

PRAYER DURING THE VACANCY



Morning Prayer
Thursdays, 9am
St Helen's Church or on Zoom

Zoom Link: <https://tinyurl.com/ymrfkfx9>

Updated Sept 2025

St Helen's + St Peter's · Wheathampstead

living God's love in our community



Wheathampstead PCC is a Registered Charity

sth-stp.org

Preparation

O God, make speed to save us.

All O Lord, make haste to help us.

Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens

All and your faithfulness to the clouds.

Psalm 36.5

The Word of God

Week One

Psalm 130

A song of ascents.

¹ Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord;

² Lord, hear my voice.

Let your ears be attentive
to my cry for mercy.

³ If you, Lord, kept a record of sins,
Lord, who could stand?

⁴ But with you there is forgiveness,
so that we can, with reverence, serve you.

⁵ I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits,
and in his word I put my hope.

⁶ I wait for the Lord
more than watchmen wait for the morning,
more than watchmen wait for the morning.

⁷ Israel, put your hope in the Lord,
for with the Lord is unfailing love
and with him is full redemption.

⁸ He himself will redeem Israel
from all their sins.

A song of ascents. Of David.

- ¹ My heart is not proud, Lord,
my eyes are not haughty;
I do not concern myself with great matters
or things too wonderful for me.
- ² But I have calmed and quieted myself,
I am like a weaned child with its mother;
like a weaned child I am content.
- ³ Israel, put your hope in the Lord
both now and forevermore.

Of David.

- ¹ I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart;
before the “gods” I will sing your praise.
- ² I will bow down toward your holy temple
and will praise your name
for your unfailing love and your faithfulness,
for you have so exalted your solemn decree
that it surpasses your fame.
- ³ When I called, you answered me;
you greatly emboldened me.
- ⁴ May all the kings of the earth praise you, Lord,
when they hear what you have decreed.
- ⁵ May they sing of the ways of the Lord,
for the glory of the Lord is great.
- ⁶ Though the Lord is exalted, he looks kindly on the lowly;
though lofty, he sees them from afar.
- ⁷ Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
you preserve my life.
You stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes;
with your right hand you save me.
- ⁸ The Lord will vindicate me;

your love, Lord, endures forever—
do not abandon the works of your hands.

Week Four

Psalms 139

For the director of music. Of David. A psalm.

- ¹ You have searched me, Lord,
and you know me.
- ² You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar.
- ³ You discern my going out and my lying down;
you are familiar with all my ways.
- ⁴ Before a word is on my tongue
you, Lord, know it completely.
- ⁵ You hem me in behind and before,
and you lay your hand upon me.
- ⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain.
- ⁷ Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
- ⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
- ⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
if I settle on the far side of the sea,
¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.
- ¹¹ If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me
and the light become night around me,"
¹² even the darkness will not be dark to you;
the night will shine like the day,
for darkness is as light to you.
- ¹³ For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
- ¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.

- ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you
when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.
- ¹⁶ Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in your book
before one of them came to be.
- ¹⁷ How precious to me are your thoughts,^[a] God!
How vast is the sum of them!
- ¹⁸ Were I to count them,
they would outnumber the grains of sand—
when I awake, I am still with you.
- ¹⁹ If only you, God, would slay the wicked!
Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty!
- ²⁰ They speak of you with evil intent;
your adversaries misuse your name.
- ²¹ Do I not hate those who hate you, Lord,
and abhor those who are in rebellion against you?
- ²² I have nothing but hatred for them;
I count them my enemies.
- ²³ Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
- ²⁴ See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Short readings

Week One

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child

shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 11.6–9

Week Two

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3.14–19

Week Three

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.'

John 11.17–26a

Week Four

When the Lamb had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. They sing a new song: 'You are worthy to take the scroll and to

open its seals, for you were slaughtered and by your blood you ransomed for God saints from every tribe and language and people and nation; you have made them to be a kingdom and priests serving our God, and they will reign on earth.'

Revelation 5.8–10

Response

Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life.

All Those who believe in me will never die.

John 11.25,26

Vacancy Prayer Themes

- 1) *Please pray for the unity of the church and its mission to serve the wider community. It is important that the church stays together during this time.*
- 2) *Please pray for support for the paid staff of the church it's church wardens and PCC who will take over the day to day running of the church. It is important that no one feels overwhelmed or overworked.*
- 3) *Please pray that people will take up more roles and responsibilities, that there will be more volunteers, and the workload will be shared out in larger groups.*
- 4) *Please pray for wisdom and direction for the leadership of the church. Especially the PCC as the put together the Parish Profile and start the process of choosing a new rector.*
- 5) *Please pray that the church remains forward focusing, that current projects and outreach receive support especially for families and children.*
- 6) *Please pray for the leaders of our Sunday morning worship and all those who hold meetings. May God bless us with quality and continuity so that the church feels fed and supported.*

- 7) *Please pray for the Pastoral care in the church. That people feel connected and cared for. Pray for the building of new relationships and friendships at this time.*
- 8) *Please pray for the Welcome team and any new people or visitors to the church. We want people to feel welcomed and to come back.*
- 9) *Please pray for regular attendance and a fresh commitment from the congregation. If people are unwell or away for a long time we pray for their health and speedy recovery.*
- 10) *Please pray that we would have wisdom when reviewing the program of activities and commitments the church has. What is feasible and wise to do in this period.*
- 11) *Please pray for good communication. People need to feel both informed and listened to. This includes the wider community not just the church.*
- 12) *Please pray for how people are feeling, their emotions at this time of change. We want the soul of the church to stay healthy.*
- 13) *Please pray for our relationship with the Diocese and Deanery. We need their support during this time. We also need them to provide us wisdom in appointing a new rector.*
- 14) *Please pray for the wider community of Wheathampstead especially St Helen's school that our relationship with them continues to grow and flourish.*
- 15) *Please pray for the appointment of the new Rector. For wisdom in choosing the right person, someone who is focussed on the vision and mission of our church.*
- 16) *Please pray that God continues to bless not only our church and it's new Rector but Richard and Claire in their new ministry.*

CPAS Vacancy Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the ministry of Richard our previous rector, and we pray your presence and blessing upon him.

We ask now that you will help us to share responsibility, grow in faith, love one another, care for those in need, reach out to others, and welcome newcomers.

Lord Jesus, guard and grow this church as we serve you together in this period without a rector.

Please guide those who are seeking the right minister for us and those who are seeking the right church for their ministry, that together we may discover your way for the future and see your kingdom grow.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

**All Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

The Conclusion

May Christ dwell in our hearts by faith.

All Amen.