

Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone



**Prayers and Reflections
for use at home**

**Sunday 18 October 2026
Luke the Evangelist**

Welcome to this week's prayers and reflections. Today, we are giving thanks for the life of one of the four Gospel writers, Luke. As well as writing his Gospel of Jesus, Luke was also one of St. Paul's travelling companions. He was the one who kept a log of all their adventures, which would become the Acts of the Apostles. Luke set both our Lord's and Paul's words free to travel the globe.

How do you set free our Lord's words?

Every blessing,

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*As you prepare to celebrate the life and writings of St. Luke,
send your praise heavenwards.*



Ye holy angels bright,
who wait at God's right hand,
or through the realms of light
fly at your Lord's command,
assist our song,
for else the theme
too high doth seem
for mortal tongue.

*Richard Baxter (1615-1691)
and John Hampden Gurney (1802-1862)*

Prayers and Reflections
for use at home on Luke the Evangelist
Setting free!

PREPARING OURSELVES

Take a moment to be still in God's presence and feel his love. If you are indoors, you may wish to light a candle as a sign of God's love - here, in your 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.

Lord, as I sit and wait in silence,
I place my hopes and dreams,
my fears and concerns,
into your safe and loving hands.
Enfold me with your love,
make my heart beat in time with yours;
in Jesus' name,
I pray. **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 then, reflect on the words of this second verse.

Ye blessèd souls at rest,
who ran this earthly race,
and now, from sin released,
behold the Saviour's face,
God's praises sound,
as in his sight
with sweet delight
ye do abound.

*Richard Baxter (1615-1691)
and John Hampden Gurney (1802-1862)*



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

Feel God's forgiveness.

Our hymn continues to look heavenwards to the saints whose earthly life have drawn to a close. All the struggles in this life, all the temptations in this life, are no more. They have crossed the finishing line and have received our Lord's prize as his good and faithful servants. Any mistakes or missteps are forgiven and forgotten. For their good deeds, their love, far outweighs any harm that they have done in this life.

If you take a look back at your own life, the race of life that you have run to date, I believe that you will see the same. Your love and your kindness far, far, far outweigh your sins. It doesn't stop us regretting our mistakes or wanting to learn from our missteps or misspoken words, so that we do better next time. For love is who we are. Our goal is to be as perfect in love as we can possibly be in this life. We seek God's Spirit of love who can renew and improve the heart within us.

As you ponder where you are on this journey to perfect love, invite God's Spirit to come and affirm, come and cleanse, come and inspire you to live with a Christ-like love in your heart.



*Come down, O Love divine,
seek thou this soul of mine,
and visit it with thine own ardour glowing;
O Comforter, draw near,
within my heart appear,
and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.*

*Bianco da Siena (d. 1434)
trans. Richard F. Littledale (1833-1890)*

PRAYING TODAY'S PRAYER

(The Collect)

Today, this prayer is being said across the benefice and the globe.

Add your voice to this earthly circle of prayer to our God of life and love.

Almighty God,
you called Luke the physician,
whose praise is in the gospel,
to be an evangelist and physician of the soul:
by the grace of the Spirit
and through the wholesome medicine of the gospel,
give your Church the same love and power to heal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Our prayer celebrates Luke the writer's role as one who set free our Lord's Good News message both in the Gospel that bears his name and in his telling of the story of the early Church. His words were designed to inspire his readers to follow the example of Jesus – his apostles – his followers. Luke may not have knocked on people's doors, stood in marketplaces, preached at church gatherings, 'In Jesus' name, I invite you to repent of your sins and be saved!' He left this to the apostles. His calling was to spread the good news and feed souls through his written words – words that have changed lives down through the centuries.

Think about your own calling. How do you in your daily life make known our Lord's love for you and for the people whose lives touch yours?

How do your words – spoken or written – bless others with the gift of love and kindness or with the gift of strength and hope?

How do your words heal or build up those who are finding life a struggle, a daily challenge?

Think about the power of your words – your Spirit-filled words, your love-inspired words. Pray that God may be in your speaking.



Ye saints, who toil below,
adore your heavenly King,
and onward as you go
some joyful anthem sing;
take what he gives
and praise him still,
through good or ill,
who ever lives.

*Richard Baxter (1615-1691)
and John Hampden Gurney (1802-1862)*

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

Jesus sends out the seventy-two

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.

"When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

"When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is offered to you. Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'

Luke 10:1-9

Setting his words free...

Jesus sent out his followers to go and share his good news message and to go and be God's good news. He sent them out into the villages – in pairs – to transform the lives of those who will receive them in peace. Their ability to spread the good news was limited by the pace at which they could walk from village to village, and, also, by the amount of people they could talk to or touch or bless on a daily basis. Our Lord's mission field was limited to a small geographical area – primarily Galilee, Jerusalem and Judea. After his death and resurrection, Jesus' team were sent to evangelise and baptize everyone across the globe. His words needed to be set free!

It is why the gospel writers – Mark, then Matthew and Luke, and finally John picked up their pens and set about recording our Lord's life, death and resurrection, what he did and said and prayed and taught as he walked from place to place. Words to inspire people to turn to Jesus, God's Son, in love and hope.

Luke's joy at our Lord's coming is seen in his three Christmas songs – Zechariah's Benedictus, Mary's Magnificat and Simeon's Nunc Dimittis. Luke's sense of who Jesus is and what he's come to do is found in Luke 4, with the passage that Jesus read in his home synagogue as his mission began. Jesus came to be good news to the poor and the persecuted, the lost and the hurting. In his choice of characters and parables, we see a Jesus who did exactly this. Which is your favourite passage of Luke's?



My soul, bear thou thy part,
triumph in God above:
and with a well-tuned heart
sing thou the songs of love;
let all thy days
till life shall end,
whate'er he send,
be filled with praise.

Baxter and Gurney

OUR PRAYERS

Feel free to use one or more of these prayers and to add your own.

Lord Jesus, you took the time to be with and listen to those who were in search of love or peace or hope. You spoke with love, you spoke to their hearts. Lord, guide my listening and my speaking...
Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, your disciples went out into the villages in pairs, doing what they had seen you do. Speaking with grace and love, lives were changed. Lord, give leaders the words that lead to peace...
Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, your heart was touched by the suffering of the sick, of the lost and outcast. You inspired your disciples to speak words of loving acceptance and healing. Lord, give me the words to say to...
Lord, hear my prayer.

Offer your own heartfelt prayers and yearnings, praise and thanksgivings.

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.

O God, you search me and you know me,
all my thoughts and feelings are open to your gaze,
you see the paths I will take before I take them. Guide my daily living.
Bless me and keep my loved ones safe, I pray. **Amen.**