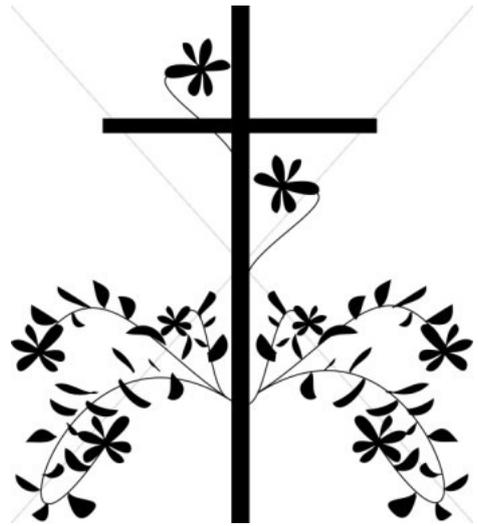


**Night Prayer At Home,  
All Saints' Cottenham with  
Rampton  
Sunday 22 August 2021**



**Preparation**

The eternal God is your refuge,  
and underneath are the everlasting arms.

Deuteronomy 33.27

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a  
perfect end.

**Amen.**

Our help is in the name of the Lord  
**who made heaven and earth.**

***Take a moment to think about the day gone  
by, giving thanks for what was good  
and bringing to God those times that need His  
forgiveness.***

**Lord God,  
We have sinned against you;  
We have done evil in your sight.  
We are sorry and repent.  
Have mercy on us according to your love.  
Wash away our wrongdoing  
and cleanse us from our sin.  
Renew a right spirit within us  
and restore us to the joy of your salvation,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

***Take a moment to thank God that through  
Jesus' sacrifice we are forgiven.***

Save us, O Lord, while waking,  
and guard us while sleeping,  
that awake  
we may watch with Christ  
and asleep may rest in peace.

## **Psalm 91**

### **Assurance of God's Protection**

You who live in the shelter of the Most High,  
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,

I will say to the Lord, 'My refuge and my  
fortress; my God, in whom I trust.'

For he will deliver you from the snare of the  
fowler and from the deadly pestilence;

he will cover you with his pinions,  
and under his wings you will find refuge;  
his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.

You will not fear the terror of the night,  
or the arrow that flies by day,

or the pestilence that stalks in darkness,  
or the destruction that wastes at noonday.

A thousand may fall at your side,  
ten thousand at your right hand,  
but it will not come near you.

You will only look with your eyes  
and see the punishment of the wicked.

Because you have made the Lord your refuge,  
the Most High your dwelling-place,

no evil shall befall you,  
no scourge come near your tent.

For he will command his angels concerning you  
to guard you in all your ways.

On their hands they will bear you up, so that  
you will not dash your foot against a stone.

You will tread on the lion and the adder,  
the young lion and the serpent you will  
trample under foot.

Those who love me, I will deliver;  
I will protect those who know my name.

When they call to me, I will answer them;  
I will be with them in trouble,  
I will rescue them and honour them.

With long life I will satisfy them,  
and show them my salvation.

**Glory to the Father  
and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning  
is now  
and shall be  
for ever.  
Amen.**

## Introduction to Bible reading

Spirit of Wisdom, take from us all fuss,  
the clattering of noise,  
the temptation to dominate  
by the power of words,  
the craving for certainty.  
Lead us through the narrow gate  
of not knowing,  
that we may listen and obey,  
and come to a place of silence and stillness,  
of true conversation and wisdom.

Jim Cotter

## Church of England Lectionary Bible reading for Sunday 22 August 2021, Evening Prayer

### **Hebrews 13.16-21**

Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls and will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with sighing—for that would be harmful to you. Pray for us; we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honourably in all things. I urge you all the more to do this, so that I may be restored to you very soon. Now may the God of peace, who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, make you complete in everything good so that you may do his will, working among us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Here ends the reading.

## Short talk

*...with joy*

*and not with sighing...*



*Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls and will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with sighing—for that would be harmful to you.*

It seems likely that this letter to ‘the Hebrews’ was written to Jewish new Christians living in Rome. It was a dangerous and uncertain time. The Emperor Nero blamed Christians for political unrest and many were killed. These new Christians would meet in private houses. Their leaders usually earned a living in non-religious jobs. There were no ordained priests or church buildings yet. Small groups were finding ways to support each other and to keep true to their belief in Jesus as the risen Christ.

Their leaders were taking on a lot of responsibility. If they lost heart, lost their ‘joy’ and took to ‘sighing’ (the Greek word actually translates more as ‘groaning’), everyone else in the group was affected.

That's always been the reality of leadership in faith groups. Being constantly joyful for others, every day and in every city, town and village, is exhausting, even for the most wonderful rectors, vicars, curates and ministers, and even with no Emperor Nero round the corner!

Clearly in many countries today there are armed forces out to kill peaceful Christians, peaceful Muslims and their families.

So what can we do? Prayer is always very much welcomed by people who are being persecuted for their faith. Prayer that is persistent, prayer that faces up to realities. We can influence our own Government and our own communities to welcome refugees.

We can also enhance church life by not 'sighing' or 'groaning' about trivial matters. It's up to all of us, not just ordained leaders, to focus on joy, life and hope. It's that simple.

*Chai (חַי) is a Hebrew word and symbol that means "life," "alive," or "living."*



## Prayers

Lord God, there is no place that is beyond your concern and no depth of suffering and sadness beyond your love.

Be with your Church, we pray, that we may offer the light of hope in places of despair, the warmth of human company in places of loneliness and the refreshment of peace in places of chaos and war.

## Silence

Lord of all life,  
you never cease from calling people to turn and follow you, and you empower us with your Spirit to do marvellous things in your service. Strengthen all those who lead your Church in our day with your many gifts, that they in turn may strengthen all your people in their ministry to bring your light to a world so in need of your truth and your love.

## Silence

Dear God, we pray that you would open our hearts to always share good things with those in greater need. **Amen.**

**Prayers for comfort, healing,  
recovery and renewal,  
for others and for ourselves**

Merciful God,  
we entrust to your unfailing and tender care  
this night those who are ill or in pain,  
knowing that whenever danger threatens  
your everlasting arms are there to hold us safe.  
Comfort and heal them,  
and restore them to health and strength;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

Be present, O merciful God,  
and protect us  
through the silent hours of this night,  
so that we who are wearied  
by the changes and chances  
of this fleeting world,  
may rest upon your eternal changelessness;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever.  
Amen.**

## Collect for Night Prayer

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,  
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy;  
may Your holy angels dwell with us  
and guard us in peace,  
and may Your blessing be always upon us;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## The Conclusion

In peace we will lie down and sleep;  
**for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.**

As the night watch looks for the morning,  
**so do we look for you, O Christ.**

The Lord bless us and watch over us;  
the Lord make His face shine upon us  
and be gracious to us;  
the Lord look kindly on us  
and give us peace.

**Amen.**



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