

## November prayers

### Presence:

God of justice and mercy, have mercy on our world, on the victims of injustice and on the agents of injustice.

In the mess and injustice of our world, with people who are poor, victims of violence and greed, with those whose lives are hunger and thirst and fear – bring us into their presence and bring them into yours.

In governments who frame laws and shape the fates of millions, who tackle injustice and at times, who endorse injustice, bring us into their presence, and them into yours.

In our friendships, show us what it means to be truly present. To listen well, to have the courage to be uncomfortable in one another's presence, bring us into your presence.

In your church, in its righteousness and its failure, give us the courage to be present, truly present, with you – so that the distinctions, the differences, the contradictions between our lives and our worship may disappear, to the glory of your name.

### Zacchaeus:

For your presence with us, we thank you. We praise you because you do not lock yourself in heaven, that we don't need a battering ram to force our way into your presence. We praise you as the God who is with us.

So we pray for the world in which you come to us.

For tax collectors like Zacchaeus, for those who take and distribute tax in order to keep our economies working. For those who plan to reduce Housing Benefits, we pray for a sense of fairness and justice, that money be saved only by withholding it from those who can most afford it.

We pray for those who suffer beneath the poverty line, in our own country and others. For those whose governments do not have the resources or the character to protect them from the consequences of extreme poverty. Lord, we pray for justice and fairness, that food and shelter and security will become a reality.

Forgive us, when we bring nothing to you but our 'to do' list. Forgive us when we want nothing from you but your 'to do' list. Expose us again to the reality of your living and loving and comforting and disturbing presence.

Expose us to you in such a way that our bank accounts, our wardrobes, our garages, our pockets, our computers, our phones, our holidays, our habits, our hopes and desires and motives all come truly under your lordship.

Lord, fill your church with your presence, fill our lives with yourself, that changing who we are does not feel like a goal but an accident, whether we give half what we own to the poor, or learn to apologise to an enemy, fill us with grace, that our lives breath our grace and forgiveness and generosity and love. Make us children of Abraham, and channels of your grace.

Amen.

### **Remembrance Sunday:**

Loving God,

Today we remember all those who have died in war.

We remember soldiers who have given their lives, suffered physical injury or witnessed unspeakable horror.

We remember all who have lost homes and livelihoods and loved ones, because of war.

We remember helpless victims, whose memory is drowned in an ocean of statistics.

We remember,

We look to you,

We ask 'why'?

We ask where you were.

But we see your face

In the fear of the soldier and the despair of the victim

In the broken child and the bereaved parent

In the peace campaigner and the reluctant general.

Awaken us to fight the battles that avert war.

Inspire us to disarm our enemies of hatred,

Forgive us for investing in the tools of war,

Liberate us from the lust for security,

Open our eyes to the true depths of horror in our world, that we may see a deeper hope.

O God, who breaks the rifle, who shatters the missile, and burns the tanks in fire.

Be exalted among the nations

Be exalted in all the earth.

### **Children in the Kingdom:**

Heavenly Father, whose Son welcomed little children, help us to come to you as children.

When we neglect to praise you, remind us of our utter dependence upon you.

When we use you as a means to our own ends, remind us simply to enjoy your company.

When we are plagued with guilt, remind us of your great love for us.

Heavenly Father, help us to come to you as children.

In a world that squeezes us into its mould, help us to recognise our Father's voice.

In a world of poverty and injustice, help us to feel this unfairness in our bones.

In a world that we want to change for the better, help our love for you to remain our priority.

Heavenly Father, help us to come to you as children.

As pride and dignity prevent us from righteous living, teach us to be messy.

As arrogance and pride convince us that we are right, teach us to be humble.

As selfishness quietly sinks its roots into our lifestyle, teach us to share.

Heavenly Father, help us to come to you as children.

Revive in us a sense of wonder at your creation, at your love for the world, at your presence with us.  
By your grace, make us like children in your presence.