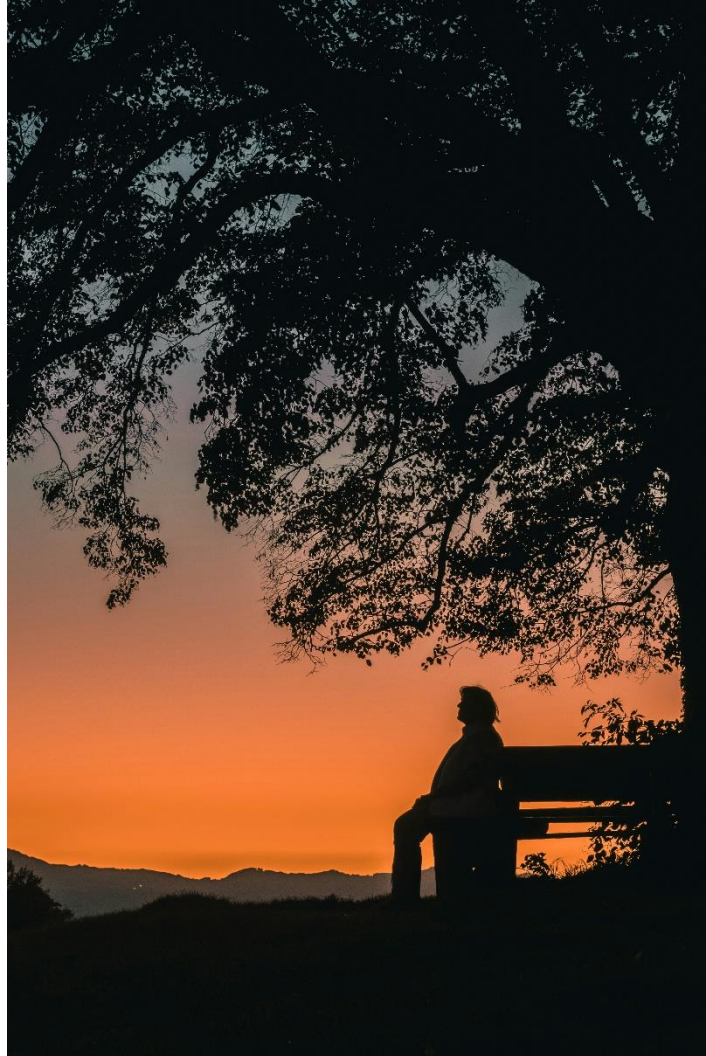


# **Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone**



**Prayers and Reflections  
for use at home**

**Sunday 27 April 2025**

**Easter 2**

Welcome to this week's Prayers and Reflections. Our Gospel reading starts on the evening of Easter Day. The disciples are sheltering in a room which is locked to keep out the Jewish leaders and guards. Jesus may be risen but the dangers are still out there. Events are unfolding one appearance at a time. Jesus' evening visit is their first commission.

Enjoy pondering our Lord's gifts to his team.

God bless,

**Revd Katrina**

**Vicar**

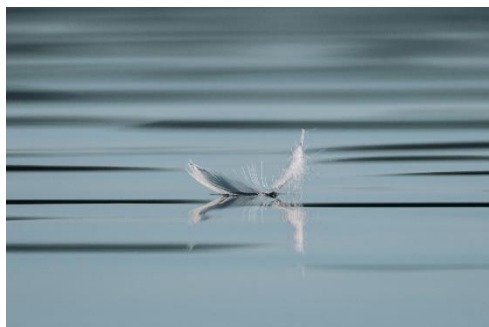
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*As you prepare to meet with our risen Lord in the Upper Room,  
tune yourself into his Spirit's presence. Still yourself and simply abide in him.*



Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
fill me with life anew,  
that I may love what thou dost love,  
and do what thou wouldst do.

*Edwin Hatch (1835-1889)*

**Prayers and Reflections**  
**for use at home on Easter 2**  
**Inner Peace**

**PREPARING OURSELVES**

*Take a moment to be still in God's presence, and feel his love. You may wish to light a candle as a sign of God's love - here, in this room. You may also wish to have a bowl of water ready for the time of letting go. When you are ready, say this opening prayer.*

Risen Lord Jesus,  
as I prepare to spend this time in worship,  
I invite you to come and fill this space,  
and my inner stillness,  
with your presence.

**Amen.**

**LETTING GO**

*If you come to this time of prayer and reflection with any regrets, with things that you wish you had not said, done or been, offer them to God in the silence of your heart. And, when you are ready, reflect on the second verse of this week's hymn.*

Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
until my heart is pure;  
until with thee I will one will,  
to do and to endure.

*Edwin Hatch (1835-1889)*



*If you wish, dip your finger into a bowl of water and make the sign of the cross on your palm.*

*Feel the Father's forgiveness.*

*Our verse invites us to breathe in our risen Lord's love for us and breathe out anything that is troubling us. Easy to say but, in reality, not always easy to do. Some challenges or issues or worries stay with us, eating up our hearts and souls, weighing us down. Breathing in, pausing, breathing out and repeating for a minute or two, or more, can calm us and centre us on our Lord's presence with us and his Spirit within us.*

*Feel free to try this.*

*When you are ready, share with our risen Lord what is on your heart at this time. It could be about yourself and your own life, or a concern for one of your family. Trust that our Lord is listening. Rest in the holy stillness and silence, and breathe in his love and loving response.*

*May our Lord bless you with his most precious of gifts - inner peace.*



My soul waits longingly for the Lord;  
he is my help and my shield.  
Indeed, my heart rejoices in him;  
in his holy name have I put my trust.  
Let your loving-kindness, Lord, be upon me,  
as I set my hope on you.

*Psalm 33:20-22*

## **PRAYING TODAY'S PRAYER (The Collect)**

*Today, this prayer is being said across our villages and the worldwide Church. Add your voice to the earthly cycle of prayer to our risen Lord who always listens to our prayers.*

Risen Christ,  
for whom no door is locked, no entrance barred:  
open the doors of our hearts,  
that we may seek the good of others  
and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace,  
to the praise of God the Father. **Amen.**

*What a beautiful prayer to inspire our search for inner peace. As we have already been seeking, it is an invitation to our risen Lord Jesus to come and breathe his peace within us. Our hearts are open to him. Nothing, within us or within our lives, will prevent him from coming to us when we turn to him. And, his gift of inner peace is not just a blessing to us, personally, but to those whose lives we can transform by his grace.*

*Pause to contemplate this. When you feel at peace within yourself, when you feel at one with our risen Lord, how does this bless the lives of those who touch your life? Think of your family and friends, neighbours and carers, and the strangers you meet on life's path.*

*And, how does this inner peace and at-one-ness with our Lord inspire, direct and guide your prayers? Our prayer for this week is encouraging us to seek the good of others. Who is our Lord placing on your heart?*

*Make a note. Pray for them daily as part of your prayer time. Notice, how our Lord is working in you through your prayers.*



Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
till I am wholly thine;  
until this earthly part of me  
glows with thy fire divine.

*Edwin Hatch (1835-1889)*

## **LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD**

### **Peace be with you!**

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.' And with that he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the

Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.'

Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord!'

But he said to them, 'Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.'

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.'

Thomas said to him, 'My Lord and my God!'

Then Jesus told him, 'Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'

Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

*John 20:19-end*

### **Peace in troubled times...**

*Our reading begins on the evening of Easter Day. On this very first day of his risen life, our Lord has been busy. Very busy! We find him searching for his lost and scattered sheep, opening their hearts and their eyes to the miracle of his return. Death is not the end. No! It is a new beginning, one which includes them and us.*

*On Easter Day, we witnessed the wonderful way that Jesus recalled Mary back to life. He simply said her name, 'Mary.' and her grief was gone, blown away in seconds. And then, Jesus gave her a job to do.*



*'Go to my brothers and sisters and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, my God and your God.' Mary did just this, sharing, breathlessly, 'I have seen the Lord!' Alleluia!*

*As evening comes, Jesus is here, in this locked room, sending his disciples to share his Good News with all who will listen to them. His commission contains three things - his peace, the Holy Spirit (as a forerunner to the day of Pentecost) and the permission to forgive. This deep, abiding, inner peace, will keep them at one with Jesus as they share his words of new life. The Holy Spirit will give them the confidence and courage to do this even in difficult situations. The permission to forgive comes from the cross where Jesus took on all of our sins so that nothing can ever get in the way of us being at with his Father in heaven. The disciples will be able to forgive in his name. It is a sign too that this will not be an easy mission. At times, they will face opposition, prison, persecution and the risk of death. Jesus will have known this as he looked into their anxious faces. Could he sense who will die at the hands of those who refuse to welcome God's message of love and forgiveness? Will they have the courageous and Christ-like love to say as Jesus did on the cross?*

*'Father, forgive them,  
for they do not know what they are doing.'*

*Luke 23:34*

*Peace - Holy Spirit - Forgiveness, these are our Lord's precious gifts to us, gifts that can enable our faith to survive the challenges life throws at us. As you ponder your life today and/or look back at your life's journey, notice how our Lord has given you a hard won serenity or inner assurance to keep on trusting in him through your dark times. Give thanks for this.*



*Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
so shall I never die,  
but live with thee the perfect life  
of thine eternity.*

*Edwin Hatch (1835-1889)*

## OUR PRAYERS

*Here are some Eastertide prayers. Feel free to add your own.*

Risen Lord, when I sit in stillness and silence,  
you come and meet with me. When I am raging inside,  
and life feels like a storm, you can calm me. Today, fill me with peace...

Risen Lord, hear my prayer.

Risen Lord, the ten were hiding behind locked doors,  
fearing for their lives. You breathed your peace into them,  
sending them to be good news to others. Today, breathe peace into...

Risen Lord, hear my prayer.

Risen Lord, you gave your disciples the power to forgive,  
and the power not to forgive. Forgiveness is such a sensitive issue,  
and a painful one. Done well, it leads to peace. Today, bring peace to...

Risen Lord, hear my prayer.

*Offer your own heartfelt prayers and praise.*

### **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.**

### **PRAYER OF BLESSING**

*A closing prayer of blessing for this week.*

Risen Lord, come and meet me where I am,  
this Eastertide. Fill me with love and joy and peace,  
so that I may offer your hope to others.  
Bless me and keep my loved ones safe, I pray. **Amen.**