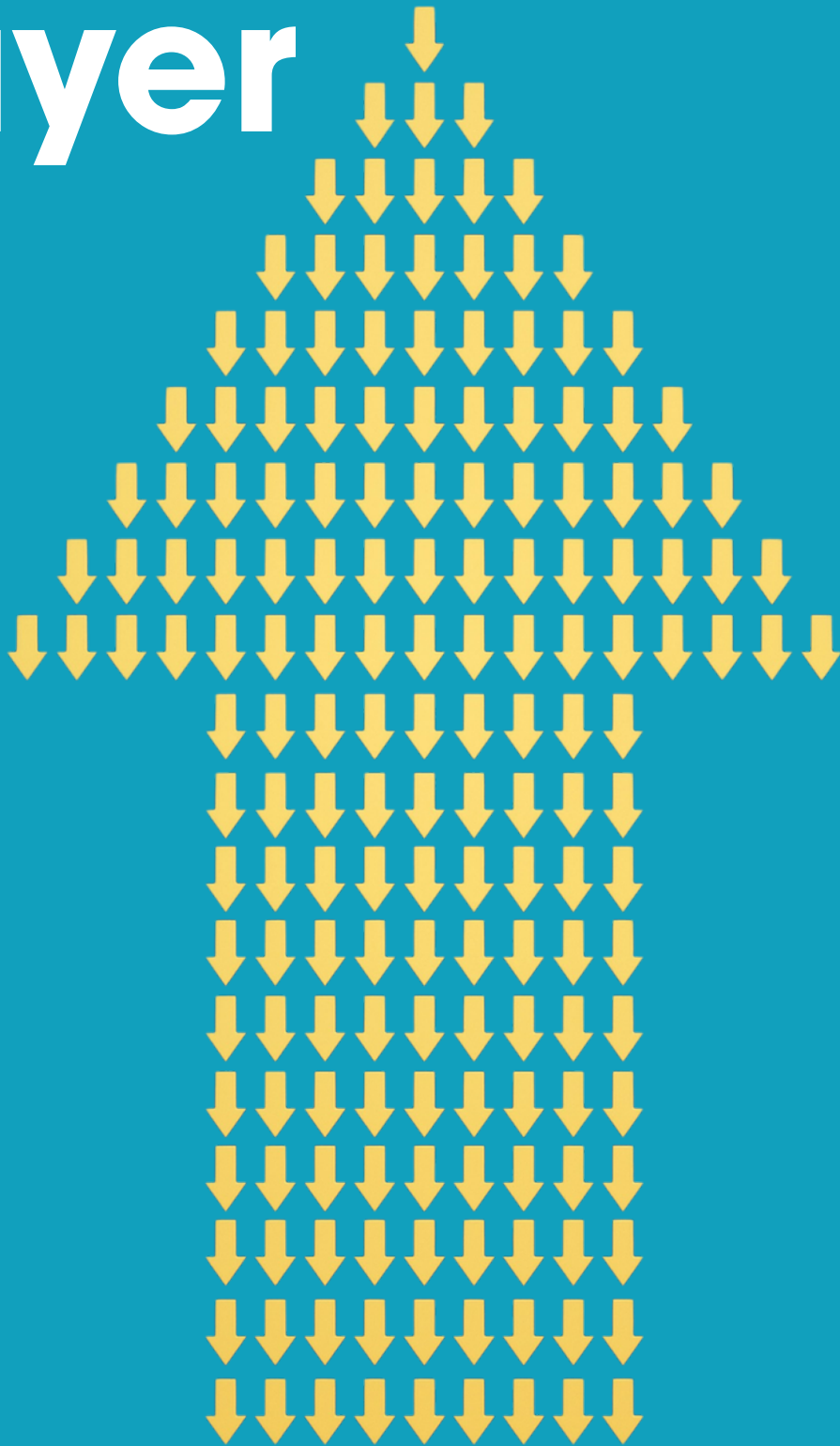


Week of Prayer



**Bow the knee
lift the name**

Philippians 2.9-11

**Discover life
according to Jesus**



**Next series starting
Thursday
24th September**



www.stmarysaom.org/321



Introduction

At the start of this new academic year we are choosing to lift our eyes to Jesus and to place Him at the centre of everything we do.

Philippians 2 reminds us of the breathtaking truth that,

“God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord.”

This week of prayer begins with that vision. Jesus lifted high. Before we pray for anything else we start by remembering who He is. He is Lord over all and worthy of all worship and the One before whom every knee will one day bow. When we see Him clearly everything else finds its right place. Our hopes our worries our plans our church life all look different when we begin with the exalted Christ.

So the call for us this week is simple but profound. Bow the knee. Not just in words but in posture and attitude. It means humbling ourselves and confessing where we have tried to run life our own way and joyfully acknowledging again that Jesus is Lord. It means choosing to align our hearts our time our gifts and our decisions with Him. This is what worship looks like in everyday life.

Over the next week we are going to pray with that focus.

- First we will fix our hearts on Jesus and His name and His glory and His Lordship.
- Then we will pray for our own lives to reflect that Lordship more fully.
- We will pray for our community that people would come to know the One whose name is above every name.

And we will pray for our church that everything we do would point people to Him.

We all come to prayer with different experiences. Some of you are just beginning to explore what prayer looks like. Others have walked with Jesus for many years and have seen Him answer prayer in remarkable ways. Wherever you are we are stepping into this week together. Bowing the knee lifting our eyes and trusting that as we exalt Jesus He will shape us lead us and work among us.

Fasting

We'd love you to consider fasting at some point this week, maybe that it becomes a more regular rhythm of your prayer life.

You may have never fasted before but it is Biblical (Matthew 6:16-18, Matthew 9:14-15, Luke 18:1-14) and can be a beautiful way to lean into God. Fasting is deliberately abstaining from the normal routines of life. Its purpose is to spend focused time in prayer, reading God's word and aligning our lives with His will.

Ultimately, fasting is more about replacing than abstaining. It is filling our lives with God's Word instead of with food, social media or entertainment. It is finding satisfaction and enjoyment in God and in God alone. Fasting helps us humble ourselves before God and positions us to experience spiritual breakthroughs in our lives. There are different types of fast:

Complete Fast: In this type of fast, you drink only liquids, this could be water, juices or hot drinks. If you fast like this, make sure you drink plenty of fluids.

Selective Fast: This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example is the Daniel Fast, where you remove meat, sweets, and bread from your diet and consume water and juice for fluids and fruits and vegetables for food.

Non-Food Fast: This fast is a good option if you have health issues that prevent you from fasting food, or if you wish to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance. For example, you might choose to stop using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast.

Whatever you decide to do, we must always remember we live under grace. There are no rules that you must obey, it's much more about relationship, devotion and discipline than it is about getting it "right". On the next page are some helpful tips for you as you consider fasting.

And, first, let it [fasting] be done unto the Lord, with our eye singly fixed on Him. Let our intention herein be this, and this alone, to glorify our Father which is in heaveny

- John Wesley

Fasting Top Tips

01 Motivation

Check that you are fasting for the right reasons; first and foremost, to spend time with God, and then to seek His blessing and breakthrough. It's so important for us to recognise that fasting doesn't change God. However, it does change us, removing barriers which then enables the Spirit to work more powerfully in and through us.

02 Plan

As you prepare to fast, try to plan your diary intentionally. It's good not to be too busy when you are fasting so that you can give some set time to prayer. Try not to fill up the time you would have been fasting with work and activity, rather keep it free to intentionally seek God.

03 Monitor

Expect to discover what you're really like. The attitude of your heart and emotions will come to the surface. This is unpleasant, but also really helpful in our walk with Jesus. Sometimes this is how God blesses us in fasting. What is God revealing? What needs to change?

04 Keep Going

When you start, you will begin to feel hunger pangs or discomfort. This is not real hunger – try to resist and allow the pains to trigger you instead to offer up prayers to God. Soon the pangs will pass.

05 Wisdom

Sometimes it feels like “nothing is happening” – this is a lie. Fasting is a discipline that God has instigated; he blesses the obedient. Remember also that we are under grace, not law. If at any point you feel you need to break the fast, do so! God's love for you won't change and is deeper and wider than you can comprehend.

06 Drink Lots

When you deprive your body of food it's important that you account for that and drink plenty of fluids. As well as single drinks, you might want to keep a large bottle with you to encourage you to drink more.

07 End Well

Decide how you will finish your fast. End with a light meal rather than heavily overeating.

Daily Prayer Topics

Pray as the holy Spirit leads you to pray. Below are some suggestions for prayer related to our church life but also allow your prayers to flow beyond to our wider community, our nation and the nations.

Monday

That we would be deeply rooted in God

Colossians 2:6-7

Also for the worshipping life of our church and that we would be disciples of Jesus in all areas of life, not just the easy parts.

Tuesday

That we would passionately pursue Jesus and his kingdom

Philippians 3:10-14

Also that our hearts would lean towards the lost, the poor and vulnerable. Carrying the light and hope of Jesus to those who need it most.

Wednesday

Schools & CYF

Today is a national day of prayer for schools. Pray for the schools in our area, teachers, students and our schools ministry. Also, for our mission and ministry amongst children, youth and families in our and around our church.

Thursday

That we would choose to live sacrificially

Romans 12:1-2

Also for the various ministries in and around the church, for the provision of resources to enable them to thrive.

Friday

That we would build authentic community

1 Peter 4:8-11

Also for our new worshipping communities/church plants, that they will grow in depth of love, knowledge and numerically.

Saturday

That we would step out with bold faith

Joshua 1:7-9

For our mission and evangelism, for our 'Pray for 5' that through our boldness people will encounter the risen Lord Jesus

"I am convinced that prayer is not only our greatest privilege, but also our greatest source of power... Keep it simple, keep it real, keep it up."
Pete Greig

MORNING PRAYER

Silence and Stillness (2-5 mins)

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him. – Psalm 37:7

Opening Prayer

Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then will I be confident. One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple. For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling. – Psalm 27:3-5

-PAUSE-

Lord help me this day to love you with all my heart and with all my soul, and with all my mind and with all my strength, for this is the first and greatest commandment, and then to love my neighbour as myself.

- Based on Matthew 22:37-39

-PAUSE-

Heavenly Father, grant me the Spirit of wisdom and revelation that I may know you better. May the eyes of my heart be enlightened in order that I may know the hope to which you have called me. May I glimpse, by the Holy Spirit, the riches of your glorious inheritance in the saints, and your incomparably great power for us who believe. May I experience that power today – the working of your mighty strength, which you exerted in Christ 3 when you raised Him from the dead and seated Him at your right hand.

- Based on Ephesians 1:17-20

CONT...

10 Commandments

Read, reflect, pray.

- 1. You shall have no other gods before me.** Lord, I detach myself from all things outside of you that compete for my ultimate affection.
- 2. You shall not make for yourself an idol.** Help me not to shape you according to my own fears and ideas, but to trust and follow you.
- 3. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord.** Enable me to represent you well in every conversation and interaction.
- 4. Remember the Sabbath by keeping it Holy.** Prepare me that I may rest for all my works each day and set apart a day to put away all earthly anxieties to delight in you.
- 5. Honour your father and your mother.** Help me to honour my parents appropriately.
- 6. You shall not murder.** May my interactions today with others and my words, bring life and not death, edify and not tear down.
- 7. You shall not commit adultery.** Free me to live purely, rightly and respectfully to myself and others.
- 8. You shall not steal.** Help me not to be greedy but to share joyfully with others.
- 9. You shall not give false witness.** Lord, help me to walk in the truth and to avoid false assumptions about other people and situations – not only in my own mind, but in my conversation with others.
- 10. You shall not covet.** May I love you above all else because your love is better than life.

Pray for your day and the prayer points for the day
(two pages back)

Midday Prayer

Silence and Stillness (2-3 mins)

Be still and know that I am God. – Psalm 46:10

We wait in hope for the Lord; He is our help and our shield. In Him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. May your unfailing love rest upon us, Oh Lord, even as we put our hope in you. – Psalm 33:20-22

“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
10 your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
11 Give us today our daily bread.
12 And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
13 And lead us not into temptation,[a]
but deliver us from the evil one
Matthew 6.9-13

Lord, you say that “in repentance and rest is my salvation, in quietness and trust is my strength.” Teach me to rest and trust in you throughout the remainder of this day. “Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth. Give me an undivided heart that I may fear your name...for great is your love for toward me.” – Based on Isaiah 30:15; Psalm 86:11-13

Conclude with Silence (2-3 mins)

Evening Prayer

Silence and Stillness (2-5 mins)

When you are on your bed search your heart and be silent. – Psalm 4:4

May my prayer be set before you like incense; May the lifting of my hands be like the evening sacrifice.

– Psalm 141:2

It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name, O Most High, to proclaim your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night.

– Psalm 92:1-2

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word, I put my hope. My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning. O Israel, put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love.

– Psalm 130:5-7

The Beatitudes

As you read and pray through the beatitudes ask the Holy Spirit to lay individuals on your heart that you might pray for them. (Some of these prayers might be appropriate for you to pray for yourself.)

Blessed are the poor in spirit Lord, draw near to all who feel empty or overwhelmed, and let them discover the hope of Your kingdom.

Blessed are those who mourn God, wrap Your comfort around every grieving heart and bring healing where sorrow runs deep.

Blessed are the meek Jesus, strengthen those who quietly serve and lead with gentleness and let their lives bless the world.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness Lord, satisfy all who long for justice and goodness and empower them to bring Your light into dark places.

Blessed are the merciful Father, pour Your compassion into those who care for others and let mercy flow through their lives.

Blessed are the pure in heart God, guard and guide those who seek You sincerely, that they may reflect Your goodness to everyone they meet.

Blessed are the peacemakers Lord, strengthen all who work for peace in homes, communities and nations and let their efforts bear lasting fruit.

Blessed are those persecuted because of righteousness Jesus, uphold and protect all who suffer for doing what is right and surround them with Your courage and hope.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion, blot out my transgressions. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and grant to me a willing spirit to sustain me.

– Psalm 51:1,10,12

Almighty God, my heavenly Father, I have sinned against you, through my own fault, in thought, and word, and deed, in what I have done and what I have left undone. For the sake of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ, forgive me all my offenses; and grant that I may serve you in newness of life, to the glory of your Name! Amen.

– Book of Common Prayer

Prayer for Yourself and your 'Pray for 5'

–PAUSE–

May the Lord Almighty grant me and those I love a peaceful night and a perfect end.

Conclude with Silence (2-3 mins)

This term at St Mary's

September

- 3 September** Hearing God Workshop
- 4 September** Friday Prayers (Zoom)
- 7 September** All Church Prayer Prayer Meeting
- 15 September** Parenting Teens for a Life of Faith begins
- 18 September** Friday Prayers (Zoom)
- 22 September** An Evening with Bishop Mark
- 24 September** 321 begins

October

- 1 October** Hearing God Workshop
- 2 October** Friday Prayers (Zoom)
- 5 October** All Church Prayer Prayer Meeting
- 11 October** Harvest
- 15 October** Friday Prayers (Zoom)
- 16 October** Worship Night
- 22 October** Prayer Course begins
- 30 October** Friday Prayers (Zoom)
- 31 October** Light Party

November

- 2 November** All Church Prayer Meeting
- 5 November** Hearing God Workshop
- 8 November** Remembrance Sunday
- 13 November** Friday Prayers (Zoom)
- 27 November** Friday Prayers (Zoom)
- 28 November** Christmas Fair

December

- 3 December** Hearing God Workshop
- 7 December** All Church Prayer Meeting
- 11 December** Friday Prayers (Zoom)
- 13 December** Carol Service
- 20 December** Scratch Nativity (9.30) & Lessons & Carols (11.15)
- 21 December** Blue Christmas Service
- 23 December** Christingle Making
- 24 December** Christingle Services & Midnight Service
- 25 December** Christmas Day Service