

# Church News

21<sup>st</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> November 2021

In Colossians, Paul explains his thankfulness to God that the gospel message was received there and was then being spread throughout the world. Through prayer, he asks God to

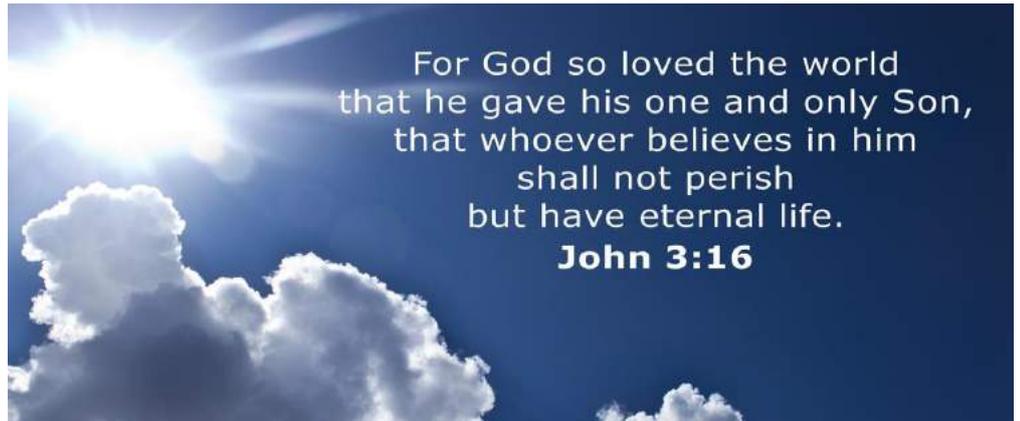
allow those who hear the gospel message to grasp its significance, to understand His will for mankind, and that, as a consequence, their lives be affected positively in the light of this new knowledge.

He encourages the Colossians that, having renounced their old way of living, they should continue to live their lives in Him and be rooted in Him. He reminds them of their old vices and warns them not to be distracted by worldly desires and false teaching. He urges them, as God's chosen people, to persevere and continue to live their lives differently than before and to keep focussed on God, devoting themselves to prayer, watchfulness and thanksgiving.

He sums this up in Col 3:17

*“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him”.*

So, as a maxim for Christian living: if you can't thank God for whatever it is you're about to do or to say, it's probably worth avoiding.



**Richard McPhail**

## Today

- Sunday 21<sup>st</sup>    **9.30am** Morning worship at St Saviour's  
                  **11am** Morning Worship at Christ Church  
                  **6.30pm** Prayer gathering at St Mary's (*or on zoom*)

## Next Sunday

- Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>    **9.30am** All-age Lord's Supper Service at St Saviour's  
                  **11am** All-age Lord's Supper Service at Christ Church  
                  **6.30pm** Prayer gathering at St Saviour's

### **Women's breakfast**

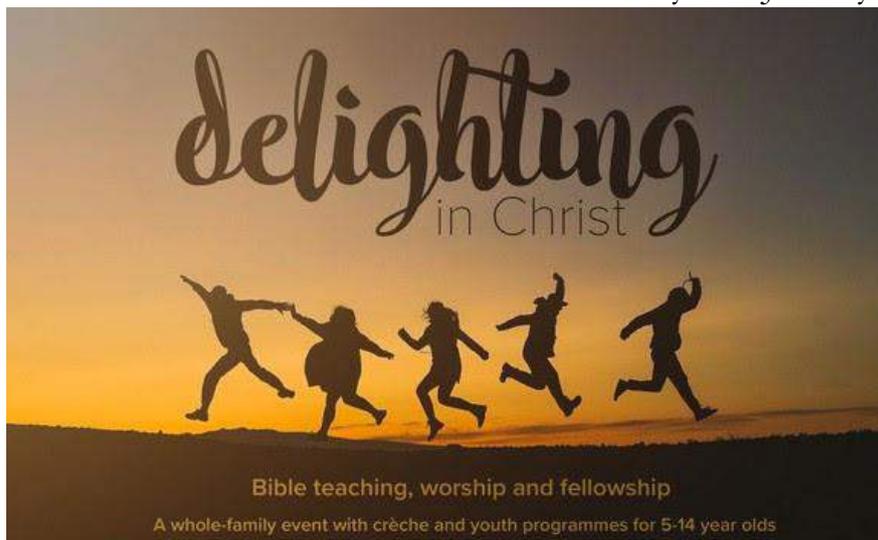
The next Women's breakfast will take place on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November at St Mary's. All ladies welcome. Speaker, Cathy from our Church Office. All welcome.

### **PCC Meeting**

PCC members: if you haven't received your agendas please let Cathy know. The next PCC meeting is due to take place on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021, 7.30pm at Christ Church.

### **North West Gospel Partnership Annual Conference 2022**

Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2022



10am to 4.30pm  
at The Edge, Wigan WN3 5AB.

Speaker: Raymond C Ortlund, Jr,  
President of Renewal Ministries

Cost: Early bird special £15  
(before 19<sup>th</sup> December)  
Full price £18  
(before 18<sup>th</sup> January)  
Pre-Booked under 16's FREE  
(Lunch not included)

The conference is for everyone:

Yorkshire Camps will be running a day of teaching and games for 4-10 year olds and a half day of teaching for 11- 14s. Parent led creche available for babies and preschoolers. Please come and join us as we meet together again in person, to make new friendships and renew old ones, rejoice in our partnership in the gospel, to sing God's praise together and to hear God's Word faithfully and warmly proclaimed.

To book please go to the NWGP website

(<https://www.northwestgospelpartnership.com/event/annual-conference-2022-delighting-in-christ/>) and book online.

### **Lent Appeal for Nekemte**

We have sent a cheque to Crosslinks for £728.41 which is the total raised (including gift aid) by our Lent Appeal this year for Nekemte School for the Deaf in Ethiopia. Thank you to everyone who supported the appeal.

## Readings:

This week: John 4. 43-54      Next week: 2 Samuel 7.1-17

*Please take time to read ahead*

## Weekly Prayer Gatherings

This week's Prayer Gathering details are:

Time: Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2021, 6.30-7.30pm

Venue: Balderstone St Mary's, Oldham Road, Rochdale OL11 2HB

Zoom details: Meeting ID: 991 7890 8003 Passcode: 123531

## Small Group Bible Studies

The Discipleship Explored course based on Philippians continues. Details of all sessions available can be found in the "Regular Mid-Week Events" (*below*). If you were unable to start with but would like to join in, please just choose a session that suits you and turn up - all are welcome to participate in any session.

## Warning - road works affecting Christ Church access

We have received notification the Block Lane will be closed from the roundabout to Cornwall Street from 22<sup>nd</sup> November for up to 5 days. This may restrict access to the church car parking facilities.

## How to give to God's work in your church

To give regularly to your church you can:

- By Standing Order to Account name: Christ Church Chadderton  
Account number: 22384340  
Sort Code: 05 06 46  
Please pick up a Standing Order Instruction (back of church) or create one online
- Through Stewardship – Find our giving page online at:  
<https://www.stewardship.org.uk/partners/20090018>
- By giving weekly through our Planned Giving Envelope Scheme (see Margaret Parrett at Christ Church or Dave Hindle at St Saviour's)
- Weekly offering box

And, of course, if you are a UK taxpayer please complete a Gift Aid declaration form enabling the church to reclaim 25p of tax for every £1 given. Forms available from the back of church. For more information, please see Eric Mee at Christ Church or Dave Hindle at St Saviour's.

## Looking ahead:

1 <sup>st</sup> Dec	<b>Cake &amp; Chat</b>	<i>2pm at Christ Church</i>
5 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Anniversary Sermon</b> <i>preacher Ben Wilkinson</i>	<i>6.30pm at Christ Church</i>
12 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>All Age Nativity Service</b>	<i>9.30am at St Saviour's</i> <i>11am at Christ Church</i>
	<b>Carols by Candlelight</b>	<i>6.30pm at Christ Church</i>
24 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Christingle Services</b>	<i>4pm at Christ Church</i> <i>6.30pm at St Saviour's</i>
25 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Christmas Eucharist (Joint)</b>	<i>11am at Christ Church</i>
26 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Joint Sunday Worship</b>	<i>11am at St Saviour's</i>

## Regular Mid-Week events:

Monday	10am	Noah's Ark Toddler's Group at St Saviour's
	1pm	King's Kitchen and Food Store at Christ Church
	1.30pm	Small group Bible study at St Saviour's
Tuesday	10am	Small group Bible study at St Saviour's
Wednesday	6pm	Rainbows at St Saviour's
	6.30pm	Brownies at St Saviour's
	7.20pm	Discipleship Explored at Christ Church
	7.20pm	Discipleship Explored on zoom ( <i>for link please contact the Parish Office</i> )
	7.30pm	Guides at St Saviour's
Thursday	2pm	Small group Bible study at Margaret Clow's
	7.20pm	Discipleship Explored at Tim & Lindsey Norman's
	7.20pm	Discipleship Explored on zoom ( <i>for link please contact the Parish Office</i> )

## COVID 19 Update

For safe opening we request that the following guidelines are followed:

- All attending use hand sanitiser (available at the door) prior to entering the church
- All attending continue to **wear face coverings**
- We are allowed to sing, preferably from behind face coverings
- **We will continue to take individuals' details** (name, contact telephone number, etc.) each time they attend and retain the information for 21 days after the service. In the case of infection these would have to be passed on to track and trace.

The seating is arranged to give everyone as much space as possible and we ask that you are considerate in where you choose to sit in relation to everyone's safety. If you wish to ensure space is maintained between you and others, please pick up the seat space sign that will be available at the door.

**Anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or has been asked to self-isolate having had contact with someone who has tested positive, or is feeling unwell, should not attend church.**

A video of today's sermon is available through the parish website after the service each week.

### Christ Church and St Saviour's:

**Vicar:** Rev Ben Wilkinson

Telephone: 07878 806174

0161 633 6166

Email: [vicar@christchurchchadderton.co.uk](mailto:vicar@christchurchchadderton.co.uk)

**Parish office:** Cathy Flint

Telephone: 0161 624 2326

Email: [office@christchurchchadderton.co.uk](mailto:office@christchurchchadderton.co.uk)

Website: [www.christchurchchadderton.co.uk](http://www.christchurchchadderton.co.uk)

*The office will be open on weekdays between 9.30am and 1pm.*

# The Parish of Christ Church & St Saviour's Chadderton



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## Sermon Sheet

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2021**

**Jamie Hughes**

Grace mercy and peace from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**Reading:** John 4. 43-54

### **Jesus heals an official's son**

<sup>43</sup> After the two days he left for Galilee. <sup>44</sup> (Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honour in his own country.) <sup>45</sup> When he arrived in Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, for they also had been there.

<sup>46</sup> Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay ill at Capernaum. <sup>47</sup> When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.

<sup>48</sup> 'Unless you people see signs and wonders,' Jesus told him, 'you will never believe.'

<sup>49</sup> The royal official said, 'Sir, come down before my child dies.'

<sup>50</sup> 'Go,' Jesus replied, 'your son will live.'

The man took Jesus at his word and departed. <sup>51</sup> While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. <sup>52</sup> When he enquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, 'Yesterday, at one in the afternoon, the fever left him.'

<sup>53</sup> Then the father realised that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, 'Your son will live.' So he and his whole household believed.

<sup>54</sup> This was the second sign Jesus performed after coming from Judea to Galilee.

## Sermon

Good morning church family it's great that you have joined us here today, it's so good to see you all again and what a great passage we are about to look at. If you are new to the church, may I extend my welcome if we haven't had a chance to meet.

I'm not sure what kind of week you have all had but there would have been times where you have put your trust in someone or something. A time when you have had to believe in someone or something. Maybe even a time when you are looking for answers or a sign.

We are blessed that we can turn to the passage today so see where we should put our trust, put our beliefs and where to look for answers. It's been a while since I was last here, so let me give you a quick update as to how God has been working in my life.

This past month has seen me move from Manchester back home to Edinburgh and I would just like to share how God has done all this, not me, but God. The prayers to God started about a year ago, for doors to open if it was the right move, no doors opened, no problem. Prayers continued over the months, a job role came up, Glasgow City Mission – Project Worker, applied, no success. No problem, God was in control. I was touched by a devotional one morning and had this sense that God was really present and was telling me to care for people, I've never had a feeling this I told my girlfriend, Kirsty. These were the words "Lord, help me to step into the world with a deeper understanding of your intimate love for me, and for others. How can I demonstrate Your love to them today?". God was starting to work.

This may sound silly but I started to see the Scotland flag everywhere, in the clouds in the sky, on number plates while I was driving into work. Didn't hear any Proclaimers songs though!

I had three days holiday last month and I said to my family on Wednesday, is it mad to sell my house and move up to Edinburgh because I feel that's where God wants me to be? They all supported this, calling it a leap of faith. The next day, a job came up at Bethany Christian Trust, I applied, the next day they called, to arrange an interview, on the Monday I had the interview, Monday night they offered me the job. That week, my house got sold, my housemate was moving out that month, a family a few doors down from my Mum and Dad's said I could house sit, the Biblical Counselling course starts in January allowing me to continue my studies. Now, I love a plan, but down to that detail it's all God.

For me being a Christian I have this belief that God does work for good in all things.

Before we get into the passage today let me pray:

Lord God,

Help us today to see you, in all things, in our decisions, when we are tempted to sin, when we are challenged by life, when we are over filled with joy. Lord, help us to trust in you, when we are faced with doing things our own way. Lord, help us, Lord help the people of Manchester to turn to you in a world where it can be easily misleading and find the answers, we are looking for rather than relying on your word. Lord, speak to us today through your word.

Amen.

I would like to break the reading down into three sections today:

Verses 43-45: What view of Jesus do you have?

Verses 46-50: What do you believe/trust in?

Verses 51-54: Have Faith and Believe

Let's turn to our bibles and read verses 43-45.

After the two days he left for Galilee. (Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honour in his own country.) When he arrived in Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, for they also had been there.

I wonder what part of that verse stood out to you, what it the fact that Jesus said he would have no honour, was it the fact that the Galileans welcomed him. On reading this a few times I find it very strange that John put these words right in the middle, it could have just read "after the two days he left for Galilee. When he arrived in Galilee..". But why do you think Jesus points out that a prophet has no honour in his own country? Jesus is going to Galilee by is bypassing his hometown of Nazareth where he has respect and where he grew up and going to Cana where the people have no interest in hearing his message. Not sure about you, but I wouldn't be keen on walking 2 or 3 days not to be warmly accepted, and for people not to listen to me. Yet again, Jesus is going to a place to seek out the lost, the trip that Jesus took would have been 2-3 days on foot, there was no HS2 train to jump on but he walked 2-3 days to turn their hearts and mind, Jesus comes so all may believe. If you are listening to this today, I would pray that you know Jesus is

walking towards you, but what way are you walking? Towards Jesus or on your own path?

They had seen Jesus at work as we have read, they too were at the Passover, do they just see Jesus as this miracle man? As we see they “welcomed him” was this for the reason, they see Jesus as if we are in trouble, he will fix everything? Do they believe Jesus is the Son of God? Is it in those words “having seen all that he had done”. “having seen”.

Having no faith but using that phrase “seeing is believing”. Is that what view you have? I stumbled across a video where an atheist is driving in the wind and rain and shouts out “if there is a God there would be lightning”..2 seconds later lightning! Now do with that as you please but we will go on to dig into this a bit more in my second point but for believers here today, do we view Jesus as someone we can pray to and everything will be ok? Where do we see Jesus in our day-to-day life, in our disagreements, in our tough moments, in our sadness, in our joy, in our aloneness, in our decisions making, He may feel a long way away but I can assure you he is right there by your side in all you do. We read in John 8:12, Jesus says “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life”.

If I can talk to the non-believers, what is your view of Jesus? Do you believe He is that light of the world? If not, what is the light of your world? Or what is the darkness in your world that that you are battling, can I urge you to bring it to God? Let me share a verse from Zephaniah 3:17 “The Lord your God among you is powerful – he will save and he will take joyful delight in you. In his love he will renew you with his love: he will celebrate with singing because of you”. Take some time today and really think about this, pray about it, talk to someone about what your views are. Have you asked for signs from God? Received them but just ignored the Spirit working in you. Do you believe the Bible is real? When you face trials and temptation, what do you turn to?

In this passage we see an official, seek out Jesus, turn to Jesus, turn to believe and in turn his household believe.

Let's turn to look at the verses 46-50:

We read:

Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum. When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.

“Unless you people see signs and wonders”, Jesus told him, “You will never believe”. The royal official said “Sir, come down before my child dies”. “Go”, Jesus replies, “your son will live”.

For my second point: What do you believe/trust in?

If we go by the songs on believing we hear, The Darkness “I believe in a thing called love, just listen to the rhythm of my heart”, or Cher “Do you believe in life after love”, or Whitney Houston “there can be miracles when you believe”, I actually quite like that one to be honest! or perhaps you are a Sesame Street fan and we have the lyrics “believe in yourself” or John Mayer “everyone believes, what they think it ought to be”.

What do we talk about that we believe, what are we passionate about that we tell our friends? We may, and I’m guilty of this talk about silly silly things! Maybe you can resonate with these lines, “I can’t believe the traffic it took me an hour to get here” – but are we thankful to God that you got there? “I can’t believe the chippy is closed” – but are we thankful that we can drive about to get food? “I can’t believe they have sold out of croissants” – but are we thankful that we get to spend time with our friends? We chose what we get passionate about when talking to our friends, what is stopping us from leading with the lines “I was reading John’s gospel and Jesus healed an official’s son and he wasn’t even in the same town!”. What do you think about that? Real conversation!

The people in Cana had a belief that Jesus could turn water in wine as they had seen that, that was their only belief. Are you willing today to put your own belief to one side and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ? Are you willing to put your trust in Jesus’ miracle or not? That’s what we see here in verse 50: Jesus said to him “Go, your son will live”. The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way”. The Official didn’t ask any questions, he didn’t ask “are you sure?”. The man believed. This is a massive step of faith and belief. Let’s take that into today’s world, instead of the word “the man” replace that with your name. “Kate believed the word..” “David believed the word”, do we believe? Are words enough from Jesus..yes!

If this had been you in this situation, what would you have done? Or, are you in a situation now where you have come to Jesus for help, for healing but nothing has happened? The Lord speaks to us daily, the Lord uses the people around you, has someone appeared in your life recently? Where are you looking for answers? The first place we should be turning is to God to His word. I say should because even now I think my way is best and don’t always call out to God.

We read in Proverbs 3:6 “in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight” and in Matthew 28:20 “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”.

The official as we read “he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son”. Does the response the Jesus gives surprise you? Did you expect Jesus just to go? I think to this and wonder what the pause moment was between the official asking Jesus and Jesus responding. To see the officials, face, the desperation, the plea, the humbleness, the faith to go to Jesus. To be in that position of an official, as your son is dying and to hear Jesus is nearby, the official must have tried everything else, and to seek out Jesus as a “last resort”.

Sounds like us, doesn't it?! We try a lot of things ourselves and they don't work out, when in the first place we should have gone to Jesus.

If we just rewind a little bit to verse 48 “Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe”. Remembering that Jesus does miracles for a purpose. He used them not just to reveal himself but to reveal what was going on in the people around him. I wonder how many of us asked for signs from Jesus before becoming Christians, how many of us lacked in faith, how many of us maybe actually seen signs, or seen miracles happen. There are many verses in the Bible about asking for signs and Jesus's response. I'm going to use the verse in Mark 8:11-12: “Why does this generation seek for a sign? Truly I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation”.

We look around this world we are in today and is it any different to these times we are reading about? Is this the time in our generation when there is such a lack of belief? A time where we are turning our backs on God? A time where we are believing that God can fit around our lifestyles and not the other way about? A time, dare I say it, that we don't need God?

I'd like to share a paragraph from a devotional that I read a few weeks ago “Sometimes the unknown that freedom and change brings is scarier than what I know. Even when what I know is suffering and struggle”. Do we stay in our comfort zones because it's what we know and trust?

Looking back to verse 48, what do you believe in? I know I've touched on this briefly but what do you really believe in, what gets you through life? Is it to give your kids a better life, is it to make as much money as you can, is it to just be happy, is it to become the best at something? We are all selfish at heart and while all these things aren't bad things done with the wrong intention they can be. If the official in this story went to Jesus demanding that he healed his son, I wonder what story we would of have? It would be a story of a real lack of belief.

Let's turn to look at verses 51-54:

While he was still on the way, his servants met with him with the news that his boy was living. When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, "yesterday, at one in the afternoon, the fever left him". Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live". So, he and his whole household believed. This was the second sign Jesus performed after coming from Judea to Galilee.

For my final point: Have Faith and Believe

You do wonder what was going on in the official's head while he was travelling back home, was it a peace that he had fully trusted in Jesus and that his son was going to live, or do you think there was any doubt in his mind? It must have felt like a whirl wind, Jesus saying to you "Go, your son will live". But we see the theme from whole bible that Jesus keeps his promises, fulfills them from Old Testament to New Testament. Why would this be any different. Then having his servants meet him on the way back to give him the good news that his son was ok and was going to live. That must have been some walk back home, for the servants to say "yesterday", he didn't know what the outcome of Jesus's promise was. Then relaying the story to his household who then believed. I can imagine the excitement in the household, the father telling the son how he had been saved. Probably scary for the son to hear all this but what an amazing testimony.

I imagine this conversation that the official had with Jesus as a prayer that we might pray, how long do we wait on an answer? How do we handle the wait? Looking back God has always worked for the good even in really tough times in my life and probably yours too. Sometimes we don't get an answer, sometimes we bring it to God again and again, but do this with a pure and clean heart. We come to the God who forgives our sins and who heals.

In verse 54, we read this was the second sign Jesus performed, the gospel of John records seven signs or miracles, intended to prove that Jesus is God. John could have written a whole other book on miracles but stuck to seven, the number of completeness and perfection. This is the "second sign" of John's gospel. It is also specifically referred to as the second sign done by Jesus in Galilee. The first was at the wedding in Cana – John 2:6-11, when Jesus turns water into wine.

What will you take away from today's reading? That if you are desperate enough to seek out Jesus and plead with Him he will answer your prayers and heal anyone you ask? Or is it that you believe in Jesus who has performed all these miracles and is the Son of God, who died for your sins, that we may live?

If that's you today, in a few moments after I pray, I will follow with a prayer for you to ask Jesus into your life:

Let's pray:

God, we come to you today as you ask us to, humble and childlike. Lord, I pray that you have spoken to someone here today or listening online that you have them exactly where you need them to be and that your light would shine through them. Father, I pray for the people in the congregation that couldn't be with us, bless them with your presence Lord. I pray that you would help us step into the world with a deeper understanding of your love for us. In your precious name we pray, Amen.

In the quietness of your heart:

Jesus, I believe you are the Son of God, that you died on the cross to rescue me from sin and death and to restore me to the Father. I choose now to turn from my sins, my self-centeredness, and every part of my life that does not please you. I choose you. I give myself to you. I receive your forgiveness and ask you to take your rightful place in my life as my Saviour and Lord. Come reign in my heart, fill me with your love and your life, and help me to become a person who is truly loving—a person like you. Restore me, Jesus. Live in me. Love through me. Thank you, God. In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

## **Prayers**

*Take time to pray for:*

*Our world: Conflicts around the world; whether territorial disputes like the Israeli/Palestinian conflict or the Kurdish/Turkish conflict; civil wars as in Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen and Iraq or political instability as in Ethiopia, Egypt and Lebanon.*

*Corona virus pandemic, its effects on poor and vulnerable communities around the world and the worldwide vaccination programme.*

*Climate change & stewardship of the world; as we see the affects on our planet, the vulnerable and poor. For wisdom on*

*how we should change and the courage to act as good stewards.*

*All our persecuted brothers and sisters around the world including our mission partners Bishop Abelino and Patti in Chile.*

*Our country: That God's word will go out to all communities and people.*

*For wisdom and knowledge for our leaders both politically and in the church.*

*For our mission partners now based in the UK, Audrey & Derek Newton, Mike & Helen Parker and Daniel & Mei Whetham  
Those affected by the pandemic; whether financially, physically or mentally/emotionally and strength and resilience for those working in the health service and social care.*

*Our church and community: our parish family,*

*Ben Wilkinson and his family (Hannah, Esther & David)*

*Our working together with St Mary's, our worship times and the way forward.*

*For wisdom and discernment for our PCC and all who work to manage our churches and facilities. For God to raise up good leaders.*

*Outreach and support to our local community and those in need*

*Ourselves: to grow in understanding of Jesus' love and grace*

*To put our trust in our Lord and Saviour*

*For humility, to be gently and patient and to bear with each other in love.*

*You may end each time with:*

**Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

## Prayer requests:

- Eva Dale
- Val Harley
- Eddie Wilson: recovery and healing
- Alan and Isabelle Dean
- Norma Howe
- Doreen Buckley
- Audrey Newton: for stamina for her and wisdom for her doctors
- Esmee (Derek & Audrey Newton's granddaughter) and her continuing health problems
- Sienna Grace (for continued improvement)
- Graham Beswick: that his treatment in the coming months is effective
- Joan Ball: For recovery after her recent heart problems
- Pauline Dalton: for God's sustaining love throughout treatment and wisdom for her doctors
- Mildred West

For the family and friends of:-

## **The Lord's prayer**

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,

your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours

now and for ever. Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon us and remain with us always. Amen.

**Christ Church and St Saviour's:**

**Vicar:** Rev Ben Wilkinson

**Parish office:** Cathy Flint

Telephone: 07878 806174

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