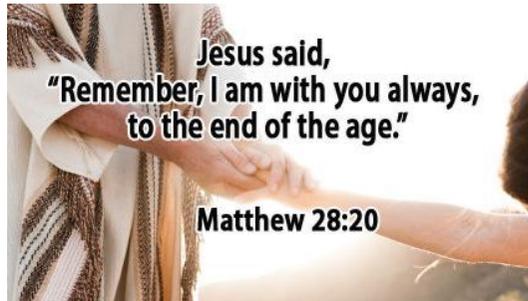


**Saint  
Stephen's**  
Southmead

## **Prayer and Worship with St Stephens Church, Southmead Spring 2020**



*Welcome!*

*If you are a regular member of St Stephens church or the wider Southmead community, or even if you are not, we warmly welcome you to join us in prayer and worship.*

*Please feel free to join us by following any of the suggestions below, or by following our website or facebook group for live and recorded resources.*

*For a time, public worship is paused at St Stephens Church. Many of us are socially distancing ourselves or even isolating for our safety and the benefit of others. Whilst this is what we should be doing, it can be very hard for us as individuals.*

It is really important for us to both support one another in this time, but also to keep being the church. This means looking after each other as best we can (which we're trying to do via phone support among other things), but also remaining to worship, pray together and to continue the church's mission and ministry.

There are many different ways of praying to God, and it is possible to pray at any time and in anyplace or situation. To pray is simply to relate to God.

The hope with this leaflet is

- to continue deepening our relationship with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- for all of us at St Stephens to remain united in common prayer and worship for ourselves, one another, and our communities
- for all to respond to the call of Jesus Christ to follow Him as disciples, to live out the Gospel, and to seek God's Kingdom from day to day whatever the situation is in the world around us

May God bless you during this season my friends.

## **Daily Prayer**

*It's really healthy to have a regular rhythm of prayer and reading the Bible, and many of us have a set pattern already. If you don't, I strongly encourage you to find a pattern of prayer and Bible reading that works for you. Here are some suggestions, there are many others.*

[www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer](http://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer)

[www.pray-as-you-go.org](http://www.pray-as-you-go.org)

[www.biblegateway.com/devotionals](http://www.biblegateway.com/devotionals)

[www.northumbriacommunity.org/offices/how-to-use-daily-office](http://www.northumbriacommunity.org/offices/how-to-use-daily-office)

[www.belovedlife.org/morning-bell](http://www.belovedlife.org/morning-bell)

## **Sunday morning online services**



We will have a weekly recorded biblical reflection posted on our website and facebook group.

We will also continue to worship together on a Sunday morning, in one way or another. Currently we are trying a simple act of worship using our normal Sunday patterns, via the app Zoom, which you will need to download onto either your computer, laptop, phone or other device. Please see our facebook group for details. Anyone is welcome to join us.

## **Personal Prayers**

*We can offer prayers to God at any time and in any place. These are sometimes referred to as arrow prayers; you don't need set words, or even words at all. Here are some suggestions.*



O God,  
help me to trust you,  
help me to know that you are with me,  
help me to believe that nothing can separate  
me from your love, revealed in Jesus Christ  
our Lord.  
Amen.

I am giving you worship with all my life,  
I am giving you obedience with all my power,  
I am giving you praise with all my strength,  
I am giving you honour with all my speech.  
I am giving you love with all my heart,  
I am giving you affection with all my sense,  
I am giving you my being with all my mind,  
I am giving you my soul, O most high and holy God.  
Praise to the Father, Praise to the Son, Praise to the Spirit,  
The Three in One.  
Amen.

## **Prayers for the outbreak**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you taught us to love our neighbour, and to care for  
those in need as if we were caring for you.

In this time of anxiety, give us strength to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick, and to assure the isolated of our love, and your love, for your name's sake.

Amen.

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.

Gracious God,  
give skill, sympathy and resilience  
to all who are caring for the sick,  
and your wisdom to those searching for a cure.  
Strengthen them with your Spirit,  
that through their work many will be restored to health;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### **Praying for our Friends**

*Praying for others is one of the most powerful things we can do. Persistent prayer for others brings transformation to their lives. There are many ways we can build up habits that will help us to pray for our friends and family. Choose five people you would regularly like to pray for. Once you have got 5 names, commit to praying for them regularly.*

Here are five easy ways to pray for five people regularly.  
Choose the one that suits you best:

1. Tie 5 knots in a piece of string, to be carried with you
2. Write 5 names on 5 small stones, left in key places
3. Write 5 names on a bookmark, kept in your Bible, or current book
4. Set 5 names as alerts to prayer for daily on your phone
5. Put 5 names on post-it notes, and leave them on your mirror

You could use the following prayer as you pray for others:



Loving Lord,  
Please work in me so I can share  
your love, life and message  
with.....  
Reveal your love to them, that they  
might know, follow and witness to  
you, for Your Glory. Amen

### **Praying through music**

*Music enhances and enriches our prayerful communication with God. It can calm us down and help to rid ourselves of some of the day's distractions, allowing us to focus more on our relationship with God. Rachel has compiled a St Stephens playlist on Spotify with our favourite worship songs on. If you'd like to add yours please do get in touch.*

“The person who sings, prays twice.”  
- St Augustine

Idea 1 - Sing along and allow the song's words to be your prayer. Sing it. Listen to it. Allow the song to open your heart and mind to conversations with God. If a verse or a few words jump out, enter the conversation with God.

Idea 2 - Choose a piece of meditative, reflective music

- Play the piece of music
- When it is finished, sit in silence for a little while
- Then play the same music again
- This time, listen attentively to the words, tempo, rhythm, patterns and melodies
- What thoughts, feelings come to mind?  
Does the music say anything about what God is like? Is God saying anything to me through this music? Is there anything or anyone I am moved to pray for?
- When the music has finished, be still for a while and then gently bring yourself back to the room.
- End your prayer by saying thank you or using words that are familiar, such as the Lord's Prayer, whichever feels right and comfortable.

### **Spiritual Communion**

*The term 'Spiritual Communion' has been used historically to describe the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some reason from sharing in a celebration of communion, nonetheless shares in the communion of Jesus Christ. The form of prayer below offers Christians an opportunity to give thanks for their communion with him, particularly at times when they would ordinarily be present at the Eucharist. If a household is praying together one person could act as leader and the others as the congregation joining in with the sections in bold. If alone,*

*read all the words aloud. You may want to light a candle before you begin, and have a bible, cross or crucifix to look at or some music to play.*

The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

**All: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*You may wish to pray*

**Lord, have mercy.**

**Christ, have mercy.**

**Lord, have mercy.**

*You may want to pray the Collect of the Day or Week, or one of the following Collects:*

God our redeemer,

you have delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of your Son: grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and

reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**All: Amen.**

Collect for Mission and evangelism:

Almighty God,  
who called your Church to witness  
that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself:  
help us to proclaim the good news of your love,  
that all who hear it may be drawn to you;  
through him who was lifted up on the cross,  
and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**All: Amen**

*You could use one or more of the readings of the day or one  
or more of the following short readings:*

**First Reading - Revelation 3:20**

Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my  
voice and opens the door, I will come in to them and eat  
with them, and them with me.

**Psalm - Psalm 62**

On God alone my soul in stillness waits;  
from him comes my salvation.  
He alone is my rock and my salvation,  
my stronghold, so that I shall never be shaken.

**Gospel - John 6:35**

Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me  
will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will  
never be thirsty.'

**Prayer**

*Spend a few moments praying for the people you know and  
love, for ourselves, our communities, for the needs of the world  
and for an end to the current Pandemic, ending with the Lord's  
Prayer.*

**Act of Spiritual Reception**

**All: O loving God, in union with Christian  
people throughout the world and across the  
centuries gathered to make Eucharist, hearing  
your holy Word and receiving the Precious  
Body and Blood of your dear Son, I offer you  
praise and thanksgiving. Even though I am  
exiled from tasting the Bread of Heaven and  
drinking the Cup of Life I pray that you will  
unite me with all the baptised and with your  
Son who gave his life for us.  
Come Lord Jesus, dwell in me and send your  
Holy Spirit that I may be filled with your  
presence.**

*You might then add one or more of the following prayers:*

Jesus, as the hem of your garment, touched in faith, healed the woman who could not touch your body, so may the soul of your servant be healed, for though I cannot receive you in the sacrament I can, through this offering of my prayer; receive you in my heart; grant this for Christ's sake.

**All: Amen.**

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your disciples, 'I am with you always'. Be with me today, as I offer myself to you. Hear my prayers for others and for myself, and keep me in your care. Hold me in your loving embrace with all you children.



**All: Amen.**

*If you would like to share a sign of having received spiritual communion, such as bread or wine, lighting a candle, sharing a meal, please do so now.*

*You may now want to hold a moments silence or sing a song of thanks and praise.*

### **The Blessing**

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil, and keep us in eternal life.

**All: Amen.**



You can keep in touch with the church by our Facebook group - St Stephens Church Southmead or our website - [www.ststephenssouthmead.co.uk](http://www.ststephenssouthmead.co.uk)

or by contacting one of these people:

Jon, the vicar:

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Hannah, the Church Warden:

[hannah\\_widdows@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:hannah_widdows@hotmail.co.uk)

Rachel, the administrator:

[enquiriesststephenssouthmead@gmail.com](mailto:enquiriesststephenssouthmead@gmail.com) or 07834842635

**Thank you & God bless you**