

# PRAYERS AND LITURGIES

These prayers and liturgies may be freely used and reproduced for worship, as long as “Ann Siddall, Stillpoint Spirituality Centre and Faith Community” is acknowledged as the source. A number of the liturgies contain responses in bold type but, of course, they may be spoken entirely by the worship leader if this is preferred. You might like to drop me an e-mail to let me know if you find them useful – this will help us to plan on-going production of resource material.



Ann Siddall

## A call to worship in Summer

Within the space of an hour  
a hot summer's day  
can change completely.

First the gathering  
of clouds, and then  
the wind-scattering dust,

followed by the rain  
with a few hesitant drops  
turning into a drenching downpour.

God of sweeping changes,  
may we who gather for worship  
remember that the Spirit blows where it will.

As we enter this sacred space  
remind us that Your comings  
are sometimes swift and invite us to change.

Grant us the faith and the courage  
to say “yes” to however You come to us  
during this time of worship.

AMEN.

# **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

## **In a world of contrasts, may we be faithful**

He was scrabbling in the litter bin  
as I walked along the foreshore,  
desperation dispelling self-consciousness,  
yet with enough dignity  
to carefully examine the bin's contents.

Metres away, behind a restaurant window,  
a group of people in crisp designer shirts  
enjoyed a hearty breakfast, advertised  
as "Luxurious, Continental and only \$25."  
Sometimes we are a world away from others.

God of generosity and grace, of boundless love  
and abundant mercy, who knows when we hunger,  
and who laments our ability not to see others' needs,  
may we who gather here to pray this Sunday morning  
be willing to go out and see our world  
through the lens of Your Gospel.

AMEN.

## **God is not reluctant**

People of God, as we come to prayer  
let us remember that we do not  
have to twist the arm of a reluctant God  
to seek good things for this world,  
nor find ways to persuade a distant God  
to come near and listen to us.

Let us remember that as we pray  
we kneel alongside Jesus Christ,  
in the presence of God,  
with the help of the Spirit.

So let us bring to mind now  
those people who are in need of our prayers:  
those who are ill, or anxious;  
those who are lonely or sad;  
those who are despairing or defeated;  
those who are hungry or homeless;

those whose relationships are breaking apart;  
those who are bullied or abused;  
those who cannot find work;  
and those who are over-worked.  
In silence now, let us make our own specific prayers  
for those on our hearts and minds today.

SILENCE

In the presence of God,  
alongside Jesus Christ,  
with help from the Spirit  
may we go into this week  
to live out our prayers through our lives.

AMEN.

## **Prayers for a country town on hard times**

We remember when many shops were open  
and full of food; when people gathered  
for a cuppa in the tea-rooms, and the  
shelves of the craft centre were stocked  
with souvenirs for passing tourists.

Now only a few places remain open,  
and we grieve for the life that has gone  
from this community which is our home,  
and against whose backdrop we have lived  
and grown in our faith.

We pray for eyes to see our town  
as Jesus sees it, when he strolls here  
in the middle of the day, pausing alongside  
someone who is broken down,  
and wiping the tears from lonely eyes.

We pray that words like “small” or  
“hard times” or “recession” may lose their power,  
and we may find the grace to live the life  
that this community has now, and even  
to be proud of our courage and resilience.

We make these prayers in the place  
where many have prayed before us,  
and we ask that we may again find words of life  
in Your Gospel, acts of kindness in Your people,  
and the strength to continue on this hard journey.

AMEN

## **Light of the world**

In the suffering,  
in the aching,  
in the mourning,  
in the weeping,  
**Jesus, light of the world, shine for us.**

In the raging,  
in the warring,  
in the destroying,  
in the violating,  
**Jesus, light of the world, shine for us.**

In the hoping,  
in the caring,  
in the restoring,  
in the tending and mending,  
**Jesus, light of the world, shine for us.**

In the ending,  
in the beginning,  
in the dying,  
in the rising,  
**Jesus, light of the world, shine for us.**

AMEN.

## **A reflection after Holy Communion**

As we broke the bread and poured the wine,  
as we held out our hands and drank our fill,  
we became part of something beyond ourselves,  
part of Christ, part of each other, part of creation.

We can scarcely imagine the significance  
of what we have just participated in;  
we only know it is a designated place of encounter,  
a thread that binds us across centuries and continents.

We come expecting so little,  
Christ comes, wanting to give so much.  
Familiarity and repetition may blur the meaning,  
but a cloud of witnesses breaks into Alleluias.

Coming here has not changed our situations,  
but strength, hope, grace and love  
have been poured into us  
for the journeys we return to.

Holy is this time, holy is this meal,  
holy is this sacred space we have set apart,  
and holy is the life we are returned to  
to be broken and poured out for others.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

AMEN.

## **An affirmation of faith at the beginning of a meeting or small group gathering**

Friends, let us pause to remember  
that we gather here in the presence of God:  
that God is within us, around us, among us, and between us.

In a moment of quietness,  
I invite you to let go as best you are able  
of the other responsibilities and anxieties of this day,  
and to let yourself settle down  
in the presence of God, who holds you in love.

(Pause)

Like a glowing flame,  
a guiding star,  
a beacon in the storm,  
a light at the end of the tunnel,  
a candle in the darkness,  
God is with us.

(A candle is lit)

May what we do together in this time  
be carried out with a strong sense  
of being at one with God,

at one with Jesus,  
at one with the Spirit,  
and at one with each other.

AMEN.

## **BENEDICTIONS**

May the love of God surround you as you go out from this place,  
and return to your daily life;  
May Jesus Christ always stand before You with an invitation  
to know him and to follow him;  
May the Spirit give you wisdom and grace for the journey,  
and kindle your imagination;  
And may the love of this community  
be like a warm cloak  
to shield you from despair and keep you strong in hope.  
AMEN

God looks upon us with kindness and mercy.  
God's face is turned towards us in love.  
Jesus said "Blessed are the merciful" ...

Let us go from this place  
as those who have been shown mercy,  
and who are ready to show mercy to others:  
In the name of God who created us,  
Of Jesus Christ who calls and commissions us,  
And of the Spirit who fills us with compassion..  
AMEN.

Sisters and brothers in Christ, we have a commission,  
to take the life and love we have celebrated here  
out into our daily lives, our everyday world.

We are not called to go out as those who are perfect,  
or who have all the answers,  
but as those who share the struggle,  
and have found a deep spring to quench our thirst.

So go from this community with our blessing,  
and with the blessing of God, the companionship of Jesus Christ,  
and the guidance of the Spirit. AMEN