



# Praying Together



*Back to Basics*  
*January 2021*

Dear Friends,

Last week we explored the constant turning of the times

and seasons and how they provide for us a backdrop to our lives in all sorts of ways. It reminded me of why we started this letter in the first place and I thought this might be a good opportunity to reflect on this again and refresh our memories on the purpose and importance of regular prayer in our lives.

In March we were in our first lockdown, many were in self-isolation and our church was closed even for private prayer. I don't think any of us had any idea then that this would carry on for so long, and that here we are again, in January, in a similar situation. Being separated from one another was a unique experience then and we felt that though we could not bodily be together, we could be united through our prayers. We, as Christians, are encouraged to pray regularly, and often at the same time, for example morning or evening prayer, ensuring that there is a constant wave of prayer across the world as the sun rises and sets on the different continents.

This week the world unites to pray for Christian Unity. *'This rhythm of prayer, with its traditional forms of structure, hymns and psalms and perhaps, most importantly, silence, might well be an important gift from the ancient Church to the Church of today struggling with pandemics and lockdowns and more widely, with some of the serious challenges that our world faces, most particularly climate change, racism and poverty. This tradition of prayer and spirituality, despite these things that hurt and separate us, invites us into shared prayer and silence together. Surely a most precious gift in these troubled times.'* (Bob Fyffe, General Secretary, Churches together in Britain and Ireland).

A link to follow these prayers on a daily basis is found at the end of this letter.

So friends, let us recharge our prayer batteries and renew our commitment to praying 'together but apart'. I know from my work and the people I meet along the way, that a sense of fatigue and weariness has set in for many and sometimes it is hard to motivate ourselves. Prayer is often difficult, but, with so much taken from us, it is one thing we can still do. The presence of the Holy Spirit remains with us today and always, despite global, national, or personal circumstances. Prayer is always heard by our great and loving God.

**From the Bible:**

**Psalm 5 verses 1-3**

*Give ear to my words, O Lord,  
consider my sighing.  
Listen to my cry for help,  
my King and my God.  
In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice;  
in the morning I lay my requests before you  
and wait in expectation.*

**Romans 8 verse 26**

*'For the spirit comes to help us, weak as we are. For we do not know how we ought to pray, but the spirit pleases with God for us in groans that words cannot express.'*

**Let us Pray:**

**A prayer in time of darkness**

All that I love into Your keeping.  
All that I care for into Your care.  
Be with us by day,  
be with us by night;  
and as dark closes the eyelids with sleep,  
may I waken  
to the peace of a new day.

**Amen**

and, we say again our special prayer, the prayer we have said from the beginning of this difficult time;

God of compassion,  
be close to those who are ill, afraid, or in isolation  
In their loneliness, be their consolation;  
in their anxiety, be their hope;  
in their darkness, be their light;  
through him who suffered alone on the cross,  
but reigns with you in glory,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

<https://manchestermethodists.org.uk/a-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2021/>

*Go with confidence into the days ahead, trusting in God's unfailing love and faithfulness.  
God will not abandon you, for you are the work of His hands – His own creation – and His love endures forever.*

Ali, on behalf of St Michael's Church, Marbury