

Congregational prayer



God of Elizabeth,

Who celebrated and blessed her relative Mary upon hearing her good news.

Thank you for the power of relationships, and the difference our words, prayers and actions can make.

May we be a people who celebrate and bless others.

Make us encouragers, Lord. Give us eyes to see the gold in those around us, especially in those who are often overlooked yet have so much contribute.

Use our words and our actions to lift those feeling low, to remind others of their worth, to speak truth when they can't hear it and to let them know they are loved.

Fill us with your joy, that we can't help but rejoice when we see what you are doing through others in our lives, our communities and our world.

Open our eyes, Lord, to what we can bring.

God of the shepherds,

The first to welcome and worship the newborn King.

Thank you for your Church.

May we, the Church, be a people of welcome and hospitality.

May we always be receptive to those on the edges of our congregation, and invite them in.

Will you help us notice those with an empty seat beside them, and be the ones to fill it.

Draw our attention to those who are missing from our Church family.

Help us create an environment where they feel safe, valued and that they belong. May we bend so that others can fit in.

May our welcome of others be worship to you.

Open our eyes, Lord, to what we can bring.

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God of the Magi,

Those wise individuals who studied, and who engaged with rulers, leaders and kings.

We thank you for those who lead us – locally, globally, academically, politically, spiritually, in community. We pray for our policy-shapers and decision makers, and for the next generation of leaders, who you are already raising up.

May those of us with influence use it to help others see the needs of the vulnerable.

May those of us with skills to listen, learn and investigate use them to search for solutions.

May those of us with a platform step aside to make room for and amplify the voices of those who aren't heard enough.

May we be filled with and driven by hope. May we be passionate about and committed to justice.

Open our eyes, Lord, to what we can bring.

God of Mary and Joseph.

Who raised and loved your son, Jesus.

We thank you and we pray for those who open their hearts and homes to vulnerable children through fostering, adoption, kinship care or supported lodgings.

We ask for more individuals, couples and families who will provide a place of safety, stability, love and encouragement to children and young people who need it. Show us, Lord, if this is something that we can do.

And if we can't, help us step in to wrap around families who do with encouragement, prayer and practical support.

May we, your Church, be a people who step forward to meet the needs of those children who are waiting.

Open our eyes, Lord, to what we can bring.

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Emmanuel, God with us

Thank you that each of your children has something unique to offer in worship of you and service of others. Help us to see the gifts and passions you have given us, and help us to call out and encourage what we see in others.

You call your Church to take up the cause of the vulnerable, marginalised and oppressed.

Holy Spirit, equip us to do this – whatever our role may be.

Show us how we can play our part. Use us to make a difference.

Open our eyes, Lord, to what we can bring.

