ to redeem  
All who trust in his unfailing grace.

2) Hear the call of the kingdom  
To be children of light  
With the mercy of heaven, the humility of Christ;  
Walking justly before him,  
Loving all that is right,  
That the life of Christ may shine through us.

Ch) *King of heaven, we will answer the call.  
We will follow, bringing hope to the world,  
Filled with passion,  
Filled with power to proclaim  
Salvation in Jesus' name.*

3) Hear the call of the kingdom  
To reach out to the lost  
With the Father's compassion  
In the wonder of the cross,  
Bringing peace and forgiveness,  
And a hope yet to come:  
Let the nations put their trust in him.

*Keith & Kristyn Getty and Stuart Townend © 2006 Thankyou Music CCL No. 515642*

## Part 3 of THE Prayer

And so we come to:

*Give us this day our daily bread*

Earlier our sketch reminded us that praying can be a dangerous thing. Give us this day our daily bread...what are we really asking for when we pray this line? If praying can be dangerous, then we must be sure what this request means. Bread is one of the oldest foods in our history, it has been and is the staple food in numerous cultures and has even been relied upon as a form of currency, but this line is not concerned with white sliced over granary. Understanding these seven simple words means grasping that bread means more than just physical provision because God has that covered:

*Psalm 145:15-16 - All eyes are on you, expectant; you give them their meals on time. Generous to a fault, you lavish your favour on all creatures.*

Instead praying for a staple of life reminds us that we ask not for what we want but for what we need, and not just for ourselves but for each other in the knowledge that we join our voice to all those calling to our Father who has shown beyond doubt that he takes care of all that is required.

The last time we spent the evening with the Brownies and Rainbows we explored the Lord's Prayer with them, a bit like we are doing this morning. One asked why when we say Give us this day... we don't say Please? It is a good question. The short answer is that the words of Jesus handed down to us don't include, please. Did "please" get lost in translation since the words were first written down or has there formed an expectation, since we ask for something already ours, because of God's proven provision? Whatever the answer it seems that out of the mouth of a child, we have been reminded not to be neglectful of all that God does each day, and to be mindful of our manners when we ask for what we need, so if we don't say please then we should most definitely say "thank you", let us do that now as we pray:

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

Generous God, how do we even start to thank you for all you give and have given? Thank you for our lives, and every moment of each new day. Thank you for the certainty that your grace is enough for a whole world of needs. Thank you that no matter who or what we are your love and power make us more than we could ever be in our own strength. Thank you that no matter what we have done or failed to do, because Jesus died for our sins, because of your Holy Spirit, your grace and mercy enfold us and transform us. May we demonstrate our thankfulness at every opportunity, in thought, in word and in our actions to bring glory and honour to your Holy name. **Amen.**

## Part 4 of THE Prayer

Now, the next line we are going to split into two parts....firstly...

*And forgive us our sins....*

Think for a minute about sin - about what you might consider 'little' sins – those that we don't think are that important really – and 'bigger' sins – those that are more significant and have a big impact on us and the people around us. Below are some sins – have a read and think about a number you might assign to each of them where 1 is the least significant and 10 being the most significant.

- Saying you are busy when you are not just to get out of something you don't want to do
- Refusing to talk to someone because they have upset you
- Pretending not to hear your spouse
- Cheating someone out of money
- Printing stuff out at work without paying for it
- Stealing from a shop
- Giving false evidence in court
- Spreading gossip about someone
- Judging someone negatively for how they look/what they wear/how they speak

Something which is very hard for us to understand is that to God all sins are equal – God doesn't use a numerical scale! This is because whatever the sin, it is an act of rebellion against God. Sin is Sin. Every sin cost Jesus' life. This means that every sin is to God equally wrong but of course, in earthly terms, it doesn't mean that all sins are equally bad. The impact of murder on other humans is greater than the impact of stealing a car for example. This understanding is recognised in law today and in the Old Testament Laws. The understanding that a sin is a sin, is to enable us to avoid self-righteousness, to recognise that we all are reliant on God's grace because we are all sinful. So, in response to this, we are going to pray.....

## Prayer of Confession

Your forgiveness is total, no notebook, no digital recorder or post-it note to remind you of that moment when....[Pause]. You take our confession, offered with hands outstretched and gently, like the loving heavenly Father that you are, put it to one side to be forgotten. No grudges, no itching for judgement. No resentment or ill-will. Not like us, who find it easy to say sorry but so hard to forgive, absolutely. Forgive us, Father, that we are often more willing to accept forgiveness, than to forgive. More willing to accept your love, than to share it with those who have hurt us. Teach us to forgive, as you forgive. **Amen.**

## Part 5 of THE Prayer

And so we move on to the second part of this line of the prayer, and if you can, get a key to hold for this section.....

*...as we forgive those who sin against us.*

Jesus teaches us to forgive those who have wronged us so that we can be free to live. He teaches us forgiveness for our own good. You see unforgiveness is a bit like a prison. When we choose to not forgive someone/or struggle to .....it is like we are in prison. In that prison we are alone with our anger, our hatred and our pain.....and the longer we stay in that prison of unforgiveness the more our hearts will be affected. Our joy will gradually go, our peace will fade away, our personality will change, we will become bitter. You might think – but where is the justice in that? It's not fair that I am suffering whilst the person who has hurt me gets on with their life. The truth is that justice comes only after we have chosen to give the person who has hurt us into the hands of God, who is the only one in the position to judge. God tells us to choose the way of forgiveness for our own good more than anybody else's, because forgiveness brings freedom.

Think if there is anyone that has wronged you or wronged someone you love and care for, that you haven't quite managed to forgive completely yet.....you have tried but you just can't let it go...

If you have found a key to hold, then look at the key in your hand (if you haven't then imagine a key at this point). This represents the prison of unforgiveness you might find that you are in. It is in your power, with God's help, to let yourself out of that prison by forgiving – completely and utterly – like God does with us. If you feel that you are in a prison of unforgiveness but are ready to use your key to let yourself out, tell God that now and put your key down, offering it to God. If you are not ready to do this, then talk to God about that now – ask him to continue to work in you to help you get to point where you can let yourself out of your prison of unforgiveness. If you don't have that burden of unforgiveness right now – that is brilliant – thank God now and ask him to keep you that way!

### **Song – For God so loved the world**

For God so loved the world

'L' is for the love that He has for me

He gave His only Son

'I' am the reason He died on the tree

And whoever believes in Him

'F' is for forgiveness and now I am free

Shall not die, but have eternal life.

'E' is to enjoy being in His company.

*John Hardwick © 1993 Daybreak Music Ltd*

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### **Part 6 of THE Prayer**

So now we consider.....

*And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.*

At a recent coffee morning, a self-confessed 'unchurched' member of the coffee community said "I'm going to give in to temptation and have a slice of cake!". On being assured that it was ok because we all give into temptation from time to time, the reply came "But surely avoiding temptation is what you lot are all about!". Of course, they have a point "Us lot" are indeed all about going God's way and avoiding the ways of temptation. However, we are also all about realising that we cannot do this by ourselves, which is why we pray, Lead us not into temptation. God's path is narrow, and it is all too easy to fall off, to stumble and sin, so it makes sense to ask for help from one who understands our individual "temptations" better than we do ourselves. That help comes in numerous ways – a gentle prompt from a friend, a lock on the fridge, even these days apps on our phones which nudge us away from laziness and into activity but primarily of course it comes through the Bible. Let's listen to the advice God offers now:

**Proverbs 3:5-6** - Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track. Don't assume that you know it all.

**Psalms 16:11** - You will show me the path that leads to life; your presence fills me with joy and brings me pleasure forever.

**Psalms 119:105** - Your word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path.

**2 Thessalonians 3:4-5** - Because of the Master, we have great confidence in you. We know you're doing everything we told you and will continue doing it. May the Master take you by the hand and lead you along the path of God's love and Christ's endurance.

So, we are at the end. Please take the time to say the Lord's Prayer now and, having reflected on it as you have read this service say it slowly – with feeling and meaning if you are able to – and let it fully sink in.....

## **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**

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. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. **Amen.**

## **StF 62 – Our God is an awesome God**

Our God is an awesome God.  
He reigns from heaven above;  
With wisdom, pow'r and love,  
Our God is an awesome God.

*Rich Mullins © 1989 Edward Grant Inc CCL No. 515642*

## **Blessing**

May the love of Jesus Christ bring us wholeness, the grace of God the Father grant us peace, the breath of Holy Spirit instil passion and the unity between them give us strength for this and every day. **Amen**