

An Act of Prayer for individuals or households to mark 23 March: the beginning of the first lockdown

It may be appropriate for this Act of Prayer to take place in the evening. In a household, all may wish to gather together.

A candle may be lit.

A leader says

Lord God, the maker and redeemer of all,
as we come before you in thanksgiving for the gift of health and life,
we grieve for the thousands who have died:
comfort us with your presence,
sustain us with the hope of your kingdom,
and give us grace to live our lives well;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

One or more of the following Scripture passages is read.

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd;
therefore can I lack nothing.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.
- 3 He shall refresh my soul
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- 4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You spread a table before me
in the presence of those who trouble me;
you have anointed my head with oil
and my cup shall be full.
- 6 Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Psalm 23

7 I bless the Lord who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me.
I have set the Lord always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. Psalm 16v7

‘Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.’

Matthew 11.28-30

I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8.38-39

Cast all your anxieties upon God, for God cares for you.

1 Peter 5.7

Reflection and prayer may follow.

You may wish to:

- *share thoughts about the last year;*
- *remember those who have died;*
- *pray for those who care for others;*
- *pray for all who are in need;*
- *share hopes for the future.*

The leader prays

Lord Jesus Christ,
when fear and anxiety besiege us
and hope is veiled in grief,
hold us in your wounded hands
and make your face shine on us again,
for you are our Lord and God.

All **Amen.**

All join in praying the Lord's Prayer.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

(or)

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

The leader may say

Christ the Good Shepherd
enfold us with love,
fill us with peace,
and lead us in hope,
to the end of our days;
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us always.

All **Amen.**

*If a candle has been lit, someone might place it on a windowsill or another place
which would make it visible from outside.*