

BERMUDA BLESSINGS

PAMELA BARIT NOLAN

Illustrated by April Dawn Branco

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PATHWAYS





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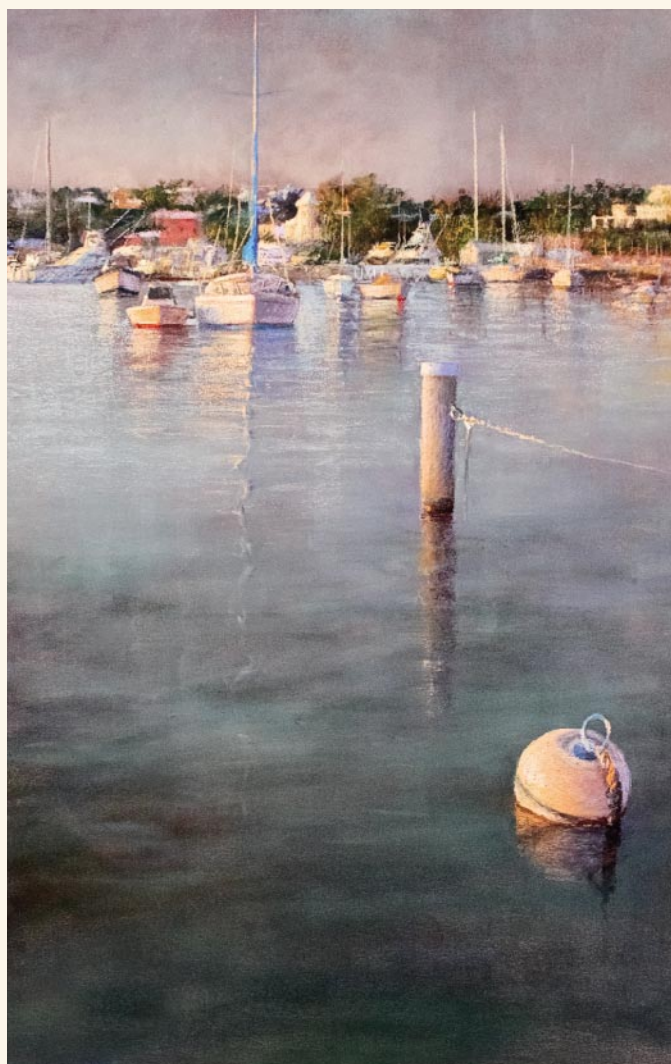
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Bermuda Blessings

I am humbled, Lord, by your constant presence during the creation of these prayers and this book. Thank you for being my leader and guide as my relationship with you deepens and grows in many directions. Lord, take this book and spread it to all who will find it a comfort and an inspiration. Be with those who read it and encourage them into a life of prayer and connection with you. May your words through this book crack open long-closed hearts and lead readers to a life full of joy and gratitude for all that you do for the earth and mankind.

~ PAMELA BARIT NOLAN ~



Foreword

Jesus says to each one of us “follow me” and “abide in me.” As we look at his life we notice that his practice was to rise early to pray to his Heavenly Father. It was this that led to the request from his disciples: “Lord teach us to pray,” which in turn led to his gift of what we call the Lord’s Prayer. Starting the day with prayer is not only a privilege but a necessity. The Scottish divine Robert Murray M’Cheyne once wrote in his diary: “Rose early to seek God and found Him whom my soul loveth. Who would not rise early to meet such company?” He went on: “Unfathomable oceans of grace are in Christ for you. Dive and dive again, you will never come to the bottom of these depths. How many millions of dazzling pearls and gems are at this moment hid in the deep recesses of the ocean caves.”

I am so grateful to Pamela for allowing us to

eavesdrop on her prayers written to lead the early Sunday morning congregation at St. Paul’s, Paget. They are prayers of the heart written in deep appreciation of both her Lord and the place where she lives, the beautiful Island of Bermuda, conscious of the changing times and seasons of the year. She writes with a love for her church, her family and her Island, bringing those to the Creator and Sustainer of life who invites us all to ask, seek and knock.

As we share in her prayers we are also inspired by the images of Bermuda that accompany them by April Dawn Branco. Both prayer and art alike cause us to look again, to wonder and to be thankful. May all who read this book not simply read and enjoy, but speak the words in prayer, and find the peace that passes all understanding as we dive into the grace of God in Christ.

~ THE RT. REVD. NICHOLAS B. B. DILL, BISHOP OF BERMUDA ~

Introduction

What do you do when your minister asks for help? Do you hide at the back of the church? Do you slip out the side door and hope no one sees you? Or do you answer God's call, no matter how inadequate you feel, no matter how unprepared you might be. This collection of prayers is a miracle to me and a testament to God's work in my life. Five years ago I would never have imagined writing prayers, let alone publishing them. But God works in mysterious ways in all of us.

The purpose of this book is twofold. One is mission based: I hope that as you pick up this book your prayer life begins to take a new shape. I hope you find comfort

in the simple words on each page and the beautiful images that accompany them. I also hope you begin to create your own prayers and develop your own conversation with God. The second purpose is to raise funds for the church. All proceeds from this book will be donated to St. Paul's Church, Paget, so it can continue to encourage people to find a new life with God.

Thank you for purchasing this book and I pray that God is with you as you read, with you as you journey forward and with you when this life comes to an end.



Acknowledgements

This book came into being through the grace of God and many of his helpers. Thank you first to Revd. Anthony Pettit for inviting me to serve through the writing and reading of intercession prayers during St. Paul's 8am service. His gentle and kind guidance is the reason you hold this book in your hand today. The members of the 8am congregation also played a part in this publication, as they encouraged me every step of the way, especially Rosemary Critchlow and Judith Pitt who suggested that these prayers be made more broadly available. Thanks also go to Diana Hindess, around whose dining room table we spent several hours selecting and editing prayers.

The beautiful images that illustrate this book come from the heart of my friend April Dawn Branco. I am grateful that God brought us together to create this book for you.

Three others have allowed their words to be part of this collection; thank you to Patricia Sunyata Brown for her beautiful poem and Janice Trott and D'Jae Gilbert for their prayers.

Given that I knew little about publishing a book, I am also grateful to Rosemary Jones and Paul Shapiro of Brimstone Media for holding my hand through the process.

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Gifts

In memory of:

Lady Gloria Astwood, Edwin Olney Jones, Cornelia Kirtland Jones,
Shirley Ballantyne Humphreys and Jay Humphreys

and

In thanksgiving for:

Time spent in Bermuda, island friends, James A. Humpheys Jr., Nea Virginia James
and all those who share and support a Christian journey through life

Thanks to Jennifer Burland Adams for permission to use the portrait of her children, Ava and Jack

~ WINTER ~

A prayer for the new year

EPIPHANY

The holidays are over, celebrations have been enjoyed, photographed and posted and now here we are, Lord, with you on the first Sunday of the year. Let us see your Son Jesus Christ the way the Magi did all those years ago. Let us feel awe, wonder, compassion, and love. Let us have the trust and perseverance that those three men had. Let us kneel and worship and be reminded to share our gifts with you and the world as we journey forward. Let us hear you every day, Lord. Let us follow the star you have shown us and trust you and have faith in you always. Keep reminding us of your presence and of your greatness and deep love for each one of us. As we waver and doubt, we ask you to keep nudging us forwards with love and your unending compassion.

Lord, as you gave us your Son, you also gave us an amazing world and we pray that in the year ahead we will honour and care for this beautiful place. Keep us mindful of our footprint on earth. Help us tread lightly

on your gift. Help us advocate for policies that support a more sustainable world.

Father God, we pray for those you have delivered into this world, bringing new cries of joy from babies and their families. Let us pray that these new lives come to know you and worship you as we do. We pray for and encourage the families of these new beings so that they may all know the wonder of being part of your family.

As we move into this new year, let us pray for those who are suffering in any way. Please shine your light on these people, Lord, and bring them the comfort that only you can provide. And finally, we pray for our home. We pray that each of us finds a way to participate in and support a new way forward. Let us connect and support each other as we show the world that we are a welcoming and beautiful place to visit, live and learn.



Beginner learners

Lord, we come before you in awe and wonder at the gift you gave us so many years ago. Your Son came to awaken us and save us from ourselves. We have read and heard about those who came from far away to worship him with open hearts and minds and with a faith that allowed them to leave their homes, follow a star and arrive at a small stable to view the Christ child. Help us to open our hearts and minds to you and your teachings and to recognise when we wander off the path. Guide us back to where we can see and follow your light. Lord, remind us that the path is not always easy and allow us put our hands in yours as we walk forward.

Help us to be beginner learners as we step into the year. You always have something more for us to learn and share. Help us prepare for all that is to come, and to be welcoming of any and all feelings, emotions, events, aches, pains, joys and celebrations. Help us to learn each day and not be afraid, retreat, become resentful or withdraw. Teach us to stand steady and to sing your praises and proclaim your word when opportunities arise.

Jesus and his family were exiled and lived in the face of death. Lead us to those who are suffering in any way,

who are without a home or are in pain. Help us to do what we can, showing compassion and opening our hearts to those in need. We ask that you have mercy on our brothers and sisters who are vulnerable. Guard and protect them.

Jesus and his family opened their home to others. Help us to be good neighbours and active community members. Strengthen our Island home and bring its people together peacefully as a family joined in love and adoration for you.

Help the people of your world come together in faith so that we may have peace and prosperity. Let us be thankful that you have given us everything we need. Help us learn how to use these gifts for the benefit of all, connecting and communicating openly, honestly and with unconditional love.

Father, we rejoice in the fellowship of all those who have gone before us and those who are all around us still. We join to sing your praises loudly and we are grateful for each moment you give us in your world. We are inspired by your unfailing love and we ask that you hear our prayers this morning and each day.

Hearing all voices

Dear Lord, on this quiet and lovely morning, we praise and glorify your name as one voice, as one Church and one community. We pray that we are able to listen and understand one another deeply. Through a deeper understanding, we pray to see you and your work in our community more clearly.

We pray for those who are suffering. Comfort those closest to those we have recently lost. We pray that they are able to focus on happy memories and laugh as they work their way through the tears. We also pray for those who are sick. Let them hear our prayers. Comfort them and allow your healing gifts to work through those who care for them.

We celebrate the new lives entering your Church through baptism or confirmation. We also pray for those anticipating the arrival of a new being through birth or



adoption. Lord, give all parents strength and courage to navigate joyful and difficult times, guiding their children through life.

Our community is debating many difficult issues. Help us to hear all voices and let those with the final say make informed and inclusive decisions to allow our community to move forward with grace.

As we look for ways to be a more unified church and community, we take a moment to remember a man whose life will be celebrated soon: Martin Luther King. We are thankful for his life and the courage he had to challenge the rules of his time.

While celebrating the lives of heroes, we give thanks for the Earth you created. Our gardens and vegetable stands are bursting with your bounty, which nourishes and strengthens our bodies.

In Jesus' footsteps

Dear Lord, how amazing you are that you find exactly the perfect moments to show us your way. Even those who are in some way working against you have the chance to see your light and live through your grace and are offered the opportunity to change course. You work in wondrous ways, and for that we praise you and shout our love and devotion to you and your Son, Jesus Christ. We fall down before you, begging forgiveness for the sins we have committed and we stand ready for you to lift us up and guide us on the way you have chosen for us. Thank you, Lord—you are indeed great, compassionate and full of love for your creation.

We pray that in our effort to be good citizens in the world we never put aside or forget our worship and journey alongside your Son. Continue to nourish our faith, dear Lord. When we are distracted from our true mission in life, nudge us back into Jesus' footsteps. Bring us back into your community of believers in Christ. Surround us with our brothers and sisters and rekindle our faith and belief in you, Lord. Help us keep our lamps burning in times of darkness.

As we find strength from each other and from your presence in our lives, we pray for those who suffer here at

home and those we cannot see. Send our prayers to any that need them. Let our prayers warm their hearts and feed their souls. Let them know that you and our prayers surround them at every moment, carrying them forward into better times.

We also pray for those in leadership positions in our world: presidents, premiers, government and tribal leaders, bishops, priests and all those who make decisions that affect countries and communities. We pray that you are in their hearts and minds as they carry out their duties. Let them hear our prayers crying for peace and prosperity for all people and guide them in ways that connect all humans to a productive and compassionate purpose on this earth.

We pray for your Church. Let each of us step into our roles as disciples and followers of Christ willingly and with great passion. Help us to bring others into your family. Help us shout with joy, shine our light and dance with you and your Holy Spirit so that others might see the gifts you bring into our lives. Take away the fear of those looking in and throw open the doors so they might join us, becoming children of God.

Led by faith

CANDLEMAS

Dear Lord, we praise you for that day when Mary and Joseph took your Son to the temple to present him to the priests. We are grateful for the presence of Simeon and Anna, whose faith never wavered. They were waiting for the miracle that was your Son and he appeared before them. They shouted with praise and recognition. Help us see and feel when your Son is with us. Help us keep and increase the faith we have in you.

There are many in the Bible who show how their faith led them in good times and in bad. Help us understand their beliefs and feel their strength. Help us be open and ready for you. Help us have faith that you are always with us on our journey. Many will try to distract us and pull us away. We pray that you will keep us close to you always. Let us bear witness to the presentation of your Son at every opportunity. Give us opportunities to see the change in people when they see Christ, when they feel him and when the Holy Spirit descends upon them.

We pray for Christians around the world. They also will be challenged and will wobble from your path from time to time. We pray, Lord, that there will always be another believer close by to pick up the doubter, dust them off and lead them back to the path to walk with you.

We pray for those who cannot see you, who are in distress, who are in need of comfort and prayer. We pray that the homeless in our community may find a warm place to lay their heads. We know that you are with them.

Help us move into the week ahead having parked our judgements. Help us listen to people everywhere and to work together to bring our Island to a better economic and social space. Lead us to participate in any way we can by lending a hand where it is needed. Let us feel you every step of the way. You are indeed a great God!

Pause and appreciate

We are grateful to be created in your image and to have the opportunity to be here on earth and in Bermuda. Let us find time to pause every day to see the bluebird in front of us, to walk in the greenness of the Botanical Gardens, to listen to the surf at the shore or to snuggle with a pet, our best friend. Thank you for being with us in each of these moments and for encouraging us to slow down to appreciate your gifts and to acknowledge your presence in our lives. Praise to you, our creator, sustainer and redeemer!



As we prepare to enter the season of Lent, help us reach out to fellow Christians across the Island. Let us unite in our faith at this time of reflection and healing. Help us hear and feel, through different types of worship, our collective love and awe of you. We are all your children, even if we gather in different spaces. Help us to serve you through your Church in whatever way we can and help us to be our very best. We are each charged with various roles and tasks, some more challenging than others, but each with its purpose and need for attention. Give us the

strength to be open to new ministries as they arise.

Father God, crazy things continue to happen here and around the world: fires, car crashes, murders, wars, human failures of one type or another. We pray that you bring calm and order to places that seem to have swirled out of control, especially where human is facing human in an aggressive stance. Take hold of us, dear Lord, and help us see that these paths are dark and twisted. Lead us to sing of the joy, laughter and love that flows around those who are part of your kingdom.

We pray in earnest today for all those who are suffering. Hear our prayers as we shout them out from our hearts and mouths. Carry our prayers to all who need our love and care.

Guide us into this new week, dear Lord. Bring us together as often as you can so that we can be with each other and you. We praise you, Lord.

Call for compassion

Lord, as your morning sun shines upon us, let us drink in the gifts you offer us: the wind in the trees, the ocean hitting the shore, the birds waking from slumber, the scent of freesias, the colours of the sky. Help us notice each of these glorious gifts throughout the day. Help us be grateful and let our praise be the salt that flavours conversation and the love streaming from our hearts be a beacon on the hill for all to see.

We pray for our island home where anger and mistrust are sometimes evident. Help us recognise that each makes mistakes, or carries history and culture that causes us to act in certain ways. Let us have compassion for one another. Let us forgive for missteps and words that may be hurtful or have unintended consequences. Help us spread your love throughout our community. Let us walk with you in our hearts as we build connections and bonds rather than walls and barriers.

Let us not forget that there are others on this lovely planet who are suffering. We pray that, in every corner of this earth, our brothers and sisters are able to find joy in each day. Even when bombs fall or attacks occur, send our prayers and allow a ray of your light to fall on the hearts and minds of each one. Let them feel our collective love and care.

We ask you to send our prayers to those in our minds and hearts. Let them be filled with the Holy Spirit and help them to know you and have faith in you. Let them turn to your light and be bathed in it. We are grateful to be here with you, to know and feel your love as it passes through each of us and resides in our hearts.



The peace of nature

As the cool breeze welcomes another day, we are thankful to be here with you, our shepherd and guide. No matter where we are or how old we are, your ever-present gentle influence helps keep us on course. Thank you for always being there, even when we resist!

We ask you to keep safe those who speak out about injustices in the world. Strengthen their courage, protect them from harm and allow them to be open to learning and hearing from each other as they work for a more equal role in our societies.

We are thankful that some political leaders around the world hear your call to “love thy neighbour as thyself” while their nations emerge from darkness. Help other leaders hear this message so they will stop oppression and corruption in their own countries. Let them hear the people’s voices crying out for the freedom.

Please give your servants who work daily in your name the courage to bring faith to people around the world. Make them your soldiers for peace, encouraging those seeking justice to act peacefully and in the name of your love. Give your missionaries the power to demonstrate that change through love is so much more rewarding

than change through violence and death.

We ask you to bring hope and peace to those who are struggling to make ends meet. Hold them and guide them to the next chapter of their journey surrounded by your light and love. Let their faith assure them that you will provide for them in their time of need.

We also ask that you comfort those who are sick and who may have lost hope. Shine your light upon them in their hour of need. Bring peace and love to those who have suffered and lost a loved one. Bring them a sign that the one they have lost is safe in your arms and show them they must continue with their mission in life.

We pray also for each other. Allow us joy, love and a passion for the life you have given us. Give those of us feeling alone or unworthy the knowledge that each has a place and a purpose in your world. Send us out with a renewed commitment to live each moment surrounded by your love and light. Remind us to pause to sit with you in the peace of your natural world; walk on a beach; sit under a cedar tree; or watch a sunrise. It is in these special places that our minds shut out the noises of the world and allow your words to be heard clearly.





Steadfast in faith

Lord, how fortunate we are to have this beautiful place to come together to worship you. Thank you for all those who assemble here each week. Thank you for our priest, for this quiet and lovely building that contains our love for you and each other.

Our scriptures talk to us about having faith in you and our willingness to follow you like Abraham and many others who have gone before. We ask and pray for strength to stand steadfast in our faith alongside you. Take us and mould us into the followers and believers you need.

The world has many places of darkness. Show us ways to shine your light and bring love to these places and to our own homes and communities. Help us have the faith that Abraham did and give us that strength. When we doubt like Peter, guide us to places and people that can help renew our faith and set us back on

the road to eternal life with you in Heaven.

While we pray for physical and spiritual strength, we acknowledge that there are those who are struggling with larger issues related to health and wellbeing. We send out our prayers to these brothers and sisters and ask that you help them hear these prayers. Help us to see and learn where our prayers and our love are needed most and guide us to the doorsteps of those most in need so we can tend to them in the most appropriate way.

We remember those who have left us and we pray for those who are just joining us. Endings can be hard for those left behind so we pray for the bereaved as they move through their sadness. We are grateful, Lord, for your newest spirits arriving in our lives and we pray that we will make time to offer them faithful support. Children are our hope and our joy. Bless them and keep them safe as they start their journey.

Purpose and compassion

Thank you for bringing us to this tranquil space to worship with you this morning. You have given us messages about obeying your law and showing sincerity, honesty and truthfulness in our daily lives. Help us continue on our path with clarity of purpose and compassion in our hearts. We pray that when faced with situations where conflict exists, we slow down to hear your voice so we can go forward with confidence.

We pray that our friends, neighbours, community and your greater world also listen for your guiding word. Help our leaders search their souls for true meaning and guide them down paths to peaceful and more rewarding lives for themselves and those who live in the countries they lead. We pray that ego and greed are put aside: the never ending desire for more leads us to dark spaces. Help every person find a place where there is enough for a peaceful and rewarding life in service and communion with you.

We pray for your Church leaders. Work through and with them. Give them loud voices to spread your word. While the messages are not always easy to hear, give every preacher, missionary and lay person the strength

and wisdom to deliver your word with grace and tenderness while helping your followers understand the way forward with you all around them.

We pray for those who are searching for a place with meaning in the world. Lead them to those with strong beliefs and practices within your Church. Lead them to congregations that will welcome them with love and kindness. Bring all your followers to help them see the beauty of a life in service to you.

We pray for those who are suffering with a physical or spiritual sickness. Send them our prayers with love and let our prayers and your presence bring them peace. We remember those who have left this world. You gave them breath and loved them while they were with us. We pray that you embrace them now and give them peace and serenity in Heaven and bring comfort to those who have been left behind. Ease them through their grieving.

We close our prayers with gratitude for our lives, our health, our friends and the island home you created for us. Thank you, Lord, for your many gifts. You are a generous and forgiving Lord.

~ SPRING ~

A glorious creation

Let us be thankful for the glorious moon that rose over us this past evening. God's world is a wonderful gift that we must treasure and experience every day. Let us be thankful and care for His creation: listen to the red cardinals, smell the Pittosporum, notice the poppies and Bermudiana springing to life as the wild freesias begin to fade in God's ever-advancing circle of life!

Let us pray for those who walk through this world to bring the message of Christ and salvation: the Archbishop of Canterbury, the priests, the missionaries and those who simply serve Christ in their everyday lives. We especially pray for those ministering to people in need in parts of the world struggling with the aftermath of natural disasters. We also pray for those reaching out with hands of salvation in Africa and the Middle East.

We thank the Lord for creating people who fight for the rights of all humanity, regardless of colour, creed or stature, especially those here in our community.



We pray for those who have lost love ones. Take a moment to remember the wonderful works of those we have lost: smile at the qualities and gifts they gave during their time on earth. Whether their passing was recent or long ago, remember the wisdom, grace, and warmth they shared. We ask God to help us stay close and support those who experience pain, grief, and loneliness due to the passing of these great people. Pick up the phone, send a card, and keep them in our prayers. We pray for those who are left behind, that they might have strength to live on in God's grace. He has a plan for each of us and we must continue that journey until it is our time.

Let us pray for each other. Send us into the world to proclaim our faith in Jesus Christ. Let us not shy away or hide our light. We pray that God will guide us back to the path when we stray from it. We all get lost from time to time. Give us strength, Lord, to be guides for others, providing compassionate and loving places for them to step into.

Beacons of faith

Father God, as we draw closer to the time of your Son's death, we stop and praise you for the sacrifices you made for us, for sowing the seed in your Son and bringing new life to this world. Help us continue to learn about and understand the sacrifice you made. We pray you will help us accept the mystery of your work and presence among us.

We pray that others in our community and around the world have the opportunity to know you and love you. We pray for those who have laid down their lives in your name. We pray for those who suffer for their faith. We acknowledge and are grateful for the freedom of worship we enjoy here in Bermuda but acknowledge that many of our brothers and sisters do not enjoy this same freedom and have been persecuted and died for their faith in you.

We pray for this congregation. Help us lay down our fears and self-focused lives and bring us together as a communion of Christians in service to you and your work. Give us time to reflect and share with each other our challenges, hopes and dreams. Help us to pray with others so you might hear us and so we can gather in your name to support one another. We pray you will be with us forever, guiding and supporting us, challenging us and carrying us home to Heaven when that time comes.

Help us pick up our crosses and walk forward. Help us fight your fight. Help us stand as examples to all around us as beacons of faith in the night. Let others see us and be encouraged to join us singing praises to you. Together with your Son, Jesus Christ, and your Holy Spirit, you give us all that is needed in this life and for eternity.



Our beautiful island home

How thankful we are that spring has arrived and that you are loading our gardens with flowers and our plates with the bounty of Bermuda gardens: strawberries, bananas, pawpaw, beets. We are grateful that your life-giving rains enable our farmers to grow such wonderful crops for our community. We pray these gifts will be shared with those who need them, even those who cannot afford them at this time. Help us to see those in need, even in the least expected places, and open our hearts to share what we have with grace and humility.

We sing praises to you for giving us many opportunities to serve you and our community. We need only to open our hearts, eyes and ears to find the many ways. Help us discern the places to put the gifts you instilled in us to best use. When we do, Lord, you fill us with joy, hope

and compassion, flowing over us like your gift of water.

As you fill us with joy, we pray for those around us and globally who are unable to find that joy and who are living in darkness and sorrow. Give our brothers and sisters the strength to carry on. Help us guide them to you and show how your love shines through us to them.

We pray for the leaders of our island and in other countries faced with difficult issues and political hurdles. Help them find and follow your wisdom.

We pray for your church in Bermuda and around the world. We pray for everyone in this church, our friends, our family and our beautiful island home that sits in the middle of this incredible and powerful ocean.

Precious motherhood

What could be more precious than a mother and those she cares for? Her beauty, compassion and selfless care and love are awesome to behold. Thank you, Father, for giving each of us mothers to guide and teach us. Without your hand in this element of creation, the world would be a poorer place. The richness of the fabric of mothers astounds us.

As we show thanks for mothers everywhere, we pray for mothers who are suffering with illness. We ask that you allow your healing lightness and joy into their lives.

We pray for mothers who live in fear and darkness. We ask that you comfort women around the world. Let them know of their importance. They hold the compassion and gentleness of the world. Help women step into your light and shine forth with their power and steadfast

faith. Women hold families, villages, communities and countries together. Let them feel the world's gratitude.

We pray today for everyone in positions of service: they all need your guiding hand. We ask for your blessings upon them. Without them life would be very lonely and sad. Lift these humble servants high and let their lights shine out.

We pray for those who won't come through your door, Lord. We pray that those surrounding these people continue to encourage them, lift them up and offer opportunities to see your hand and work in their lives so they might come to knock on your door. Let them know they will be loved and embraced by you and each of us. We are throwing our doors open in your name and in the name of Jesus Christ.



The bounty of love

Thank you for the blessings you have bestowed upon us. You have given us much to be grateful for: opportunities to discuss our faith, to travel with you and your Son, to enjoy walks in the gardens with the ducks, to witness glittering sunshine on the water, to hear beautiful singing in the Cathedral, to buy new Bermuda onions at the vegetable stand and to taste Bermuda strawberries. We praise and glorify you for these opportunities and gifts.

We are humbled by the sacrifice you made in order that we might live with sins forgiven. Sometimes this great sacrifice is difficult for us to understand but we are eternally grateful for the life of your Son.

We pray for all those who love us and whom we love. Let us not take any of these people for granted. Even when times seem difficult, help us focus on the wonders of our relationships and on how life is so much richer because of them. Give us the grace to spread our love far and wide so we can become a more connected family.

We pray for all Christian leaders. Help them bring the family of believers together to understand and deepen their connection to you and help us integrate your word into our lives. Gather us into quiet spaces, encourage us to meditate and pray and relive important moments in the development of our faith. Help us invite others to open their hearts to your teachings. We pray that everyone takes in the magnitude of your promise.

We pray for those who have lost a loved one, a human or four-legged friend. These lives are precious to us and bring much joy and we are thankful for the time you gave us with them. We pray that those who are grieving are able to look through darker times into your light and be grateful for the time they had with their loved one.

Finally, we thank you for the spring flowers. What would Bermuda be without the wonderful smell of wild freesias on the hillside? What a beautiful way to connect to your glorious creation. How amazing it is that we are able to walk through and live in such beauty each and every day.

Holy week

PALM SUNDAY

On this Palm Sunday we praise you for the gifts you give us each day. The sun rising, cooling breezes, the healing ocean, birds, flowers, the food we eat, homes to keep us safe and warm. We know many around the world are without these gifts. Help us become aware of the abundance you have granted and to look for ways to share all you have created.

Holy week is a time of remembrance, reflection, great sorrow and then great joy. There will be many ways for us to sit in quiet places and draw closer to you through the words of the Bible and from the mouths of your servants in Christ. Help us make time to fully embrace this important part of our Christian calendar. Let us immerse ourselves in opportunities to meditate on this important event that created our Christian way of life. Touch our hearts and minds and help us to open our hearts to fully take in the meaning of the sacrifice you made during the dark days that turned to light when Christ rose again.



We pray for political leaders around the world. We hope they see, through the actions of your disciples, that following your word and your path brings peace and joy to the darkest of spaces. We also pray for the leaders of your Church as they minister in secret or in the open. We hope this Easter season will bring more religious freedom to congregations around the world so they may praise and glorify your name freely and openly. We pray for your missionaries around the world: they are brave and loyal servants. Keep them safe and encourage them to stay on your path.

We pray for those who are weak, sick or in pain. Bring peace to all those who need it, even if they have not asked, and guide caretakers to their bedsides to comfort and love them.

We are humbled as we step into this week. It is for us that you made this incredible sacrifice. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

A day of endings

GOOD FRIDAY

We come to this day with heavy hearts, remembering what your Son endured so many years ago. We are born into this world with many faults and frailties and yet, Lord, you love us so deeply that you sacrificed your Son to save us, to break the power of evil and death and to give us eternal life.

We pray your Son's example of obedience and compassion will sit deeply within us, so we might follow in his footsteps. We pray you will give us the tools we need to be humble and put aside our cares to embrace the gift you have given. Help us see everything you continue to do in our lives and to follow your teachings closely.

This day of endings must be taken in by each of us and allowed to permeate every element of our being. A man died for us! A man was beaten and humiliated for us. A man was denied and abandoned by us. And yet, Lord, you are still with us, still guiding, still loving.

On our island home this day children will run, laugh and play. Kites will be flown, families gathered. Music will

play and gombeyns will dance. Hot-cross buns and fishcakes will nourish us. We pray that as these traditions play out each of us will stop and remember that your grace allows us to be here, to sing, dance and rejoice.

Father God, we remember today the mother who knelt at your Son's cross and we pray for mothers who have lost a child. We pray that their grieving will be lessened by your presence and by the knowledge that their faith in you will deliver them from pain. We pray for all who are grieving: give them strength, be with and around them. Shine your light into their lives so they are able to let go of the anger or sorrow lingering due to their loss.

We also remember those who cared for Jesus before, during and after his death. We pray you give each of us opportunities to serve you and your Son as we journey through life. Open our eyes to see these opportunities: feeding the poor, ministering to the sick, visiting those who can no longer move about in your world, adopting an abandoned pet, volunteering in our church and in our community. Anything Lord—we are ready!



A humbling sacrifice

EASTER

Christ is risen! Lord, we sing praises to you for bringing us personally closer to understanding what you did for us by sacrificing your Son on the cross; for raising Him from the dead as prophesied to cleanse us of sin and to allow us to continue in life. How incredible is that? All for us, for each of us! Lord, we are humbled and in awe.

We are grateful that the scriptures and services of our Easter week have given us ways to deepen our faith. Let us never be like Thomas. Let us believe your mysteries without seeing, without really knowing. Fill our hearts with trust and unconditional love and allow us to move forward in faith—always believing, always feeling you by our side.

We pray for those in need of love and care. We pray that those feeling persecuted in any way might find freedom

from pain and injustice. Spread your wings of love over everyone that is in need, here in our church and in all corners of the Earth. We pray for all leaders and ask you to guide them to productive conversations that lead to positive and supportive actions. We pray that old fears are laid to rest and that past wrongs be forgiven.

We remember all loved ones who have left this earth: they all had special meaning to those who loved them. Keep their spirits alive and safe with you and comfort those left behind.

We pray for our planet. We are thankful and honoured to be graced by your majestic whales off Bermuda. Keep them safe, Lord. Help all of us acknowledge and treasure the amazing beauty that surrounds us each day in every moment. How lucky we are, Lord, to be alive and living in this place. We are so very grateful.



A time of renewal

Birds sing, butterflies flutter, waves slide over the sand and we become quiet and pray to our Lord. How thankful we are to be here: your seasons are changing and we are able to see signs of new life around us. Easter lilies are bursting forth, bluebirds and cardinals are finding nests for new families and longtails are chirping along the shores. You are renewing our world, just as you renew us each day. Through faith in you and your Son you offer the eternal life-giving spirit. You offer new hope each day. Even as we face death, a new beginning awaits. You are a generous and compassionate Lord.

We ask you to breathe new life, as you did for Lazarus, into each one of us and our communities. Where there is decline and decay, lift up the faithful and allow us to see things with new eyes and creative energy so spaces of darkness may be bathed in light and hope.

Let us find and comfort those who are suffering. For those who are lonely, let us create visiting teams; for those who are ill, let them be known so we may pray and care for them; for those whose time it is to wake up with you in Heaven, let us be thankful for their lives. Help us to brush away tears of sadness and let us rejoice in the knowledge that they are now resting with you.



In this season of spring, let us ponder our own renewal. Help us not only to see possibilities but to follow in your footsteps to create new beginnings for your Church and community. Give us strength to step in the world to proclaim your good news. We are still beginners, but together and with your love surrounding us, we will find ways to serve that will bring us closer as human beings, working towards a just and fair life full of joy for all.

Gift of the Holy Spirit

We are thankful and humbled by the sacrifice you made and the gifts that you have given us since that terrible day so many years ago. Thank you.

Help each and every one of us accept your gift of the Holy Spirit. Help us to set aside time to pray and to understand that your Holy Spirit is alive and helping us each moment of the day. Help us learn to seek help from you when times are difficult and to celebrate with you when we are joyous. You offer us this gift; we just have to allow you in and work with you in service and joy.

As we learn to accept and pray to you and to live with the Holy Spirit, we ask that you bring this same gift and lessons to world and religious leaders. Introduce each of them to the power of prayer and reflection. Through your teachings help leaders back away from threats of nuclear

war and continued strife. Help every nation see the pointlessness of these weapons and tactics. Steer them away from harsh words and terrible threats and towards the opportunities available to everyone when they work in peace and love.

Help us to remember to pray for ourselves. We all have our own times of joy and sorrow and need to remember to ask for your help. We sometimes forget that: we are so busy helping and worrying about others that we get lost.

Help us be thankful for this space, this beautiful building where we can gather together out of the wind and rain to enjoy one another's company and to worship you and pray with you. We are very fortunate to have such a safe space to be with you. Remind us never to take it for granted.

Steadfast in faith

Thank you for bringing us here to be with you and with our family. Praise to you for being the centre and the head of this gathering and so many others. We worship you for the mysteries of life and our daily journey. We praise you for the life of your son Jesus Christ who died for us. We praise you for the bread and wine we share in each week, giving us a symbol of the life you sacrificed for us. We are humbled.

With the many gifts you have given us, how is it that we still doubt your presence? Why can we not proclaim our faith when confronted with questions or confrontations? We pray that you fill us with your Spirit and help us see you everywhere, as your disciples did. Teach us that if we slow down and are quiet enough, we will see you just as they did, walking among us and guiding us. Help us to not brush off “coincidences.” Let us rejoice as you work to create opportunity and joy. Help us to feel your

presence in dark times. Then give us the courage to shout to the world about those experiences. You are a great God and we ask you to show that to all who doubt. Guide them towards peace and prosperity and help us to encourage them to lead the way with you in their hearts.

As we stand tall and steadfast in our faith, comfort those who perhaps have lost the way, or are questioning your presence as they look death or disease or some other challenge in the face.

Help us to strengthen our relationship with you. Help us to walk in a new way, with a new step, fully aware of your presence with every breath we take. Help us feel you, and loosen our tongues so we may share this experience with others. Give us strength and fill us with joy so that others will come and worship you with us.

Walking in God's footsteps

We are joyful and full of praise for you and the work you do in our lives each day. You call out for our love, for our faith, for our belief in you and your Son. How can we not answer? Give us and your Church strength to fulfill your word. Help us to walk in your footsteps each day. Give us the discernment to feel and know that your Holy Spirit is among us always. We pray for us, for your Church and for Christians everywhere. We are shouting with joy, knowledge, and wisdom. Rejoice in the world!

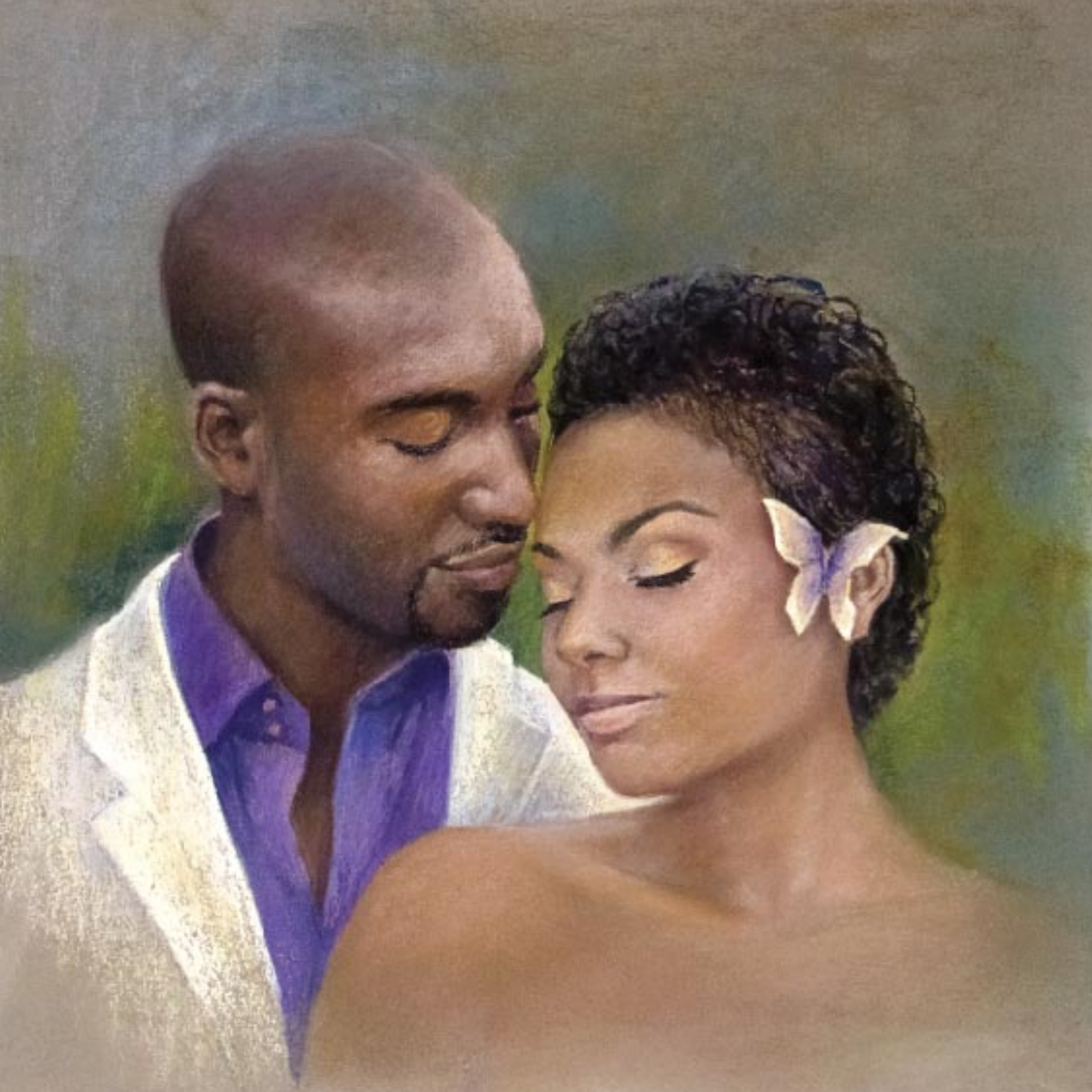
Many changes are happening all the time. People are stepping into new roles and others are returning to ones already familiar. We pray that as these changes and shifts occur, you will give those in power your wisdom and clairvoyance. Let them see the truth in the world and help them walk a path of strength, compassion and love.

We ask that you help us celebrate those in our lives: the ones who love us, those who have had an influence during our lives whether they are still with us or if they

have left this world to join you. We are grateful for the impact they had and are thankful you placed them with us to help us live richer more purposeful lives. We pray that you continue to bring us into situations where our faith can grow and that our love for you expands beyond the horizons we can see.

With love and gratitude in our hearts, we send prayers to those hurting or hiding in the darkness. Let them know we are here; let them hear us, see us and feel us. We are here with you to be a shoulder for them. We step gratefully into this service and ask you to guide us to where we are needed.

We pray that you help us step into life with wonder and awe in our hearts and before our eyes. Let us jump in with both feet and look for ways that you wish us to serve you. Help us to stay alert and mindful as we move about our days so we can embrace opportunities to be with you and to let others know of the wonders of life when it is filled with you, your word and your wisdom.



Partners in grace

We are thankful and blessed by your mercies in so many ways. We are reminded of the beauty and strength of human partnerships, the benefits and joy of two becoming one. We pray that this knowledge will strengthen and give support to relationships that might be shaking under the pressures of life's challenges and dark passageways.

As we focus our prayer on our relationships,, we have not forgotten about the world's troubles, and pray that you will give all world leaders wisdom, patience, and strength as they work to improve global living conditions. We pray that you and your missionaries can work to alter perspectives and reorder priorities, bringing actions and beliefs into line with your desires.

Please help Church leaders bring your written word to

life. We pray that all Christians are reminded of the importance of meditating on, reading and learning from the Bible. Find ways to encourage each of us to take your book off the shelf, to open the pages and spend time with your word each day. Help us learn from each book, chapter, and verse, finding ways to incorporate the teachings into our everyday lives.

While our hearts are melancholy with the remembrances of those who have passed on before us—those we miss and wish to see again—we are thankful for the simple pleasures you give us to make our journey beautiful. We are comforted by the rising of the sun and the moon, the sound of the waves on the shore, the ocean breezes, the flowers that bloom and the birds that sing and we are secure in the knowledge that with your blessing and your sacrifice we may have the gift of eternal life.

Our guide and protector

We are thankful that you live on in each of us through your Holy Spirit. You are in us, around us and with us at all times. Our faith and prayer lead us to you. You guide, protect and nurture us. Help us to remember this each day; help us set aside time to sing about your glory and to be thankful for the many things that you give to us.

Your servants in Christ are often persecuted while working to bring the people of the world your message. We pray for every one of these brave souls. We pray for Church leaders who have been with you for many years and for those either considering this vocation or just entering it. Each needs your guidance: comfort them when they run into difficulties. Renew their spirits and

bring them joy as they celebrate new beginnings through baptisms, confirmations and weddings.

We pray for those people today that are suffering or feeling pain in any way. Let them hear our prayers, dear Lord. Surround them with our unconditional love. Bring them strength to live another day.

As we hear happy tree frogs chirp in the evening, we thank you for the glorious natural world in Bermuda. How fortunate we are to be able to experience so many natural wonders created by your hand. Help us to be better stewards of these natural spaces so that they are there for generations to come.

Rejoice in the Spirit

PENTECOST

As we celebrate Pentecost, may we all have the opportunity to tap into the Spirit that lives within and around us every moment. Let us be conscious of this energy and power that we are able to call on for strength and guidance at any moment. Remind us of your presence through the blessings of the Spirit. All we need to do is pause, calm our minds and open our hearts to the Spirit and the hope of the world to come. We pray that we learn about the power of your Holy Spirit in our everyday lives so we can use its strength to serve others.

We pray you will bless our leaders and give them the opportunity to work with you through the Holy Spirit to bring love and joy. We also ask you to support and bring comfort to Christian leaders and missionaries everywhere. May they be given the strength to breathe hope into the lives of those with whom they work.

We pray for our young people who will be joined with you through the act of confirmation. Give them faith in your power and presence. Let them know the benefits of having a relationship with you. Give them grace every day to stand tall in your light and love. Let them be proud to be Christians serving their saviour!





Give us strength

Lord, take our lips and speak through them; take our minds and think through them; take our hearts and set them on fire.

At this time, when we ponder your ascension into Heaven and yearn to see you again, we pause to acknowledge the ways you reveal yourself in our lives. We praise you for stepping forward when most needed. Some may be too far into the darkness to see your light but those of us who have turned towards you feel you in our everyday lives. We are grateful our prayers are heard; we rejoice in the beauty and wonder of the scenes you set before us, and continue to work to bring others to this place of peace, acceptance and joy.

We thank you for being among us when our community

comes together: parades, boats, walks, cart races and all sorts of celebrations. You are with us when we celebrate our Island home, and when we remember those who have left us. Help us walk into community celebrations with your cloak on so that others can see we are walking with you. Give us strength to tell all that will hear your good word.

We ask you to walk with those in power and guide them. Help them see the value of spreading fairness and justice for all. Help them see the need to educate families against killing their own women or enslaving any in their communities. Shout into the ears of all, that as citizens we can work alongside leaders to bring justice and fairness to the forefront of world agendas. Give us the strength to speak up in your name.

Faith, hope and love

There are so many tasks in our busy lives: tending the sick, working in offices, volunteering for charities, coaching young people, ministering to friends, relatives, and neighbours, cooking, cleaning, and helping with homework. The world spins and we go along with it. Thank you for catching us, sitting us down, and encouraging us to stop and spend a moment so we can hear you say: “Talk with me, further your faith in me and knowledge of me through prayer, meditation, Bible study, song, dance, poetry.” You provide us with many ways to commune with you and to be in your presence. You are indeed a gracious Lord and friend.

Help us to find ways to put our full faith in you. When we do, our lives are fuller and less stressful. You prove this to us over and over again and yet we continue to question and doubt. Be patient with us, Lord.

While we focus on our immediate surroundings and the power we have to create positive change in our lives due to your grace, we also remember and pray for those in other parts of the world who have been hit by natural and manmade disasters. Please keep all your servants everywhere safe.

Praying for people who have made new lifelong commitments to a partner, we ask that they may be strengthened by your love. We celebrate and pray for your continued love and support of those who have spent years together working through the trials of sharing a life with another person. Help them celebrate each moment together and help them to be a beacon for others.

Faith, hope and love are your true gifts to us, with the greatest of these being love. We thank you for these wonderful and powerful gifts.



Ready for the call

TRINITY SUNDAY

Let us always be ready to hear you, Lord, whether you arrive on a wind or in the stillness of the night. Whether as one almighty powerful God or one of the three elements of your mystery. Help us put our faith in both the three and the one. Let us not try to fully understand your Trinity but simply accept you in all your glory and have faith in your power and love always.

Open our eyes to the many ways you move and work. Help us see your hand in the creation of caves beneath our feet and the delicate beauty of the flowers that erupt from every corner of this island. We know we often miss your teachings as we hurry through the day. Please forgive us. Take our hands and help us be fully aware of your presence. Help us be willing to speak about you to others, praising you, three in one, always and forever. Ready us for your calling whenever it might come. Is it

I, Lord? I will go, Lord. May this always be on our lips.

We pray for those who do not know you and ask that you give us the words and works to enable others to see you, your spirit and your Son at work. We pray that your light shining in us might bring others to baptism and to be new disciples for you in your glorious creation.

We pray also for those who may be struggling with their faith, health or way of being. Let them ask for help from Christians who can shine your light on their path.

Let us go out into the world fully alert, full of faith and your love. We pray that our curiosity will help us see you at each corner, hear you in each conversation and each silent pause. Let us dance with your Trinity, bringing honour and glory to your name in all that we do.

Journey of the heart

Dawn has come, birds have woken, the grass is damp with dew and we are gathered together to worship and praise our Lord God.

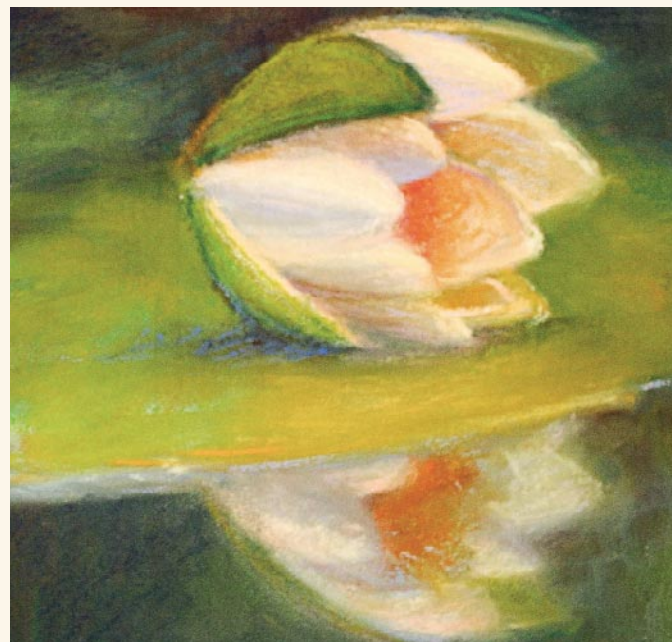
We have welcomed home many of our young people from schools and universities abroad. Please keep these young people safe until it is time for them to return to their studies, their journeys towards knowledge and the actualisation of hopes and dreams and your will for them.

We remember those who are struggling in silence and ask you to bring them peace. Help friends reach out to these people with gestures to ease the pain, and with words to bring laughter and joy.

You tell us to love our neighbours and yet, when offered the opportunity, we drive by, look away or walk by. Please give us the courage, the strength and the time to stop, shake hands, smile, say good morning, offer a lift, sit and talk, introduce ourselves to a stranger or to someone we see often but have never asked their name. You may lead us to a deep a relationship that could enrich our lives.

Help us to have more faith, to seek a closer relationship with you, to trust that your way will lead us to peace and glory. Remind us often that our life is a journey of the

heart that requires the mind, not the other way around. Living in love and from an open, trusting and true heart will guide us though each difficult moment, experience in the desert or bump in the road. Help us have the courage to shout this truth from every hilltop, to help others see that your way of living is the only way. You are our saviour and every moment we connect with you brings us closer to our true purpose in life.



~ SUMMER ~

Guardians of your gifts

We sing your praises with gratitude for bringing us here with open hearts and minds to worship and create community with our brothers and sisters. Let us recognise that we come before you with history, culture and family patterns that make us who we are in your presence and in the presence of others. Help us embrace the elements of truth that serve you and let us shake off those that do not. We come before you as your creations: beautiful, raw, and vulnerable. Help us pray together and see one another as human beings and your children.

As we rest in the space of oneness with you, as calm and love wash over us, we send prayers to Israel, to Palestine, to Afghanistan, to the Ukraine and all other corners of the world where people are focusing on differences, conflicts and ancient histories. People in these places live in a place of hatred, mistrust and tainted egos. We pray for those caught in the crossfire of strife, but we also pray for those who launch the bombs and carry out the orders. Take the scales from their eyes and let them see their neighbours as human beings. Let them reach and touch

another human who somehow they have been taught is their enemy. Intervene and thaw the hearts of those in the midst of crisis.

Send our prayers to all who are in need. We are grateful to be here with sound mind and good health: let our energy and life force flow to them with love. May they feel loved and cared for, even when pain persists. Help them see that all will be well by placing their faith in you. Be with them as they journey forward.

We pray that you offer us ways to serve and glorify your name. Help us to work and play in your creation with respect and connection. Help us to encourage others to become guardians of the gifts you have given us on land and in the sea. Help us show those who have not experienced the joys of being on the water, in the sea or in your parks and pathways what beauty there is to behold and treasure. We do this in service of you, and ask that you give us the opportunities to participate in our community every day.



A magical tapestry

Music is playing, rain splashes gently on the leaves and a lizard waits patiently, flashing his orange lure for all to see. If we pause for a moment we can be aware of these glorious creations you have made for us. You are a master craftsman, Lord, and we kneel in wonder and awe. We listen for your call to understand how we, in service to you, can be a part of this glorious creation. Show how we can become part of this magical tapestry that you weave each second. We are listening: place your hand upon our shoulders and guide us to those who await our service and love. We are prepared for some of those paths to lead to dead ends. You gave us free will and sometimes that takes us to empty and dark places. But we have faith that when we reach those places, you will be there to shine a light and guide us home. We pray that you will lift each of us from moments of shame and failure, dust us off and help us learn and move forward in service. Thank you for every opportunity you give us to learn and grow. You are a wonderful teacher.

When we are tired, weak or sick, let us hear the prayers of our brothers and sisters. Encourage us to allow others to heal us, comfort us, bring us our favourite foods and

photos and cover us with a favourite blanket! Let us feel that the world loves and honours us and that through prayer we are all connected and that you are there every step of the way.

We extend our prayers to people around the world suffering great challenges: those in Japan and China dealing with floods, the people of Syria and Afghanistan dealing with war and terrorism. We also pray for those that cannot speak: the fish in the sea losing habitats as coral reefs die and garbage fills the ocean, the creatures of the forest whose homes are being chopped down. Help us come together to help each person, creature and living thing. Help us work to preserve the things you have lovingly bestowed upon this world.

We pray for your Church and its challenges. Let us remember each one of us has gifts to offer and that there is only one judge: you, our Lord. Guide Church leaders to appreciate each person for their beauty, talents and love. Let us pray and hear your word so we can create, be innovative and willing to move forward in your light, in faith that your word and judgement are all that matter.

Graceful competition

The weather is hot and the annual cricket Cup Match is upon us. Rivalries will be fierce and parties will fill our Island! Dear Lord, give us grace to enjoy these times as one community without violence, accidents or other mishaps. Lift us up to be joyful, kind to the environment and responsible. Watch over us and our young people.

We pray for athletes participating in regional and international games in all parts of the world and for the volunteers and staff that make these competitions joyous and safe. We pray for country and regional leaders that host and support gatherings of the world's finest competitors and ask that you bring calm and grace to each place used for these important events.

Please allow world leaders to experience the wonder that comes with competitions such as the Olympic Games. Help them see what sport and community can do for any country at any time. Allow them to learn from the power

of the Olympics to create a peaceful and loving venue for cross-cultural exchange and love. Shine the light of the Olympics on those countries and places that are plagued by strife.

We also pray for all those who are hungry. Please feed all our brothers and sisters; spread the loaves and fishes throughout their communities. Let hunger fall away and bring them back to health. Your world produces enough for us all: help us find the ways to distribute the world's bounties so all can be nourished.

Show us how to spend time with you, Lord. Quiet our souls so we can hear you and listen for your guidance. Let us be sure we are following the path that guides us to you. Help us do your work wherever that might be, in whatever vocation our skills can be used. We wish to show our love for you through service to our world and our fellow mankind. We are ever watchful for your signs and guidance.



In difficult times...

We thank you for our seventh full moon shining upon us, casting a beautiful path of light on the ocean's water.

While we enjoy this summer beauty, we pause to pray for those on our shores who are in distress, concerned about feeding their families and ensuring their safety, uncertain how the next bill will be paid, or worried that their home may be sold to pay off debts. Dear Lord, we pray for those in our Christian family who are in difficult situations and ask you to help them put their faith in your Son, Jesus Christ. Allow them to see their time of difficulty as an opportunity to create new paths in life.

Help our leaders and all struggling with difficult times to create spaces and opportunities for communities to rise above the adversity and to work together. Help leaders and all of us to share that most amazing of gifts, love, in a true and unconditional way to ensure a better future for our world.

We rejoice in your name and in the name of your Son for the new bright lights that have joined your world. May you hold them in your loving embrace and care and guide them forward as they begin their journeys. We pray for those who are in our hearts. Give them peace and comfort in their time of need.

A community together

We are thankful for the abundance in our lives as we pray and offer help to those less fortunate than us. We are grateful that we can serve you, Dear Lord, by serving those in our community and around the world. We ask that you light the ways we can continue our giving, with and through you.

Thank you for the opportunities to come together as a community: to watch cricket, get out on the water, camp and play together. Family, friends and neighbours from every part of our community have been able to participate.

And while we are grateful for our many opportunities, we send our prayers to those living with violence and war. We pray for the families trapped in the Gaza conflict and in the Ukraine, and all families that have lost loved ones. We pray each day for peace to blanket the world; for wars to cease and for places experiencing violence to transform these difficult times into festivals

of love and kindness. Help us to settle differences in ways that do not involve bombs and guns. Help us realise that we are all humans, who need to find new ways to resolve conflict. Show us how we can stop the fighting.

Dear Lord, you have provided us with many gifts; each one of us is unique. Help us continue to use our gifts in the community and in the world, no matter what age we are. Help us spread your light wherever we go. Guide us to those who need us and send our prayers to those suffering in any way. We pray and look for ways to help those grieving the loss of a loved one. We remember those that have gone from this world and ask that you welcome their souls into your eternal world.

Send us out with baskets overflowing with love and kindness. Help us find and feed those who need to hear your word and to embrace your love and kindness. Guide us among the crowds and bring us back to worship with you when the day is done.

Laugh and celebrate

Unwavering faith is often hard to maintain. Lord, remind us often that we must have faith. You prove to us over and again that our lives are fuller and devoid of worry when we surrender to your love and walk on the path you illuminate. Even when clouds and fog obscure the path ahead, you guide and protect us and are there always to provide for our needs. How can we doubt that? So, when a task seems too daunting or a mountain too steep or a journey too long, shine your light upon us; give us a nudge, or maybe a kick, to get us back on the path towards glorifying your name in our daily lives.

We pray that those who are sick and in need of guidance will reach inside themselves to find faith in you. Doing so will comfort them and offer them peace, making their suffering bearable. They need you every moment.

We thank you for moments of pride and solidarity: cheering on our cricket team; congratulating our young optimist sailors; watching our equestrians complete a dressage test. Our community welcomes opportunities to come together and support one another in moments of joy. We all must leave time each day for play, as the pure child that lives inside of each one of us is always ready to

laugh and celebrate. Remind us to let that child out to play often! It brings health and an opportunity to be with each other, without self-consciousness telling us to stop being so embarrassing. So dance, laugh, and love. Bring laughter to God and joy to many others.



Filling the 'faith tank'

Dear Lord, we come to you trembling and scared. Our world is often one we cannot control, where events spin and confuse and frighten us. In such moments, many forget to turn to you and our belief in our journey to eternal life with you and your Son Jesus Christ wavers. Help us restore and affirm our faith in times of distress, uncertainty and despair. How is it that we can forget your love and support so easily when we are faced with mountains? Help us know and feel your presence each step of the way. You are in us and around us all the time. We simply have to call your name and have faith that you are there and have faith that we will all be with you in Heaven when our time comes. Help us follow in the footsteps of your prophets and your Son, amazing souls who gave everything to you, and in the case of your Son, gave of himself to save us. Emblazon this on our hearts; let us never forget this. Shake us when we doubt you. When we cower in the darkness bring us back into the light. Help us stand tall with you.

As we allow your Spirit to wash over us and fill up our "faith tank," we pray for others: for world leaders facing

volcanic eruptions in Indonesia or bombs in Syria and Iraq; the horrors of human trafficking globally and the toils of everyday life, especially those in public service with the weight of countrymen on their shoulders. Give these leaders strength every day. Ensure that those who have the will and strength are in the right places to serve the world in positive ways and find ways to divert and cast out those who have more destructive paths in mind.

We pray also for your prophets, those alive today and those who have gone before. Help those still with us to speak loudly and clearly so we are able to hear your words over and again. Allow their words and work to settle over us. Help us drink it in to strengthen our resolve to lead lives of service in your name. Help others hear these words and see the actions of your bishops, ministers and missionaries and inspire them to walk along the same paths learning and following your word. And in their times of quiet Lord, help them be strengthened by your presence, light and love. They need every ounce of it in order to get up and begin their work again with joy and passion.

Staying steadfast

We are grateful for the gifts you have given us. Thank you for standing by us in moments of despair and moments of joy; for surrounding us with people who show us how to use and recognise these gifts, who nudge us along when fear wells up and blocks our path. Thank you for friends and family who encourage us to stay steadfast in our faith, who help us stay with you, who remind us you are here and always will be. Help us receive and project these messages. Help us overcome shyness, fear and uncertainty and guide us to the top of the mountain where we can shout with joy about our relationship with you and your Son, our saviour.

And as you guide our community we pray you will also give guidance to others: our Church leaders and governments. Keep world leaders company as they wrestle with evil where corruption and violence have become commonplace. Light up the world with your

glory. Find a crack in the wall to let your splendour into dark and difficult places. Give those who believe strength to shine your light into the darkest corners and let them hear our prayers.

We remember those who have fought valiantly for equal rights for all human beings. Remind every one of us that we are equal. The colour of our skin, the dollars in our bank account or the type of job that we hold make no difference to you. We are all your children. We are thankful for the heroes who have fought the battle for human rights. May we be courageous enough to participate in these battles and help change communities. Lord, ensure all of us know and believe that if we have a dream you will be there to lift us up and guide us forward. Let us rejoice in the knowledge that you will surround us with others who will believe in us and walk with us on our journey.

A passion for learning

Hurricane season is upon us and we ask that you watch over every place on earth that is exposed to these powerful storms. We pray that people prepare carefully; that supplies are available when needed and that communities will help each other when storms hit.

We remember today all those who have left a special mark on the world. Those who walked on the moon, dived to the depths of the oceans, sailed the seas, flew around the world or discovered new medicines. We are grateful for the strength you gave these explorers and scientists. They have made our lives richer and encouraged others to challenge themselves to create, explore and take a leap into the unknown. Lord, keep that curious spirit alive in all of us so we can continue to delve into the mysteries you put before us.

We pray for our young people who are going to school for the first time, are heading back to a familiar school or are starting a new school. Give them a passion for learning and a sense of curiosity about each experience that you offer them. Keep them safe, especially those headed to schools overseas, and bring them home to us for the holidays full of joy and excitement over what they have learned and the prospects ahead.





~ AUTUMN ~

The healing power

You are our shepherd, here to guide and care for us each day. Give us space and quiet to learn more about your ways so we continue on the right paths in life, your hand on our shoulders and your voice in our ears.

We thank you for the healing power of sport, bringing us together around a TV, radio or at venues around the world to watch tennis, football and athletics. What incredible strength you give each athlete, especially those with physical handicaps. What obstacles they have had to overcome, but through your grace, they show what they can do. These brave spirits are an example to us all.

We pray for world leaders, especially those in the aftermath of natural disasters. Help them put aside ego ask

help from those close and far away. Many hands can create beautiful and lasting relationships and push away the horrors of disaster.

We pray for Church leaders and those in ministries around the world. Keep these brave souls protected. Reach out and heal those leaders who are suffering physically or emotionally: they are often most vulnerable as they work, caring for others before themselves.

We also pray for each other. We are a family and all have joys and sorrows. We are happy to see familiar faces and concerned when someone is missing, while welcoming strangers who join us. How lucky we are that you brought us together. Keep us safe until we come together again.

May the children flourish

Dear Lord, we pray that we may learn to love unconditionally. Help us put aside judgement so we can be present in the world just as it is. Help us to first learn to love ourselves, then to spread that love in every nook and cranny around us. Help us create a quilt of love to spread across our Island home and beyond. Let our lights shine into the world carrying this feeling of love. This world will not survive without more believers and followers of your commandment that asks us to love one another as we love ourselves.

With this love in our hearts we send prayers for those who are hurting, sick or under emotional stress. We pray for those in places pulled apart by war, controlled by terrorists or places where basic needs are not met and where each day is a struggle to keep families alive and together. Let our prayers of love and kindness wash over these places and these people.

We pray for our children. Give them focus and strength. Give them open eyes and minds and a curiosity to learn so they may grow and flourish in this world.

Send us out into the world fully connected to you and your love; connected to ourselves and to one another so we may serve you in the fullness of our being. Help us find places to spread your word and demonstrate a life with you through our actions.





New beginnings

Dear Lord, we are so excited to be with you this morning and every morning. What a privilege is it for humble sinners to feel your presence, to know you are with each of us, even when we are weak and when our faith is shaky at best. Thank you, Lord. You are awesome.

Your cool breezes and sunny days have been such a blessing, helping us in our gardens to dig or clip or tidy up. The work is made so much easier with the cool wind blowing across our cheeks.

We pray this morning, Lord, for new beginnings: our gardens, new life, new romance, new marriage, a new chapter in life. Each of these will be full of surprises, and perhaps some storm clouds, but with your love and support they will all blossom into beautiful flowers.

We also need to pause to reflect on endings that have crossed our path: a life, a pet, a plant, a journey, a job, a friendship, a loved one. Help us make time to grieve and accept these difficult events, Lord. Surround us with love and compassion and help us find joy from each experience and relationship. There will always be a place in our heart for these memories. Help us focus on the joy rather than the sorrow and the loss.

Dear Lord, You bless us each day with those who have been given the gift of the written and spoken word. They communicate feelings and fears so eloquently through their poems. Today I share the words of a friend and a guide, Patricia Sunyata Brown. Let her words settle into us and remind us of the gift of life that you give to each of us.



THE UNKNOWN

How quickly the void
moves to be filled
with another's
ideas and ways to be.

How rare to surrender to
the void...
to a space and time
of no direction,
no identity defining
the fabric of a life.

To simply stay in the Openness...

To be willing to watch
the tides of possibilities
roll in and out again.

To be willing to stay
in this uncomfortable
and unfamiliar ambiance.

Until Openness, itself,
is recognised as the only
true ground of Being.

~ PATRICIA SUNYATA BROWN ~



The pain of loss

We pray for those who have suffered the loss of loved ones, old and young. Those suffering are missing the sparkle their loved one brought to life: laughs, gestures, or an attitude to life. Help these families, friends and co-workers look for the lessons the departed might have left: live life to the fullest; never turn away from adventure; be romantic; love each moment of the day; treasure friends; be sure to laugh out loud, and so many other things. Where faith does not exist, surround them with loving supportive people, and perhaps through their selfless giving, faith will be kindled and begin to burn.

As the sun rises and the breeze touches our cheeks

gently, bringing us into a new day, let us be reminded in each moment of your great glory, dear Lord. We are humbled to be a part of your family. We ask for your guidance as we step into a new week. Help us continue our Christian journey. Help us structure our days to ensure we have time with you each day, to pray, to read your word, to meditate, to serve. Life can easily sweep us into its frenzy: it cannot be Sunday again and...we have not spoken to you all week! Slow us down, Lord. Remind us of our priorities and encourage us to make time to be in service to you. Joys are certain to bubble to the surface when we make this commitment and are disciplined enough to set aside time and space to grow our relationship with you.

Earthly treasure

We sing praises to you, Almighty God. Praises and gratitude for everything you give to us and you do for us! How can we doubt that you will not be here for us? We must learn how to ask and how to pray, and then how to develop our faith to know you will respond. Teach us how to be present and aware so we can hear and feel you and notice when you are speaking to us. As we move through our busy lives we may miss those moments. Teach us and guide us to find a time of quiet meditation that will lead us into conversation with you.

We pray for the earth, dear Lord, as it strains to contain us all and to provide in so many ways. We are guilty of beating the planet and destroying many of its wonders. We pray that every person becomes conscious of what

this wondrous planet provides. We pray that we treasure what we have and look for ways to protect the earth, as well as restore damage done. Raise global consciousness so we become one with the world you created. Help us stop the rape and pillage of your gift to all creatures. Teach us all to be better stewards.

Remind us we are here for a purpose, that we have a special reason to be on earth. Help us to be present, kind, beautiful, and full of gratitude. Lead people into our lives who will help us realise we are loved and that we have love to give. We are needed in this world. Encourage us to live our lives in service to you with pure hearts and with love surrounding us every step of the way.

Staying connected

We come before you trembling with joy and fear. We acknowledge our weaknesses, sins and periodic lack of faith, which leads us down tempting paths. We pray you will give us strength and wisdom as we move forward. Help remind us that staying connected to you is critical for a fruitful and productive life. Our faith is so fragile, yet you show us over and over again how you love and care for us. Your hand is on our backs, your arm lovingly over our shoulders, yet we so often doubt your presence. Remind us to slow down and be present with you and listen to your word. Help us support one other in faith, praying and studying together and finding opportunities to hear your word. Community support can help us stay on the path, leading a rich and delightful life.

We pray for those in our community who have lost a job, closed down a business, lost a friend or a family member.

In the hours of darkness, help these individuals dig deep within themselves. Encourage them to dream as never before and to reach for that dream: a new way forward, an inspiration to others. Help them see they have whatever it takes to achieve their desire. Let them know you will support them as they become inspirations to their communities and to the world. Encourage us to be bold, strong, and loving.

We are thankful for everything you give us: friends, families and this earth we live on. Help us go forth with joy and song in our heart. Help us to make a difference in whatever way we can. Remind us that there is no score card or competition, that acts large and small are celebrated by you. A smile is sometimes all it takes. At each step we take, be at our sides. Let us feel and hear you so we may walk together in strength and love.

Thankful for so much

We are forever thankful, Lord, even if some days we seem distracted and resentful of you and others around us. On these darker days, shine a light to remind us of the wonders of our surroundings and the opportunities you present each day. As we listen to rainwater trickle into our tanks, we are so grateful that we have roofs over our heads, water to drink and food to eat. Here, and in many places around the world, others are not so fortunate. We pray you will put food on their tables, giving them nourishment and warmth, and surround them with love.

We pray for just and fair societies where people are able to speak freely and live a life of their choosing, unhindered by dictators or heavy-handed rulers. Bring freedom of choice and speech to our brothers and sisters around the world. Let every man, woman and child walk into your light and your arms freely and without fear of death or discrimination. Allow them to enjoy your gift. Let them step boldly into your light and not cower in

secret to live the life you have chosen for them.

We pray that all countries are led by just and responsible leaders who bring peace and equality to their people. Help them build infrastructure that is sustainable and productive. Help each country respect the earth and halt practices that kill the creatures you lovingly crafted.

We pray for your soldiers in Christ, who study and learn to preach, pray and teach your word. These honourable and brave souls work tirelessly to bring an understanding of you and your word. You have blessed clergy around the world with the ability to assemble people in your name to learn and worship together.

We ask you to help us stay in the light. We are thankful for your presence and our ability to walk this journey basking in your love and in faith. Wow! What a life we have, dear Lord. Thank you a million times over.

A time of change

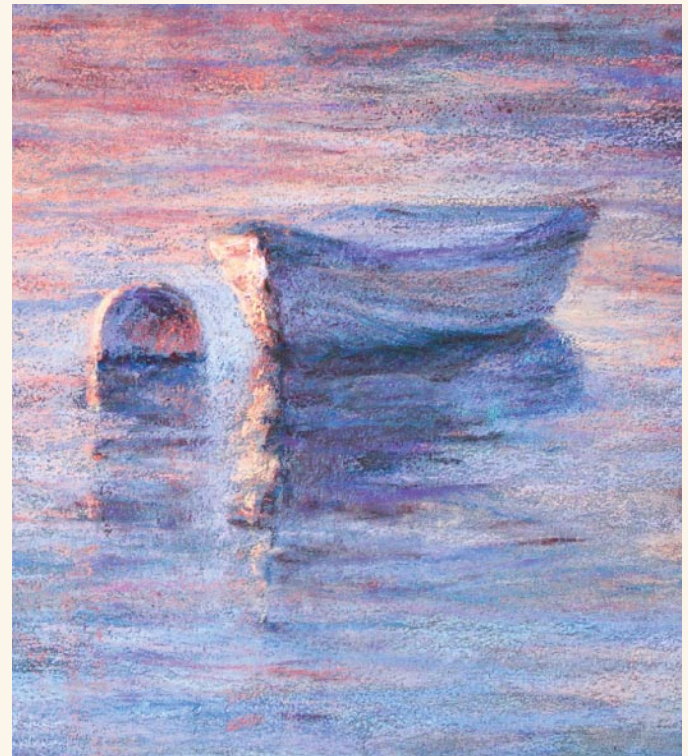
Dear Lord, we pray for our friends and family, those who mean so much to us. Please comfort and protect them; ease pains, celebrate special moments and walk by their side, hand-in-hand.

We pray also for world leaders whose countries and organisations are going through the steps of leadership change: our Church, Bermuda, the United States and other countries. The process can be daunting and tiring; sometimes people are hurt and past missteps revealed. Help us move through the difficulties and focus on positive elements that can come from those who take on the mantle of leadership. Help us be supportive of new ideas and programmes that might arise. Stay close to those contesting positions of power and guide them onto a path full of light and love.

We pray for the sick, the downtrodden, the forgotten, the abandoned, those who have lost their voice and believe there is nothing to live for. Put your arm around them, Lord; let them feel your touch and hear your word. Lift the darkness around them and show them the light of your world. Raise them to their feet and show them that walking with you at their side is a worthy walk to take.

Remind us to stop at least once each day to reflect and

be grateful. Moments of quiet and stillness allow us to be present with you, to speak to you and to listen for your guidance. Thank you for being with us in such precious moments. We treasure them and know we will walk forward with a clearer mind and a more open heart.



Many blessings

We thank you for the blessings you have showered upon us: glorious fall days, moments with friends and family, walks near the sea, quiet times with a good book, watching a movie. We treasure each moment in this life, whether in quiet rest and rejuvenation or actions that serve you and your greater purpose.

In Bermuda we have seen a new member of parliament elected and cabinet ministers changed as we continue through difficult times. We ask you to bring wisdom and blessings on those who take on new roles of service. Clear, focussed minds and hearts are needed to guide us, so every person has an equal chance to work and care for families.

We also ask your wisdom be bestowed on leaders around the world trying to keep economies afloat and people safe. There are many others who need our prayers and your guidance. Make yourself heard so they come to know your awesome power and the glory that is theirs should they follow your path.

Bring peace and comfort to those who are sick and in distress. Cradle them in your arms and let them feel the warmth of your presence and love. Guide them through difficult times, knowing their journey will not be in vain.



An end to war

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

We gather this Remembrance Sunday with hearts overflowing with thanks for those who fought for us, our countries and our freedom. We pray for those who lost loved ones in war and hope that with faith and love for you their feelings of loss will be lessened. We pray that wars in all corners of the world will end as people put aside differences and understand how much alike we all are.

We pray for the sick and the wounded, from acts of war, or here around us. Whether emotional or physical, the burdens are heavy and we ask that you lighten the loads of our brothers and sisters. Bring them peace and comfort in the days ahead.

Humble the world's leaders. Bring them clarity of sight and tenderness of heart so they serve you and your people with grace and compassion. Let them find reasons not to fight but to celebrate and come together. Remind them to serve you and mankind, not themselves.

We send our prayers to those giving time and talent in this community and around the world. We are thankful and pray for missionaries. Please keep them safe and energise them with your Holy Spirit.

We are thankful for the ways you bring us together: in prayer and service, parades, sporting tournaments, charity events or other gatherings. We need each other, Lord. Remind us to not shut out others or turn our backs when we are needed. Give us the strength to stand tall in difficult times and to reach out for each other when we need help or have the opportunity to strengthen others.

Thank you for a glorious day. Send us into your world to experience a walk in one of your beautiful parks so we can observe and listen to the songs of the birds, the waves crashing, a sea bird flying overhead or a flower waving in the breeze. Thank you for these wondrous gifts. We are indeed blessed!



Each has a purpose

Dear Lord, we ask you to keep safe your servants who chose to speak out about injustices in the world. Continue to bolster their courage as they highlight struggles and inequities faced by so many. Keep them safe from harm and open to learning as they work together for more equal rights.

We are thankful that some political leaders around the world are listening to your calls to love thy neighbour as thyself, as countries like Myanmar emerge from darkness. Help other leaders hear this message so they too will end oppression and corruption. Let them hear the people's voices crying for the freedom to be heard. Bring participatory and democratic processes forward to allow your people to shape the world of our future.

We ask you to bring hope and peace to those who are struggling. So many of our friends and neighbours are fighting to make ends meet. Keep them in your faith and guide them to the next chapter of their journey

surrounded by your light and love. Let them be full of faith that you will provide in their hour of need.

We ask that you comfort those who are sick and may have lost hope. Shine your light upon them in their hour of need. Bring peace and love also to those that have suffered and lost a loved one. Bring them a sign the one they have lost is safe in your arms and show that they must continue with their mission in life.

We also pray for each other. Let us face life with joy, love and a passion for what you have given us. Give those of us feeling alone or unworthy the knowledge that each has a place in your world and a purpose on earth. Send us out with a renewed commitment to live each moment surrounded by your love and light. Remind us to be with you in the peace of the natural world: on a walk on a beach, sitting under a cedar tree, watching the sunrise. In these special places our minds shut out the world's noise and allow your words to be heard clearly.



Beauty of families

Thank you for the opportunities you have given us to be together and celebrate. Some gathered for a Thanksgiving feast with family. Others viewed the Christmas lights being turned on in the city. Some went for walks to watch the sunrise. Whatever the activity, we thank you for reminding us how important family and friends are and for teaching us to treasure the moments when we are together, connected through love.

We pray for those unable to enjoy such moments, perhaps because threatened by others focused on domination and violence. We send prayers to the unfortunate people who live in fear every day. Give them a sign, Lord, that they are not alone. Carry our prayers to them and give them strength to carry on learning and growing in your light and love.

We pray for families large and small. Relationships are challenging, Lord, ever changing and full of surprises. Help us to see the beauty of families rather than what might be lacking. Help us to work on relationships in joy and love and not run away to repeat the same patterns. Let us stand hand in hand and celebrate the life we have and the steps we will take together.



~ WINTER ~

From shadow to light

As you bring the world from dark to light this first December morning, Lord, let us consider areas of our lives that are in shadows. Let us put those things aside and walk with you in the light. Help us to shine brightly, to sing your praise in loud and clear voices, to be heard around the world and in our community. Let every person see, feel and hear our faith in you and our love of one another. Let those around us see your spirit inside and all around us as we spend each day in service of you.

As we ground ourselves in your love and walk with you in complete faith, we pray for those in our community struggling to find answers. They are struggling with a need to know everything, each moment, and dissected in order to get “The Answer.” Our prayers go to those tormented in this way. Help them relax into your arms and to have faith that you are with them. Let them know that not everything can be known in this world. Lord,

you have given us such power and ability through our brains, but let us use that power wisely and be comfortable that not every question can be answered. Let us live in awe and wonder and be open to learning each day.

We pray that the fountain of faith that pours from us spreads and is felt by others around the world. Let us drench them in the knowledge that with you by their sides, times of conflict will subside, that communities will come together, realising we are all connected. Help them to turn to you, to drink in your wisdom and spread that knowledge and faith into their communities.

Thank you for this opportunity to pray together and for each other. With you by our side we are ready for whatever comes and we will greet our experiences with grace and hospitality and a curiosity of what we can learn at every moment.

The gift of time

The Christmas season is upon us and with it the frenzy of gift buying, parties and community events. While these offer us a time to come together in peaceful settings, remind us each day of the true meaning of Christmas and help us focus on the importance of this season as Christians. Guide us to quiet meditative spaces where we can read and think about the glorious arrival of your son, Jesus Christ.

Help us and all Christians around the world to share this story with others and demonstrate the joy and wonder of living in your light and love each moment of our days.

We give special thanks for those who give the gift of time. We celebrate International and National volunteer day. Where would we all be without those who give so willingly and selflessly? These gentle souls seek nothing

in return and quietly go about the tasks assigned to them: feeding the hungry, distributing clothes, comforting families in distress, participating in a neighbourhood watch. There are so many ways volunteers enrich the fabric of community. We ask that you bless each and every one of them. They are shining examples of unconditional love and service.

Help us in the days ahead to approach all opportunities with wonder and love, seeking out moments to feel your presence and learn from the surroundings we are placed in. Bring us home safely to the quiet spaces where we can be closer to you. Let us all place a Bible on the kitchen table to give ourselves the opportunity to read your word and wonder at the story of Christ's coming. What an amazing gift you gave us! Thank you, Lord.



Let our light shine

We are less than two weeks from celebrating the birth and life of your Son, Jesus Christ. Families are gathering, children are coming home from school and university. Old connections are being restored and new ones are being made. With your presence, our community is gathering together in preparation for celebration. Give us the courage to use our voices and let people know about the amazing life we live in communion with you. Let our light shine and our praises be heard by those we encounter daily and let us serve you with the humbleness of John and the dedication of your Son's disciples.

We pray also for the children joining our family. Baptism is an amazing celebration of life and of living with you. Help all those who surround these children to encourage their children to know you in all ways every day.

We pray, too, for ourselves and each other, for those who will be serving Christmas dinner to those in need, and for those hosting their own gatherings. Lord, we ask you to be with each of us. Fill us with your spirit and allow it to radiate into every place we find ourselves. We love and honour you, Lord, and will do our best to let everyone we encounter know that!



Surrounded by love

Lord, we come before you with expectation and excitement. Christmas preparations are in full swing. We are thankful for members of our congregation who serve you by decorating and preparing the church, this wonderful space to worship and pray.

There are many places not so fortunate, where Christians do not have a place to worship, or are persecuted if they try. Never let us forget how fortunate we are to worship openly and freely in a beautiful space. Give those in more trying circumstances the courage to continue to follow your teachings. Let each one who works for you have the courage to show the world their faith. Let them wear it openly like a badge of honour, and bring them the strength to share your light and love with all they encounter. Keep them safe Lord, as they meet trials and difficulties along the road; keep them from harm's grasp and comfort them in times of need.

As we draw close to celebrating the birth of your Son, let us remember the sparse surroundings into which he was born. Many are facing meagre times at this very moment. Please bring comfort and joy to those who are in need, looking for jobs, working to ensure their children are safe and warm each night...often with little means to do so. Give them courage to ask for help, to seek places and people who will provide food and shelter until they are back on their feet.

And at this special time of year, please keep travellers safe. Bring them to their destinations with open hearts and spirits filled with love. Let us treasure the moments with our loved ones, reflecting and learning from each moment together and always being thankful to you that we have the opportunity to be together surrounded by your love.

A prayer for others

Dear Lord, we send our prayers to those in pain or distress, alone, homeless, suffering from an illness or unable to feel the light and love you offer every day. We pray for the wellbeing of our brothers and sisters, hoping that, at this time of new beginnings and the promise of eternal life, they will find peace and connect with a giving soul who will comfort and provide for them. So many are without, this Christmas season. We pray for them in earnest and with love.

We pray for community leaders serving those in need. Keep them safe and rested as they go about their work. We pray for those in governments: may they feel your goodness in their hearts as they move through the requirements of their jobs, making decisions that impact countries, towns, neighbourhoods and individuals. Keep your light on them; give them generous and peaceful

hearts; let them join hands with others and develop a connected and giving world.

We send prayers to Church leaders and workers as we prepare to celebrate the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ. Let this time of renewal and reflection bring all sorts of people together to sing your praises and to find new reasons for their life in service of you. Give Church leaders renewed energy and love, and when the services are over, help them re-energise and bask in your love.

Help us to accept those things from our past that we cannot change. Help us dive into life with excitement and strength. Join with us, Lord, as we celebrate you, your Son and the Holy Spirit that lives within each of us. Send us forth each day full of your love for us and for this world.

Your gift has arrived

CHRISTMAS DAY

Dear Lord, let the bells toll and let voices sing alleluias. We have arrived at the day your Son was born. Your gift has arrived, Lord!

You called upon two humble people to accept and care for your greatest gift to mankind, your Son. Despite their fear, their answer was “Here I am, Lord.” We pray that each of us will hear your call and that we will respond and answer your call to serve you on earth.

Father God, we pray that with the celebration of your Son’s birth, our faith will be renewed and that every one of us will find strength to share your word and the good news you offer us as Christians. We pray that your light penetrates our hearts and shines from us through our words and actions.

As we feel you around us, and see your hand in our lives, we pray that world leaders will be filled with your Holy Spirit. We pray they will seek justice and peace through every action they take. Help them care for your creation and work towards global policies to renew and bring new possibilities for the world and every creature living on it.

Your Son was born in a stable and swaddled in a cloth against the cold. We pray for those who are homeless and have nowhere to lay their heads. We pray for the hungry, the sick, those in pain and those who see only darkness around them. The star led the shepherds and wise men to the place where Jesus was born. We pray that same light is seen by those in difficult circumstances and leads them to salvation and eternal life.

Lord, we pray for Church leaders, missionaries and all who serve you in your Church. Let this time of new birth be a time of renewal and recommitment for each of them. We pray they kindle the flame inside them that led to their ministry and reaffirm their path with you. This path is not always easy but to us a Saviour is born. We pray that their faith allows them to proclaim this each time they speak in your name.

As we gather around our Christmas tables with friends and family this wondrous day, let us be thankful, Lord, for our church, this Island, our community and the beauty that surrounds us. We pray you continue to watch over us and encourage us today and every day.



Good Shepherd...

WRITTEN BY DOROTHY EVANS AND ADAPTED BY JANICE TROTT:

Our Lord said: “My sheep know my voice. I know them and they follow me.”

Good Shepherd: Your sheep need guidance. So often we do not know the way we should go but stumble along blindly, not listening for your voice. We pray for guidance for the church and its leaders, our Archbishop, our Bishop, and all the clergy throughout the world. Guide and lead all your sheep in the path of righteousness.

Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer

Good Shepherd: Your sheep need protection. So much in the world threatens to harm or destroy them. They are oppressed, exploited and unjustly treated. We pray today for countries where there is war, random violence or only fragile peace. We pray for those who meet persecution and torture with courage and dignity. Give those who are trying to make peace an inner certainty of their calling and constant patience in their negotiations. May the ways of diplomacy and the ways of forgiveness coincide.

Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer

Good Shepherd: Your sheep need good pasture. So many in this world do not have enough to eat. Lives are narrowed by need as they struggle to exist. We pray for those who have to search for daily food or walk long distances for clean water. Encourage all workers in the field as they endeavour to bring food and supplies to relieve the suffering of so many.

Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer

Good Shepherd: Your sheep need healing. So many are sick and in pain, incapacitated by illness, sorrow and anxiety. We pray for all who have asked for our prayers and especially those on our prayer list. We pray that those in trouble may know life in all its fullness.

Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer

Good Shepherd: Your sheep need saving. So often we stray from you and get lost, needing your costly forgiveness, needing you to risk all to fetch us back. We pray for ourselves and that we may know life in all its fullness.

Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer



Finally, Good Shepherd, we thank you for all the blessings of this life. We thank you for your life, your sacrificial death and for your resurrection. We thank you for those whom we love, the special people you have given to us. With deep gratitude we thank you for those who have left their mark on our lives by giving us love and laughter, but have now gone before us to be with you. We hold them in our hearts.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

MY GOD IS THE KING

My God is the King
Who Saved our Lives
Which became History
From Day to Night

He Saved our Sins
He's Up Above
We Love him Forever
To Heavenly Love

We Worship Our God
Today and Every Day
We Pray to God
And we Pray in different ways.

God, I Love You!

~ D'JAE GILBERT, AGED 10 ~

