



AT HOME SERVICE

Sunday 3rd August 2025

compiled by Angela Banfield - Lay Assistant

I hope you have been able to enjoy the beautiful weather that we have been blessed with this summertime. For those able to go away, or for our families on holiday, we pray they will have a restful and happy time. We particularly ask a blessing on children who have their school holidays in August, along with their teachers too, but if you can't go away for whatever reason, remember that God is happy to stay with you wherever you are.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we give you thanks for your beautiful creation around us. For the kindness of friends and neighbours, for the fellowship of other Christians, and for your ever-present Holy Spirit. We thank you for Jesus, our Saviour, who has promised never to leave us; and for our knowledge of your perfect love that Jesus has made plain through his life, his cross and resurrection.

May we be aware of your loving presence as we worship you today.

In Jesus name we pray. **Amen**

Hymn: 34 in STF

1] O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness,
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his name.

2] Low at his feet lay your burden of carefulness,
high on his heart he will bear it for you,
comfort your sorrows, and answer your prayerfulness,
showing the pathway your feet should pursue.

3] Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness
of the poor wealth you would count as your own;
truth in it's beauty and love in it's tenderness,
these are the offerings to bring to his throne.

4] These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,
he will accept for the name that is dear;
mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,
trust for our trembling, and hope for our fear.

John Samuel Bewley Monsell (1811-1875)

Psalm 49: 1 - 15

Hear this, all you peoples;
give ear all inhabitants of the world,
both low and high, rich and poor together.
My mouth shall speak wisdom; the meditation of my heart shall be understanding.
I will incline my ear to a proverb;
I will solve my riddle to the music of the harp.
Why should I fear in times of trouble, when the iniquity of my persecutors surrounds me,
those who trust in their wealth and boast of the abundance of their riches?
Truly no ransom avails for one's life, there is no price you can give to God for it.
For the ransom of life is costly and can never suffice that one should live on forever and never see the grave.
When we look on the wise, they die;
fool and dolt perish together and leave their wealth to others.
Their graves are their homes forever their dwelling places to all generations,
though they named lands their own.
Mortals cannot abide in their pomp; they are like animals that perish.
Such is the fate of the foolhardy, the end of those who are pleased with their lot.
Like sheep they are appointed for Sheol, death shall be their shepherd;
straight to the grave they descend, and their form shall waste away;
Sheol shall be their home.
But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol, for he will receive me.

We pray together,

Forgive us Lord, when we have laid aside your service to fulfil selfish ambitions. Empower us by your Holy Spirit to choose what is right; give us your love for all mankind, that we might be true witnesses to Jesus our Lord, and bring something of your Kingdom into the world in which we live. In Jesus name we pray. **Amen**

Hymn: 370 in STF

1] Breathe on me, Breath of God;
fill me with life anew,
that I may love what thou dost love,
and do what thou wouldst do.

2] Breathe on me, Breath of God;
until my heart is pure,
until with thee I will on will,
to do and to endure.

3] Breathe on me, Breath of God;
till I am wholly thine,
until this earthly part of me
glows with thy fire divine.

4] Breathe on me, Breath of God;
so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life
of thine eternity.

Edwin Hatch (1835-1889)

Colossians 3: 1 - 5

So, if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory. Put to death therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, (which is idolatry).

Reflection on Colossians 3: 1- 5

I have to admit, that Paul's letter to The Colossians is one of my favourite reads, and I have to make a real effort not to habitually take it up to read in preference to his other letters.

The beauty of the liturgy and depth of thought, as I see it, particularly in chapters 1 and 2, lead me into thinking and praying more deeply than many other texts do. But today's section is a little more gritty, and not quite as easy to get lost in. This is because, cleverly, Paul turns the spotlight upon us, upon mankind, and having reveled in his previous words, I feel compelled to now accept the wisdom that flows in chapters 3 and 4.

We are urged to put to death whatever is worldly, and there's a list of things in verse 5 that I'm sure you shudder at along with me. Possibly the one that hits home most, is Greed. In our comfortable affluent society, it is easy to be critical of people who struggle to survive. I often hear how 'if people spent money on the right things they would have enough' which is marvellous coming from people with wardrobes overflowing with clothes, and fridges and freezers topped up to the brim. The truth is, and I include myself in all of this, if we all spent our money on the right things, everybody would have enough. Everybody! throughout this world of want.

Paul likens Greed to Idolatry. And suddenly my beautiful, go to letter, becomes much less attractive; as I look around at the things that I have squandered money on. Now I hope you will forgive me for sharing a personal story.

Peter and I had been married about a year, when I went off to Church one Sunday morning. I lived very close to the chapel so was home again within an hour and a quarter, and normally he would welcome me home at our door. Not on this day. Over the previous 12 months we had worked very hard to decorate and update our tiny, but 3 storey, house. We had painted everywhere, laid new carpets, and to be honest, I was pretty pleased with our smart and beautiful home. Yes! I admit, I was very proud of it.

Well, this day, I called and there was no reply, just an eerie silence. Then I heard Peter speak quietly from our downstairs utility room. Upon investigation I found him covered head to toe in olive green gloss paint - he couldn't open his eyes for paint but he could just about speak. He said, 'I've ruined everything' and I replied, 'How? I've only been gone an hour.'

Well, he was right. He had nipped up to the top of our house to paint one 8 inch window frame carrying a newly opened five litre tin of gloss paint. As he left our bedroom, he slipped on the top step of the newly carpeted stairs, and threw the paint tin up in the air as he did. It splashed all over the walls the carpets and him, before rolling slowly in front of him down the stairs and continuing through the open lounge door on the second floor, where it finally glugged out its last pint onto the new lounge carpet. He then tried to get downstairs to the undecorated bit of our house, innocently spreading green paint everywhere as he went. He was afraid of what my reaction would be to this catastrophe, and to this day I am pleased to say that I collapsed laughing. It was so awful that there was absolutely no room for anger, and my honest concern was to get the paint off his face and eyes. It took a long time, but eventually we got straight again, and I took it as a lesson about my pride in material things.

Of course we want to live in nice homes, think how Jesus enjoyed his visits to the home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus. I'm sure it was clean and comfortable and loved. But as I found out, possessions and style are mere fripperies in a world of want. If we could all manage with a 'just little less', it could be a life-line for someone needing 'just a little more'.

Prayers of Intercession

Father God, as we have been thinking about things that we might have too much of, or perhaps even endure with too much importance, help us to remember that we are a minority in a world that sometimes struggles to exist. A world where some do not have homes, or places of safety to sleep, a world where many are hungry and thirsty.

As we think about this Father, we know it is wrong, because in your Kingdom there will be no hunger, thirst or homelessness and all will be loved to the uttermost. As we so often pray "Thy Kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven" help us to focus on this, and as your children, strive to make our words a reality.

Precious Father, is it possible that if we sold all our unneeded things, the money might fund healing for those who are suffering? Could our excesses be turned into someone's necessities? Could our spare cash take away the fear of starvation for even one person?

Speak to us now Father as we turn to you, and bless how we respond with your guidance and grace. For we pray in Jesus' name. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 250 in STF

1] Jesus calls us! O'er the tumult
of our life's wild restless sea,
day by day his voice is sounding,
saying 'Christian, follow me.'

2] As of old apostles heard it
by the Galilean lake,
turned from home and toil and kindred,
leaving all for his dear sake

3] Jesus calls us from the worship
of the vain world's golden store,
from each idol that would keep us,
saying 'Christian, love me more.'

4] In our joys and in our sorrows
days of toil and hours of ease,
still he calls, in cares and pleasures:
'Christian, love me more than these'

5] Jesus calls us! By your mercies,
Saviour, may we hear your call,
give our hearts to your obedience,
serve and love you best of all.

Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)

Blessing

May God bless you in all things this day,
and the grace of our Lord Jesus be with you,
this day and forever. **Amen**