

Night Prayer

From A New Zealand Prayer Book

OPENING SONG

Leader: The Angels of God guard us through the night.

People: and quieten the powers of darkness.

Leader: The Spirit of God be our guide

People: To lead us to peace and to glory.

Leader: It is but lost labor that we haste to rise up early,
and so late take rest, and eat the bread of anxiety.
For those beloved of God are given gifts even while they sleep.

Silence

Leader: My brothers and sisters, our help is in the name of the eternal God,

People: who is making the heavens and the earth.

Leader: Dear God,
thank you for all that is good,
for our creation and for our humanity,
for the stewardship you have given us of this planet earth,
for the gifts of life and of one another,
for your love which is unbounded and eternal.
O thou, most holy and beloved,
my Companion, my Guide upon the way,
my bright evening star.

We repent the wrongs we have done:

Silence

Leader: We have wounded your love.

People: O God, heal us.

Leader: We stumble in the darkness.

People: Light of the world transfigure us.

Leader: We forget that we are your home.

People: Spirit of God, dwell in us.

Leader: Eternal Spirit, living God,
in whom we live and move and have our being,
all that we are, have been, and shall be is known to you,
to the very secret of our hearts
and all that rises to trouble us.
Living flame burn into us,
cleansing wind, blow through us,
fountain of water, well up within us,
that we may love and praise in deed and in truth.

Invocation

Leader: Eternal Spirit, flow through our being and open our lips,

People: that our mouths may proclaim your praise.

Leader: Let us worship the God of love.

People: Alleluia, alleluia.

Psalm 4

Leader: Answer me when I call, O God,
for you are the God of justice.
You set me free when I was hard-pressed:
be gracious to me now and hear my prayers.
Men and women,
how long will you turn my glory to my shame?
How long will you love what is worthless and run after lies?
Know that God has shown me such wonderful kindness:
when I call out in prayer, God hears me.
Tremble, admit defeat, and sin no more.
Look deep into your heart before you sleep and be still.
Bring your gifts, just as you are, and put your trust in God.
Many are asking, Who can make us content?
The light of your countenance has gone from us, O God.
Yet you have given my heart more gladness
than those whose corn and wine and oil increase.
I lie down in peace and sleep comes at once,
for in you alone, O God, do I dwell unafraid.

A Reading from the First Letter of John

Reader: There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and those who are afraid are not perfected in love. We love because God first loved us. If anyone says, I love God, and hates his brother or sister, that person is a liar; for those who do not love their brothers and sisters whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen.

1 John 4:18-20

Hymn - *Creator of the Stars of Night*

Leader: Creator of the Stars of Night,
your people's everlasting light,
O Christ, Redeemer of us all,
we pray you hear us when we call.

In sorrow that the ancient curse
should doom to death a universe,
you came, O Savior, to set free
your own in glorious liberty.

When this old world drew on toward night,
you came; but not in splendor bright,
not as a monarch, but the child
of Mary, blameless mother mild

Leader: Into your hands, O God, I commend my spirit,

People: **For you have redeemed me, O God of truth and love.**

Leader: Keep me, O God, as the apple of Your eye;

People: **hide me under the shadow of your wings.**

*The following antiphon is said together, before the **Song of Simeon***

People: **Preserve us, O God, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ,
and asleep may rest in your peace.**

Song of Simeon

People: Praise be to God, I have lived to see this day.
God's promise is fulfilled, and my duty done.
At last you have given me peace,
for I have seen with my own eyes
the salvation you have prepared for all nations -
a light to the world in its darkness,
and the glory of your people Israel.
Glory be God, sustaining, redeeming, sanctifying,
as in the beginning, so now, and forever.
Amen.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord have mercy.

THE PRAYER JESUS TAUGHT

People: Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
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 the 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 we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
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.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Leader invites the people to offer their own prayers in the chat box or silently at home

The leader and people pray responsively.

Leader: I will lie down in peace and take my rest,

People: for it is in God alone that I dwell unafraid.

Leader: Let us bless the Earth-maker, the Pain-bearer, the Life-giver,

People: let us praise and exalt God above all for ever.

Leader: May God's name be praised beyond the furthest star,

People: glorified and exalted above all for ever.

*The leader selects and starts one of the following prayers, **the people joining on the second.***

*The service concluding with the leader saying the Sentence of the Day, the closing song (We Remember), and **people responding in the concluding sentence of the Final Versicle.***

1

Leader: Be present, Spirit of God,

**People: within us, your dwelling place and home,
that this house may be one where
all darkness is penetrated by your light,
all troubles calmed by your peace,
all evil redeemed by your love,
all pain transformed in your suffering,
and all dying glorified in your risen life. Amen**

Or

2

Leader: God our Creator, our centre, our friend,

**People: we thank you for our good life,
for those who are dear to us,
for our dead, and for all who have helped and influenced us.
We thank you for the measure of freedom we have,
and the extent to which we control our lives;
and most of all we thank you for the faith that is in us,
for our awareness of you and our hope in you.
Keep us, we pray you, thankful and hopeful
and useful until our lives shall end.
Amen.**

Or

Leader: Lord, it is night.

People: The night is for stillness.

Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day.

What has been done has been done;

what has not been done has not been done;

let it be.

The night is dark.

Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives

rest in you.

The night is quiet.

Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,

all dear to us,

and all who have no peace.

The night heralds the dawn.

Let us look expectantly to a new day,

new joys,

new possibilities.

In your name we pray.

Amen.

Sentence of the Day

Leader: The blessing of God, the eternal goodwill of God, the shalom of God, the wildness and the warmth of God, be among us and between us, now and always.

Closing Song: *We Remember*

We remember how you loved us to your death
and still we celebrate, for you are with us here;
and we believe that we will see you when you come
to your glory, Lord.

We remember, we celebrate, we believe.

Leader: The divine Spirit dwells in us.

People: Thanks be to God.

To all attending: Please unmute your sound and say "farewell" or "goodnight" or "peace" to those who have worshipped with you this evening. Then go in peace.