

PRAYER OF APPROACH, CONFESSION, & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our God, we come to you acknowledging that you are the one in whom we live and move and have our being.

You have created each one of us and your loving care surrounds and keeps us.

You are not contained within any place of worship, and the whole universe you have made is not great enough to hold you.

And yet we can approach you from whatever place we are in, whatever our mood or feeling.

Some of us come with joy and others come with reluctance;

some of us come with sadness and loss, others with fear and anxiety.

Yet you receive us just as we are, and, if we open ourselves to you, can touch us with your healing and loving power, gathering us together as one world wide community of worshipping faith.

We are thankful for your gracious presence among us.

You are our one true and shining light.

In your presence our way can become clearer, and our own light is able to shine by reflecting your light.

Yet we also acknowledge that so often we hide that light, as Jesus said, under a bushel basket.

We lack confidence and are uncertain of ourselves, and find it hard to share the truth we have experienced with others.

We are sometimes afraid to take the risk of sharing our gifts in community, or reaching out in love and friendship.

We do not raise issues which should be raised; we find it difficult to break the silence of anger, or to give or receive forgiveness.

It is so hard to overcome prejudice and bias, to understand others who may be different from us by race or ethnicity or sexual orientation.

Forgive us for the many times we fall short, help us to know ourselves forgiven and give us strength and courage to face each new day, whatever it may bring.

May we grow towards you as plants grow towards the light, seeking always that which is true and genuine, which has real value, which is your gracious will for our lives.

Shine through us with your love and wisdom, healing the hurts of the past and giving us hope for the future.

For we pray in the name of Jesus Christ who lived among us to be light to the world and who taught us to pray together:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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, forever and ever, AMEN...