

Home Prayers

September 20, 2020 • Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

(adapted from the *Book of Alternative Services*, pages 685-679)

*If you are praying with one or more others, the service can be divided between the plain and bold text.
If you are praying by yourself, you can say all of the prayers aloud or silently.*

The Preparation

O God, you command a light to shine out of darkness. Shine in our hearts that we may be as lights in the world reflecting the glory of Jesus in our lives.

God is light and in him is no darkness.

A hymn may be sung. This one can go to the tune Babilone.

1. There's a wideness in God's mercy,
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in God's justice
which is more than liberty.
There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than up in heaven.
There is no place where earth's failings
have such kindly judgment given.
2. There is welcome for the sinner,
and a promised grace made good;
there is mercy with the Saviour;
there is healing in his blood.
There is grace enough for thousands
of new worlds as great as this;
there is room for fresh creations
in that upper home of bliss.
3. For the love of God is broader
than the measures of the mind;
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.
But we make this love too narrow
by false limits of our own;
and we magnify its strictness
with a zeal God will not own.
4. 'Tis not all we owe to Jesus;
it is something more than all:
greater good because of evil,
larger mercy through the fall.
Make our love, O God, more faithful;
let us take you at your word,
and our lives will be thanksgiving
for the goodness of the Lord.

Words: Frederick William Faber (1814-1863)

The collect of the day may be said.

O God,
from your providing hand
even the dissatisfied and grumbling
receive what they need for their lives.
Teach us your ways of justice
and lead us to practise your generosity,
so that we may live a life worthy of the gospel
made known through your Son
Jesus Christ, our Saviour.
Amen.

Reading

The Gospel of the day may be read. Matthew 20:1-16 is appointed for Pentecost 16:

Jesus said, 'For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the labourers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the market-place; and he said to them, "You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right." So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, "Why are you standing here idle all day?" They said to him, "Because no one has hired us." He said to them, "You also go into the vineyard." When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, "Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first." When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, "These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat." But he replied to one of them, "Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?" So the last will be first, and the first will be last.'

Following the reading you may contemplate in silence, or discuss the scripture passage with others, or read a related work of literature.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again
to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Intercessions

Prayers may be offered for the church, those in authority, the world, those in need, and the departed.

Loving God, your generosity is beyond our imagining and all we have is given by you. Hear the prayers we bring for your people.

We give you thanks and praise, O God, for the profligate generosity of your creation, for its beauty to delight us and its bounty to sustain us. We pray for the peace and prosperity of the world; for those who have no daily bread, no shelter or medical care; for those whose livelihood is destroyed or labour exploited. Free us from our greed and indifference, that we may learn to share the resources of the earth and live in harmony with the world you created.

Ever-generous God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We give you thanks and praise, O God, for your abundant mercy toward your people, for your bountiful gifts of redemption and grace. We pray for the ministry and mission of your church; for leaders of churches and all who minister in your name; for those who newly baptized, confirmed, or ordained. Free us from all arrogance and apathy, that we may work humbly and gladly in your service and share with all people your gospel of love.

Ever-generous God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We give you thanks and praise, O God, for your unconditional love for your people, for your acceptance of all without distinction. We pray for our communities, our families, our friends; for those whose daily work enriches us; for those who cannot find work and those whose work is not valued. Free us from our selfishness and envy, that we may establish true communities of care, where no one is neglected, unwanted, or unloved.

Ever-generous God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We give you thanks and praise, O God, for your unfailing compassion for your people, for your sustaining care in times of need. We pray for all who are in distress; for those who are lonely or anxious; for the sad and the grieving; for the sick and the dying and all who care for them. Free them from their anxiety, pain, and fear, that they may find comfort in their sorrow, hope in their despair, and in their terror know your presence.

Ever-generous God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We give you thanks and praise, O God, for you lead your people from the bonds of death to the freedom of everlasting life. We remember all who have died in your friendship and love, the faithful and the unfaithful. We give you thanks for those from our communities who have served you and for all whom we have loved. Free us from all that binds us in death, that following the example of your saints, we may rise with them to eternal life.

Ever-generous God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions can be offered.

This concluding prayer can then be said:

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go forward with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Conclusion

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. Amen.