

LOCKDOWN **PRAYERS**

BY ESTHER SIMPSON

1.

GRATITUDE

A Prayer of Thanksgiving

You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God; I will extol you. Psalm 118:28

Lord my God,

You are good, all the time.

All the time, you are good.

Thank you for this moment;

Thank you for my senses - all I can see, hear, touch, smell, taste;

Thank you for where I am – my home, my work, my street, your presence;

Thank you for how I am – for the strength in my muscles, the blood in my veins, the breath
in my lungs, the thoughts in my head;

Thank you for who I am – for my family, my friends, my neighbours, for being your child;

Thank you for when I am – for now, this day, this time in history.

Thank you for it all.

Thank you that you know, you see, you hear, you act, you hold, you love.

Thank you.

I will never get to the end of all there is to thank you for.

You are good, all the time.

Amen.

A New Psalm

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

Give thanks to the God who is greater than all gods,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

Give thanks to the Master greater than any other authority,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

To him alone who works miracles,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
To him who understands the details of the cosmos,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
To him who makes the world work,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
To him who alone can make light,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
The sun to give us light and delight in the day,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
The moon and stars to give us comfort and wonder in the night,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

To him who defeated death,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
Who has rescued us from slavery to sin,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
By a mighty hand and self-sacrificing love,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
Who rose victorious from death,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
And brings us with him in triumph,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
Who has defeated our enemy,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
To him who leads his people through isolation and lockdown,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
Who can defeat virus and plague,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
Who provides when our fridges and bank balances are emptying,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
Who gives wisdom to doctors and nurses,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
Who does not leave or forsake us,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
Who remembers our frailty and fragility,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
And puts every breath we breathe into our lungs,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

Give thanks to our God above, our God-with-us,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

2.

UNCERTAINTY

A Prayer of Uncertainty

We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you. 2 Chronicles 20:12

Lord our God,

King of heaven's armies.

In so many ways we do not know what to do:

our efforts seem so small in the face of so much death;

our prayers sound so feeble in the face of an invisible enemy;

our knees are trembling and our hands hang limp.

But you are God and Lord, Maker and Majesty.

We look to you, for you alone can save us.

Keep us attentive to watching you,

And then, as Jesus did, to do what you are doing.

In his name we pray, who spent his whole life attentive to what you were doing. Amen.

A Prayer When I Have No Words

You have known the distress of my soul. Psalm 31:7

Lord,

I ---

You ---

There's ---

Please ---

I do not have words.

Your words says that you know the distress of my soul.

You know the distress of my soul

You know the distress.

You know.

You know.

You know.

You.

Thank you. Amen.

A Prayer of Doubt

Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand. Psalm 73:23

Lord,

I am uncertain.

I am afraid.

I am wondering where you are, if you are there.

My mind is whirling with questions.

My heart is heavy with the weight of grief

My hands are itching to do something but have been told to do nothing.

Are you here?

Are you in our hospitals and supermarkets and streets?

Please be here.

Be here in the stillness and silence.

Be here in the busyness of ICUs and ambulances.

Be here in my head and heart and hands.

Be here, even when I cannot see you or name you.

Be here, as you were in Mary's womb,

As you were in a boat in the storm

As you were hung on a cruel cross

As you were in the cool silence of a grave

As you were in a room of frightened disciples

As you are drawing near with compassion and comfort to those mourning.

Be here and it will be enough.

Amen.

3.

TRUST

A Prayer of Trust

*The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord sits enthroned as king forever.
Psalm 29:10*

God, our God,

King over all, including this chaos.

You are always enthroned on high;

You are always king.

You alone are sovereign over this world you have made.

In a time when we groan with uncertainty,

when we are overwhelmed by the invisible flood of pandemic and panic,

Be king.

Be king over nations, and governments.

Be king over sickness and death.

Be king over communities and families.

Be king over me.

Be king over the floods around me and the floods in me.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.

A Prayer for All Who Minister

Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will. Psalm 103:21

Father God,

You send your angels to minister to us.

Thank you for all those who minister in a particular way at this time:

For those who work in hospitals, care homes, surgeries and pharmacies;

For those who grow, produce, transport and supply our food;

For those who clean, cook, clear up and keep us healthy;

For those who speak, preach, call, write, blog, vlog, sing and pray into our isolation;

For those who calm, cradle, carry, comfort and care for the dead and their families;

For those who lead, decide, deliberate and govern;

For those who seek, research, explore and assess treatments and cures;

For those who give, bless, serve, love and tend the vulnerable and the needy;

For all who in this season reflect you.

Even as they mirror you, would you bless and protect and provide for them,

Our great Shepherd and the One who is always Enough. Amen.

A Prayer for Wisdom

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go. Psalm 32:8

Lord God,

You create and recreate us in your goodness and wideness.

Thank you for the many outreaches and programmes you have blessed us with,

Thank you for the ways they have changed us

Thank you for the ways they have changed our community

As we look to a time beyond lockdown,

Keep us listening to the ways you want to restore us

And the ways you may want to recreate us.

May we not cling to the old out of nostalgia,

But rejoice at the new wine you bring

And look for the fruitfulness after the pruning.

In this time of preparation make us flexible;

To contain new wine without bursting,

To be ready for harvest,

To embrace with joy all you are recreating.

May we look to you for comfort, not comfortableness.

In the name of Jesus, our foretaste and pioneer of all things new. Amen.

ESTHER SIMPSON

I'm Esther Simpson, originally from London but have lived here since 1991. I have four children that keep me out of mischief and I work in a local school. I've been part of Willowfield Parish since 2005 and finished my training as a Diocesan Reader in 2019.

I have always loved stories and writing since I can remember. These prayers are born out of imagining myself into Bible stories and re-imagining Bible prayers into my days. I hope and pray that they inspire you to do the same as you find your own words to speak to the God whose ears are always listening.

