

# **Prayers to pray for St Jude's, and for all churches!**

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## **A prayer based on Paul's prayer for the Colossians, in 1:9-14**

### **For St Jude's:**

Gracious God, please fill us with the knowledge of your will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that we may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in our knowledge of you, being strengthened with all power according to your glorious might so that we may have great endurance and patience, and give joyful thanks to you, our Father, for you have qualified us to share in the inheritance of your holy people in the kingdom of light. You have rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son you love, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins.

### **For other churches:**

Gracious God, please fill this church with the knowledge of your will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that they may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in their knowledge you, being strengthened with all power according to your glorious might so that they may have great endurance and patience, and give joyful thanks to you, Father, for you qualified them to share in the inheritance of your holy people in the kingdom of light. You rescued them from the dominion of darkness and brought them into the kingdom of the Son you love, in whom they have redemption, the forgiveness of their sins.

## **A prayer for all the churches in the world, based on Ephesians 3:14-21.**

Our gracious and loving heavenly Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. We pray that out of your glorious riches you may strengthen us with power through your Spirit in our inner being, so that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith. And we pray that we, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that we may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Now to God who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

## Shorter prayers for churches

May the Lord make our love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else. May he strengthen our hearts so that we will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones. [Based on 1 Thessalonians 3:12,13].

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify us through and through. May our whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls us is faithful, and he will do it. Praise him! Amen. [Based on 1 Thessalonians 5:23,24].

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage our hearts and strengthen us in every good deed and word. [Based on 2 Thessalonians 2:16,17].

Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip us with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. [Based on Hebrew 13:20,21].

### A longer prayer based on the letter to the Hebrews.

If you are praying in a group, divide the group into two sections. Everyone prays the words in **bold** together, then section 1 prays their words, and section 2 their words.

[This follows the Old Testament practice of having two choirs, to lead God's people in prayer and praise. See 2 Chronicles 7, and Nehemiah 11. It is good to pray and praise, and also good to hear others praying and praising, and to echo their words in our hearts.]

**O gracious God, you have spoken to us by your Son, the Lord Jesus, through whom you made the universe, and who is the radiance of your glory. He provided purification for our sins, and is now seated at your right hand in glory and majesty. He is the builder and Lord of your household, your people, your church.**

1. We praise you that he shared our humanity, so we are his brothers and sisters. By his death he broke the devil's power of death, by making atonement for our sins. He suffered when he was tempted, so he is able to help us in our temptations.
2. We thank you, for you appointed him as our high priest, who empathizes with our weaknesses. Through him we can approach your throne of grace with confidence, to find mercy and grace to help us in our time of need.
1. We pray that you would enable us to hear your voice in the Bible, that none of us would harden our hearts. Take from us a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from you, the living God.
2. We thank you for your living and active word, the Bible, which pierces our hearts, shows us our sins, and shows us our Saviour.

1. We rejoice, because Jesus lives forever, so he is able to save us completely when we come to you through him. He always lives to intercede for us.
2. We praise you, because he offered himself unblemished to you through the eternal Spirit. So he can cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, that we may serve you, the living God!
1. We thank you that Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many. And we thank you that he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.
2. We praise and thank you that we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. For by that one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

**We praise you that we have confidence to enter into your presence in your Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus. We praise you that we have a great priest over your household, the church of God. We draw near to you with sincere hearts and with the full assurance that faith brings, with our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from our guilty consciences and our bodies washed with pure water. We hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for you are faithful to your promises. And we will spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, but encouraging one another—and all the more as we see the Day approaching.**

1. Please help us and all your people to throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles us, so we may run with perseverance the race marked out for us. We will fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of your throne on high.
2. Please help us and all your people to endure hardship, and accept your loving discipline, that we may grow in holiness and pursue it. Help us not fall short of your grace, and let no bitter root grow up to destroy and defile us. Help us not to refuse you as you speak to us through the Scriptures, to be thankful, and so worship you acceptably with reverence and awe, for you, God, are a consuming fire.

**As we worship you with reverence and awe, graciously assist us to worship you in our daily lives:**

1. Help us to: love one another as brothers and sisters; show hospitality to strangers; remember fellow-believers who are suffering or in prison for their faith in Christ; Honour marriage; keep our lives free from the love of money, and learn contentment; remember our leaders, who speak your Word to us, respect them and receive and welcome their teaching, and imitate their lives.
2. We praise you that Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and for ever. Help us to not be carried away by strange ideas and teaching. Help us to suffer with Jesus, and not be ashamed of bearing disgrace for him. For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come. Through Jesus, continually offer to you a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess your name. Prompt us to do good and share with others, for with such sacrifices you are well pleased.

Now may you, the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip us with everything good for doing your will. And may you work in us what is pleasing to you, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

## **A challenging prayer to pray about our mutual responsibilities as members of a church, based on the 'each other' and 'one another' instructions in the New Testament.**

**Gracious heavenly Father, we pray that in the name of Jesus, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, we may, as you have instructed and urged us:**

- 'be at peace with one another.' [Mark 9:50]
- 'love one another' [John 13:34].
- 'outdo one another in honouring each other' [Romans 12:10].
- 'live in harmony with other another' [Romans 12:16].
- 'not pass judgement on one another' [Romans 14:13].
- 'welcome one another' [Romans 15:7].
- 'able to instruct one another' [Romans 15:14].
- 'have the same care for one another [1 Corinthians 12:25].
- 'greet one another' [1 Corinthians 16:20].
- 'agree with one another [2 Corinthians 13:11].
- 'become slaves to one another' [Galatians 5:13].
- 'not bite and devour one another' [Galatians 5:15].
- 'not compete against one another, or envy one another' [Galatians 5:26].
- 'bear one another burdens' [Galatians 6:2].
- 'bear with one another in love' [Ephesians 3:2].
- 'speak the truth to one another, because we are members of one another' [Ephesians 4:25].
- 'be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another' [Ephesians 4:32].
- 'be subject to one another, out of reverence to Christ' [Ephesians 5:21].
- 'not lie to one another' [Colossians 3:9].
- 'bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other' [Colossians 3:13].
- 'admonish one another in all wisdom' [Colossians 3:20].
- 'encourage one another and build up each other' [1 Thessalonians 5:11]
- 'seek to do good to one another' [1 Thessalonians 5:15].
- 'exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today,' so that none of us may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin' [Hebrews 3:13].

- 'consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglect to meet together, but encourage one another, and all the more as we see the Day approaching' [Hebrews 10:24,25].
- 'not speak evil against one another' [James 4:11]
- 'not grumble against one another' [James 5:9].
- 'confess our sins to one another, and pray for one another [James 5:16].
- 'love one another deeply from the heart [1 Peter 1:22].
- 'be hospitable to one another without complaining' [1 Peter 4:9].
- 'serve one another with whatever gift each of us has received' [1 Peter 4:10].
- 'clothe ourselves with humility in your dealings with one another' [1 Peter 5:5].
- 'love one another' [1 John 3:11]
- 'lay down our lives for one another' [1 John 3:16].

All this we ask in the strong name of Jesus, our Saviour and Lord, and for your glory. Amen.