

May Prayers

May Day

As warmth returns to the sky and colour to the land, we thank you for the world you have created.

We thank you for the beauty of golden sunrise, budding leaf and good harvest.

But we lament the barren field, the depleted forest, the malnourished child.

We thank you for the beauty of friends, of good relationships, of opportunities for care.

But we lament the damage we have caused to others, the suffering our lifestyles inflict upon those we will never meet, those who have failed because we have succeeded.

We thank you for the opportunities each day brings, for the breath in our lungs and the pulse in our hearts.

But we lament over the time we waste, the people who have little in the way of opportunity, and we pray for those we know, who do not enjoy good health,

God of season, of day, or hour, help each of us to be good stewards of the time, the friends, and the family you have entrusted to our care. Fill us afresh with the Holy Spirit, so that colour and warmth and life flow into our world through the little colonies of heaven you call your church.

Light of the World

Lord, you are the light of the world.

But for many the world is a dark place: For people living with anguish and fear and violence, in the countless places in our world, where news is dark. Let your light shine.

In Japan where crises continue, where consequences of natural disaster cloud both present and future in so many ways; In the minds of suffering and fear and grief. Let your light shine.

In our own country, with government cuts which have yet to have their full effect, we pray for those who already feel themselves engulfed in darkness and despair, Let your light shine.

In our lives, when things don't turn out as planned, when we feel the effects of failure, of guilt, of hopelessness, of loneliness, of violence, anger or despair. Into our lives, let your light shine.

In our church, where we look through eyes that are critical, when we speak words of bitterness, when we perpetrate hypocrisy, tolerate gossip, point fingers, when we would rather judge than love others, rather tear down than build up, rather assume you are on our side than ask seriously whether we are on yours...

Restore our sight; restore our role as your witnesses, to us, for us, through us. Let your light shine, to glorify your name.

The Unexpected God

Lord, we would love to create you in our own image; to share our values and views, to be moved by what moves us, angered by what angers us, to love what we love.

But when you come to us in Christ, you are not what we expect. We cry for liberation – Hosannah – and we pray that you liberate the world in your way.

But we see injustice and violence. In the people of Libya, of Bahrain, in Ivory Coast, in other places – and as we stand with these people, we cry for liberation and we long for you to act.

We see people in Japan, trapped in uncertainty, in grief, in fear. And we stand with these people and cry for liberation.

We see people who we know, imprisoned by bitterness and grief, harbouring resentment and hatred towards others, feeling that a Big Society is failing them. And we stand with these people and cry for justice.

Lord, come to liberate us.

When we are trapped in prisons that we have made; and prisons which we have grown into; or prison which have grown slowly around us,

Come to us, we pray, and bring liberation, the freedom you have prepared for us.
And open our eyes and ears and hearts so that when you come, we recognise you – even when your coming is not what we were expecting.

Make us sensitive to the freedom you bring,
Make us agents of your liberation in the world today,
Make us a people who stand as and alongside those who long to be free, and teach us how to sing Hosannah.

Joy

Lord God, author of all life and of each life, we praise you for this sacred world in which you have called us be your people.

We thank you for the love we have known, the comfort we have enjoyed, the happiness we have tasted. And we pray now for those who feel themselves without love, comfort or happiness.

For those whose relationships have made them less human, who find it hard to trust and to be trustworthy. For those who have been abused or neglected... May they know the reality of your loving-presence, may your Holy Spirit flood into their lives to bring healing. Make us willing to be your means of answering our prayer.

For those who go days without food, for those who have fled their homes, for those without future and without hope. Bring justice and peace, and a comfort that can come only from you. But make us willing to be your means of answering our prayer.

For your church, when it has lost its joy. When joy is battered by hardship, persecution or grief ... When joy is mistaken for entertainment, fake smiles or superficial thrills. Bring the gift of joy, that your church on earth might be a colony of heaven.