

Intercessions on Sunday 22 February 2026 by Andrew Goodman

First reading: Exodus 17.8-13

Gospel: Matthew 4. 1-11

Collect: Heavenly Father, your Son battled with the powers of darkness, and grew closer to you in the desert: help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer that we may witness to your saving love in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

This morning's Collect refers to you, Lord, battling with the powers of darkness.

As we approach the fourth anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine next Tuesday 24th February, we remember the call from Ukrainian Jews and Christians to pray Psalm 31 as the country entered into the darkness of the assault by Russian armed forces, and cried out to you for help.

Strengthen them, Lord. May their hearts take courage as they wait on you.

Strengthen them, Lord, as they endure temperatures down to -27°C with minimal heating and electricity due to attacks on critical infrastructure.

Lord, the news headlines this week feature other conflicts. In particular, we remember today people living on the West Bank and in Gaza. It's not clear if anyone is on their side whilst they face violence and their land is being violently appropriated and they are excluded from peace initiatives.

Lord, we remember also the millions of people affected by the brutal conflict in Sudan, those who are displaced and facing famine and disease. We thank you for organisations like Christian Aid (who we have supported from our mission giving) and their partners who are providing life-saving support and bringing hope to people fleeing conflict.

Thank you, Lord, for everyone who is working for a breakthrough in talks that would lead to a just and lasting peace in any conflict arena.

Thank you, Lord, for everyone who is providing psychological support, comfort and healing to those who are suffering and/or displaced and/or who have lost family and friends and their homes.

Lord, we especially remember the children affected by these conflicts. May they soon see their futures marked by peace.

Lord, in your mercy - hear our prayer

Lord, with the news headlines this week also full of the fallout from the Epstein files, we remember those who have endured and are enduring the darkness of trafficking and slavery.

We thank you, Lord, for organisations like A21, who we have supported from our mission giving, who dare to invade these dark places. Continue to equip them with a heart of compassion and show them how they can bring hope, love and light into the darkness, even in the most desperate of situations.

Lord, in your mercy - hear our prayer

Lord, shortly we will remember in the Eucharist how you bore our sins and suffered on the cross for us. As the Apostle Paul urged the Ephesian church, help us to bear one another, to support and encourage one another in our walk with you.

Bless the ministry of Alan, Bill and Scott, and of our lay readers and leaders, and the ministry of Lindsey and those who help her with children and families. Give wisdom to all leaders in the church, especially the Churchwardens and PCC.

We thank you, Lord, for the gifts the have given each of us to bear one another according to your grace: gifts to bless and equip each of us, to build us up and to develop our faith and knowledge of your way for us.

We remember those who are suffering physically, mentally and emotionally and commit to you those known to us who are unwell:

Restore to them the healing and joy of your salvation.

We commit to you those known to us who have died recently:

Lord, we thank you for sending the Holy Spirit to comfort us and give us peace. Bring comfort and reassurance to those who mourn that you are with them in their pain and sorrow.

We remember the anniversaries of:

Lord, in your mercy - hear our prayer

Lord, as this morning's Collect puts it: help us to use these days [in Lent] to grow in wisdom and prayer. Increase our thirst for you. Thank you for the promise of the Holy Spirit, who is living water that never runs out.

So often we rely on ourselves, instead of coming to you to be refreshed and restored. This Lent, help us to come to you and drink from you daily, so that living water can flow through us and bless those around us.

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