

December Prayers

Advent Intercession

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

Advent God, we long for your coming – for your coming into our world where there is so much unfairness, injustice, lovelessness and violence. Save us from the rose-tinted spectacles with which we like to comfort ourselves at Christmas. Open our eyes again to see the world as you see it.

We pray for economic fairness in our world. Where broken banking systems are patched up but not reformed; where gatherings of the nations' leaders seem unable to see beyond bringing more-of-the-same; where one half-baked solution after another after another seems destined to failure: we long for the presence of the Wonderful Counsellor.

We pray for governments and politicians, so often powerless to overcome the will of those with wealth or position, powerless to confront mighty corporations and business interests. In a world where the wealthiest one percent can afford to avoid paying tax, while the poorest help to subsidise them, we pray for justice in governments – and a vision that extends beyond the next election. Where our governments and politicians are powerless to bring justice, we long for the presence of the Mighty God.

We pray for fatherless children – half the children in our poorest countries, and a quarter of them in our wealthiest. We pray for those who have lost fathers, and those whose fathers have abandoned them.

As we stand with these children, we long for the presence of the Everlasting Father.

We pray for those who have seen too much war: For those who have lost homes and loved ones over pointless conflict, brought about by thinly veiled stupidity, greed or bloodlust.

When our world seems set to tear itself apart – in petty squabbles; in acts of terror; in declarations of war: we long for the presence of the Prince of Peace.

Silence

But unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Lord, if this is you – make yourself real to us. Make yourself known through us. Make yourself at home in our lives. Make your presence felt in our world.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Nativity Scene

Lord we pray for the world in which we live, and which God loves so much he sent his only son:

When in our governments, in our church, in our lives – we become so obsessed with power that we mistreat other people, Help us to see you, the king of heaven, as the fragile infant in a feeding trough.

When the poor and powerless people of our nation and our world, are ignored or exploited, Help us to see the mere shepherds who are invited to witness a royal birth.

When so-called experts in finance, in politics, in business, offer solutions to fix our world, but only seem to make things worse – Help us to see the wise men bow before a vulnerable child.

When we fear the melting ice sheets, the changing environment, the chaos in our climate – help us to see the creatures, looking to Jesus as their hope.

When we feel powerless, helpless to change the world, unable to bring fairness, frustrated because we are too little to make a difference, Help us to see the angels of heaven celebrating the fragile child in a peasant's dwelling.

As we celebrate Christmas – reach into our world, our church, our lives in new ways, and by your grace, help each of us to be humble enough, small enough, powerless enough, vulnerable enough, to become your gift to others.

Christmas

Loving God, giver of life and creator of love, We pray for those who have no gifts to open this Christmas, for parents who will struggle even to feed their children, for children who will have little reason to smile. May we who celebrate Christmas become agents of Good News for them.

We pray for those who do not look forward to this time of year, because of family circumstances, difficult memories and loneliness.

Lord Jesus, who came into our world, be close to them. May we who celebrate Christmas, truly represent you to those on our own doorstep.

We thank you for the reminders of Christmas, for the truth that you have made yourself thoroughly at home in our midst, that we may call you Emmanuel, God with us. Keep us conscious of your loving and living presence, and make us channels of your grace, not just on Christmas Day, but every day. May we and the church in which we worship become ever more truly God's gift to the world.

Christmas Eve

Loving God, giver of life and creator of love, We pray for those who have no gifts to open this Christmas, for parents who will struggle even to feed their children, for children who will have little reason to smile. May we who celebrate Christmas, become agents of Good News for them.

We pray for those who do not look forward to this time of year, because of family circumstances, difficult memories and loneliness.

Lord Jesus, who came into our world, be close to them. May we who celebrate Christmas, truly represent you to those on our own doorstep.

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Christmas Day

Lord Jesus Christ,

On this Day we thank you for coming to earth, to live as one of us.

We thank you for all the presents we have unwrapped.

We thank you for the gifts we have been able to send.

We thank you for the happiness this day brings, And for all the good food we are ready to tuck into.

But we pray for those who are less happy about today,

For those who are hungry or lonely, away from home or sad, ill or unhappy.

Be near to them, and show us how to be as loving and caring, As the Jesus whose birth we celebrate today.

New Years Day

As we enter this New Year, we bring before you our hopes and dreams, our aims and objectives, the best of our intentions and the worthiest of our ambitions. We bring before you all that we hope to make out of this year, and submit it all to your life-changing grace.

When our priorities submerge us in pointless tasks,
When our ambitions fail us or overtake us,
When our hopes seek the fulfilment of none but ourselves,
When our hearts deceive us to think that we are right when we are not

Open our eyes to who you really are.

Open our eyes that we might see the future you have already planned for us.

Grant us:

The courage to seek your kingdom;
The energy to labour where labour is needed;
The wisdom to see when it is not;
The grace to be quiet when we need to listen,
The humility to receive from others,
The compassion to hear and see and love those who nobody wants to hear and see and love.

By your loving-kindness, make us the body of Christ, thriving by the indwelling of your Spirit, bringing glory to the Father.