

Prayers 20 December – 4th Sunday in Advent

In response to the message

Heavenly Father, how we look forward to that great day when Jesus will return and put all things right and establish the new heavens and new earth where righteousness will reign! Knowing that everything of this world will one day come to an end, please help us to have a right perspective on what is temporary in this life and what will last to eternity. By your Holy Spirit's power, may we live godly and holy lives which stand out in this world because we are your people. Thank you that because of Jesus' death and resurrection, we will indeed be found 'spotless, blameless and at peace'. Help us to be on our guard so that we are never pulled away from our relationship with you and may we remain people of joyful expectation because of the certainty of Jesus' return. We ask all this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

For Christmas celebrations

Loving Lord, thank you for the joyful anticipation of Christmas celebrations, now only days away. We thank you that Jesus' presence with us in this world is a sure sign and promise of his return. Thank you for coming to dwell with us in the presence of Jesus Christ. Bless our Christmas celebrations after such a challenging year, that our joy will be centred around Jesus and all that his coming means. As we gather to sing your praises and hear your word; as we get together with family and friends, may our hearts rejoice because of the depths of your love in the gift of your Son. Thank you for the new life which is ours because of Jesus; for we ask these things in his name. **Amen.**

Lives and nations impacted by COVID-19

Loving Lord, it is hard for us to grasp all that is happening around the world due to COVID-19. The numbers of those daily infected and those who are dying each day in the USA, Europe and the UK and elsewhere, is staggering and sad. Please bless and protect front line health workers who are caring for those infected. May the vaccines which are currently being rolled out be effective.

Thank you so much for the blessing we know here in our own nation of relatively low cases and deaths. Thank you for the easing of restrictions in time for Christmas. Please continue to direct and guide our political leaders and health professionals. And we are bold to ask again Lord, that as people are confronted with the fragility of life, they might run and turn to you in repentance and trust, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For those struggling at Christmas

Dear Heavenly Father, some people approach Christmas with fear and trepidation and find it a difficult and challenging time. Please help them to focus on your Son Jesus above everything else which might make them sad or distressed. May the reminder of your love for us and the new life you've made possible through Jesus, sustain and strengthen them through this time. All this we ask in Jesus' name. **Amen.**