

Prayers for the earth

*An invitation to pray for people and places on our hearts
... praying in words or in silence for the healing light of
Christ to pour in ...*

The Lord's prayer

Life-Giver, Pain-Bearer, Love Maker
Source of all that is and that shall be.
Father and Mother of us all.
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo
through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed
by all peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done
by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread that we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another forgive us
and help us to forgive.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever, amen.

Alternate Lord's Prayer by Jim Cotter

Final Blessing

May your protecting circle -
Source of the elements, Gentle Christ and Holy Spirit -
be keeping me safe.

...
Liturgy written by Rev Dr Sally Douglas
To be shared freely with acknowledgment.



Anna and Simeon meeting the baby Jesus
Luke 2.22-38

**Christmas One
Worship at Home
26 December 2021**

 **Richmond
Uniting Church**
www.richmond.unitingchurch.org.au

Before this service begins you are invited to light a candle

Prayers of thanks and gratitude

Holy One - Sacred Three
our source and our homecoming
we gather to you in love.

We praise you for coming among us in Jesus
cascading in humility and compassion.

We praise you for the presence of Great Spirit
birthing us into truth and grace

We praise you, together with the world-wide church
in Jesus' name. Amen.

Reading from Sacred Scripture

As you hear this account in Luke, take time to imagine the scene

Psalm 148. 1-5

Luke 2.22-38

Reflection Questions

After reading the passage from Luke you are invited to engage with these questions:

What do you see and hear at the Temple?

What is Simeon like? What is Anna like?

Where are you in the scene?

How do Mary and Joseph react to these old people?

How does the baby Jesus respond to them?

What are you waiting, and longing, for?

What is this reading speaking to you?

Spend some time in conversation with Jesus.

A poem about Anna and Simeon
By the biblical Scholar Richard Bauckham:

"In the drab waiting-room
the failed travellers, resigned, sleep
on the hard benches, inured
to postponement and foul coffee.
Hope has given up on them.

There are also the impatient,
pacing platforms, and the driven,
purple with frustration, abusing
their mobiles, for the hardest part
of waiting is the not doing.

Truly to wait is pure dependence.
But waiting too long the heart
grows sclerotic. Will it still
be fit to leap when the time comes?
Prayer is waiting with desire.

Two aged lives incarnate
century on century
of waiting for God, their waiting-room
his temple, waiting on his presence,
marking time by practicing

the cycle of the sacrifices,
ferial and festival,
circling onward, spiralling
towards a centre out ahead,
seasons of revolving hope.

Holding out for God who cannot
be given up for dead, holding
him to his promises—not now,
not just yet, but soon, surely,
eyes will see what hearts await."