

Prayer Day, 10th May 2020

Suggested Prayer Ideas for the Morning

Our focus is lament. The definition of lament is - passionate expression of grief; to express regret or disappointment. The following may help you pray. You may wish to do some, all or none. You may wish to come back to these at a later date. You may wish to watch or listen to a service on radio or television.

Remember:

- If you would like to make a comment, give an encouraging word or a prayer, please either use the Live Chat on the YouTube page, or email it to stanhopemethodists@gmail.com.
- The next session is at 12.30pm.

Prayer Suggestion 1

You may wish to re-read the words of 'There is a time for tears' and reflect on the words.

Speak to God about how you feel. Take time to hear his reponse.

"There's a time for tears, and a time for pain, time to hurt while the grief remains.

There's a time when peace seems so far away, yet still God holds us on that day.

There's a time to weep from the ache inside, time to show what we've tried to hide,

There's a time to doubt and to wonder why, and hold each other as we cry.

God of comfort, God of the cross, joining us here to weep,

stand beside us, grieving our loss, and be for us the hope of peace.

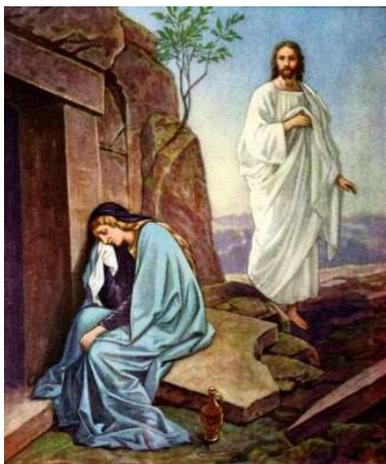
There is time to smile at the memories, time for thanks as we meet to grieve.

It takes time to heal, so we pause today to mourn, remember and to pray."

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Prayer Suggestion 2

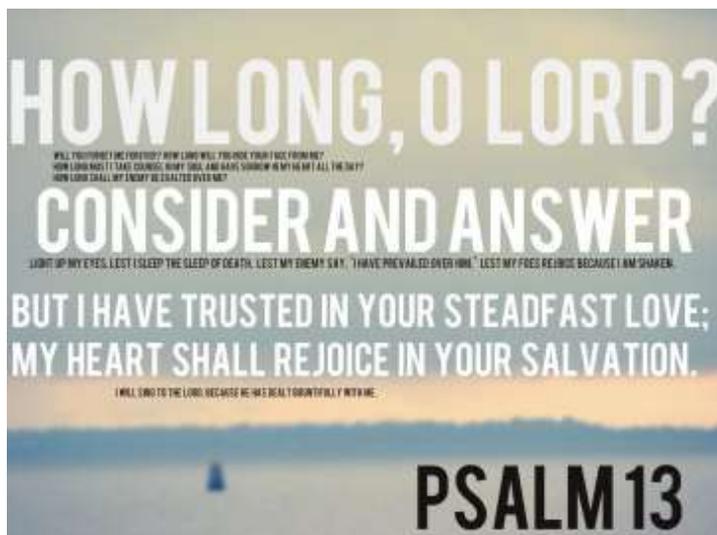
Mary's Lament: John 20:11-18



Spend a few moments in your imagination.

Feel Mary's pain and sadness ... things have gone terribly wrong. Why has this happened? In her pain and confusion all she could do was weep.

It's hard to pray in such times but prayers of lament can be so helpful. We live in a broken world where things don't always go right. There are times when we don't know what God is doing and we don't know which way to turn. Bringing before God a prayer of lament can make a difference because God actually changes us during these times. Prayers of lament are a form of worship and faith. We worship God even in the midst of difficulties. Instead of backing away from God in the hard times we face the pain and worship him in it.



The writers of Psalms knew what it was to lament and cry out to God.

Take some time prayerfully to explore some of the following:

Psalm 10, 13, 69, 74, 79. These are by no means the only Psalms of lament. You may want to look at a different one or you may want to write your own Psalm in the light of today's difficult time.

Here is a prayer of Lament taken from Crosswalk.com. You can read and consider this or if you feel able write your own prayer for your situation.

A Prayer of Lament:

Lord, I know that you are faithful over all things, even the hard, dark times of my life. Help me not back away from you in my time of grief. Help me instead to lean into you and trust you, even when I do not understand your ways. Please keep my head above the waters of anguish and my feet from slipping off the ground of truth. Help me see you in these hard moments and glorify you in my response. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Alternately you may want to visit the book of Lamentations. The writer, thought by some to be Jeremiah, expresses the sorrow at the fall of Jerusalem. As you consider this book and its message you may find you are led to prayers of confession and repentance for our world/our country/our communities/ourselves, remembering God's words to Solomon after the dedication of the temple (2 Chronicles 7:11-22). It is hard to think about worship and prayer at times of great sadness or difficulty but there is much in the Bible to show that this is encouraged and modelled – known as prayers of lament they can encourage us.



In the Dark Night of the Soul, bright flows the river of God - St John of the Cross

Ignatian Spirituality refers to times like this as Dark Nights of the Soul, those occasions where it is really hard to see the light.

Reflect on an occasion where you found yourself in such a place – what helped you through these times?

Activity suggestion - go into your garden and find some pieces of wood or twigs, make a cross, write your prayers and lay them at the cross.

Prayer Suggestion 3

A Prayer for this Difficult Time

Here's a prayer by Nick Fawcett (devotional/reflective writer) who has allowed this to be used as a free resource to aid reflection, assist prayer and inspire hope.

Nick wrote, "It may help you to find words to articulate some of your thoughts and fears when you're struggling to pray during these dark days of the coronavirus pandemic, reminding you that, however much it may feel like it, you are not alone."

Lord, I prayed for the people of Wuhan at the start of this outbreak

Lord, I prayed for the people of Wuhan at the start of this outbreak,
asking that the disease would be confined to where it started,
limited in its impact,
soon be over.

But it didn't stay in one place,
it wasn't restricted to a few,
and it's still going strong,
if anything seeming to gather pace.
I prayed when coronavirus began to spread
that it would be held in check,
that measures to control it would be effective,
that a pandemic might be avoided,
but again I was to be disappointed,

for it's rampant now,
all attempts to stop it have proven woefully inadequate,
the whole world now in its grip.
I prayed when it reached this continent,
this country,
that we could deal with it,
that few would be infected,
none might die
chaos might be avoided,
but it seems I was wasting my breath,
for thousands are unwell,
hundreds have perished,
and nations are reeling from one blow after another.
Aren't you listening, Lord?
Can't you hear our prayers?
I don't understand.

Only, I do, of course,
for this isn't *your* mess;
it's *ours*,
this whole sorry business being, in part at least, of human making,
like so many we blame you for.
You did not wish it upon us,
and you yearn to help us through it,
your heart being heavy at the pain we endure
and fear we wrestle with.
Teach me that you *do* hear,
do listen,
and, in whatever ways you can,
will answer.
Amen.

Prayer Suggestion 4

Watch this video entitled 'We have come'. Think about the words. Tell God how you feel.

You may find it helpful to write down your prayers, your thought, your feelings.

<https://www.engageworship.org/ideas/we-have-come-song-and-video>

Prayer Suggestion 5

You may to use this video as a prayer.

<https://www.facebook.com/theisb1891/videos/922375834843315/?v=922375834843315>