

 **St. Aidan**  
Anglican Church

**Day of Solemn Prayer and Fasting**  
**Eve of the Ascension**



May 13, 2026

## INTRODUCTION

It has been the practice of Christ's church from the first century to combine prayer and fasting. This was especially the case when the church was seeking wisdom and guidance from God's Spirit. This was certainly the case in Acts 13 when after a time of fasting and prayer, members of the church in Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas off on a mission of evangelism and church planting, and they subsequently established churches "and appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting" (Acts 14:23).

In that same Spirit, we at St Aidan are setting aside Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, the eve of the Ascension, as a day of solemn prayer and fasting in order that we might continue to pay attention to the Spirit's wisdom and guidance as we prepare for the next expression of pastoral leadership in our parish.

What follows is a **suggested format** for how you might participate in the day. Please do not feel that you must engage in every practice suggested. However, you are encouraged to adopt and adapt as much as you able into your regular routines and responsibilities:

First, if fasting is not a familiar practice for you, we would recommend that you read this short article from the C.S. Lewis institute that offers some excellent historical background and practical suggestions.

[www.cslewisinstitute.org/resources/the-place-of-fasting-in-the-christian-life/](http://www.cslewisinstitute.org/resources/the-place-of-fasting-in-the-christian-life/)

Second, we offer this simple structure to guide your prayer throughout the day:

- ✦ **Prayer liturgies:** Punctuate your day with the short morning, noon, evening and compline liturgies from the Northumbria community (Aidan's "home turf") that are included in this document.
- ✦ **Short prayers:** Set an **alarm**, or other means of reminder, for each hour of the day. When the alarm goes off turn your attention to God and pray one of the shorter prayers also found below. Alternately, carry a **prayer rock or holding cross** in your pocket and whenever your hand contacts it—offer one of those short prayers to Lord; or, when you experience **hunger**, turn your attention to God and pray.

**Compline:** Finally, as a way of bringing our prayers together, join with us for a short Compline service at 7 pm on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May.

## **MORNING PRAYER**

*+ indicates that you may make the sign of the cross.*

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

### **Opening sentences**

One thing I have asked 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 behold the beauty of the Lord  
and to seek Him in His temple.

*Call:* Who is it that you seek?

*Response:* We seek the Lord our God.

*Call:* Do you seek Him with all your heart?

*Response:* Amen. Lord, have mercy.

*Call:* Do you seek Him with all your soul?

*Response:* Amen. Lord, have mercy.

*Call:* Do you seek Him with all your mind?

*Response:* Amen. Lord, have mercy.

*Call:* Do you seek Him with all your strength?

*Response:* Amen. Christ, have mercy.

### **Declaration of faith**

To whom shall we go?  
You have the words of eternal life,  
and we have believed and have come to know  
that You are the Holy One of God.

Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ,  
King of endless glory.

### **Scripture Reading**

**Psalm 27:4-5, 8** One thing I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. <sup>5</sup>For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high on a rock. <sup>8</sup>'Come,' my heart says, 'seek his face!' Your face, Lord, do I seek.

**Jeremiah 29:13-14** When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, <sup>14</sup>I will let you find me, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

## Prayers for others

### Canticle

Christ, as a light  
illumine and guide me.

Christ, as a shield  
overshadow me.

Christ under me;

Christ over me;

Christ beside me

on my left and my right.

This day be within and without me,  
lowly and meek, yet all-powerful.

Be in the heart of each to whom I speak;  
in the mouth of each who speaks unto me.

This day be within and without me,  
lowly and meek, yet all-powerful.

Christ as a light;

Christ as a shield;

Christ beside me

on my left and my right.

### Blessing

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you,  
wherever He may send you.

May He guide you through the wilderness,  
protect you through the storm.

May He bring you home rejoicing  
at the wonders He has shown you.

May He bring you home rejoicing  
once again into our doors.

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

## **MIDDAY PRAYER**

*+ indicates that you may make the sign of the cross.*

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

### **Opening Sentences**

Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us.

Establish Thou the work of our hands;  
establish Thou the work of our hands.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name;  
Thy kingdom come;  
Thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil. Amen

### **Declaration of faith**

We believe and trust in God the Father Almighty.

We believe and trust in Jesus Christ His Son.

We believe and trust in the Holy Spirit.

We believe and trust in the Three in One.

### **Canticle**

Teach us, dear Lord, to number our days;  
that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Oh, satisfy us early with Thy mercy,  
that we may rejoice and be glad all of our days.

And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us;  
and establish Thou the work of our hands.

And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us;  
and establish Thou the work of our hands, dear Lord.

## **Blessing**

Let nothing disturb thee,  
nothing frighten thee;  
all things are passing,  
God never changes!

Patient endurance attains to all things;  
who God possesses  
in nothing is wanting;  
alone God suffices.

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

## **EVENING PRAYER**

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

### **Opening sentences**

My soul waits for the Lord  
more than those  
who watch for the morning,  
more than those  
who watch for the morning.

*Call:* Out of the depths I have cried to You.

*Response:* O Lord, hear my voice.

*Call:* With my whole heart I want to praise You.

*Response:* O Lord, hear my voice.

*Call:* If you, Lord, should mark iniquities:

*Response:* Who could stand? who could stand?

I will wait for the Lord, my soul waits,  
and in His word do I hope.

### **Expressions of faith**

Lord, You have always given  
bread for the coming day;  
and though I am poor,  
today I believe.

Lord, You have always given  
strength for the coming day;  
and though I am weak,  
today I believe.

Lord, You have always given  
peace for the coming day;  
and though of anxious heart,  
today I believe.

Lord, You have always kept  
me safe in trials;  
and now, tried as I am,  
today I believe.

Lord, You have always marked  
the road for the coming day;  
and though it may be hidden,  
today I believe.

Lord, You have always lightened  
this darkness of mine;  
and though the night is here,  
today I believe.

Lord, You have always spoken  
when time was ripe;  
and though you be silent now,  
today I believe.

### **Prayers for others**

#### **Canticle**

In the shadow of Your wings  
I will sing Your praises, O Lord.

The Lord is my light, my salvation;  
whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the refuge of my life;  
of whom shall I be afraid?

In the shadow of Your wings  
I will sing Your praises, O Lord.

One thing I ask of the Lord,  
one thing I seek;  
to dwell in the presence of my God,  
to gaze on Your holy place.

In the shadow of Your wings  
I will sing Your praises, O Lord.

I believe I shall see the goodness  
of the Lord in the land of the living.

O wait for the Lord!  
Have courage and wait,  
wait for the Lord.

In the shadow of Your wings  
I will sing Your praises, O Lord.

## **Blessing**

See that ye be at peace among yourselves, my children,  
and love one another.

Follow the example of the wise and good  
and God will comfort you and help you,  
both in this world  
and in the world which is to come.

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

## COMPLINE

If this Compline is being used in a group setting the \* notation indicates a change of reader; words in bold are said all together; words in bold italic are said by each person in turn; and + indicates where you might make the sign of the cross.

+ (silently)

\* O Christ, Son of the living God,  
may Your holy angels guard our sleep,  
may they watch over us as we rest  
and hover around our beds.

\* Let them reveal to us in our dreams  
visions of Your glorious truth,  
O High Prince of the universe,  
O High Priest of the mysteries.

\* May no dreams disturb our rest  
and no nightmares darken our dreams.  
May no fears or worries delay  
our willing, prompt repose.

\* May the virtue of our daily work  
hallow our nightly prayers.  
May our sleep be deep and soft  
so our work be fresh and hard.

**I will lie down and sleep in peace  
for You alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.**

***My dear ones, O God, bless Thou and keep,  
in every place where they are.***

\* Into Your hands I commit my spirit;  
I give it to You with all the love of my heart.

\* How precious to me are Your thoughts, O God!  
How vast is the sum of them!  
Were I to count them,  
they would outnumber the grains of sand.  
When I awake, I am still with You.

**I make the cross of Christ upon my breast,  
+ over the tablet of my hard heart,  
and I beseech the Living God of the universe –  
may the Light of Lights come  
to my dark heart from Thy place;  
may the Spirit's wisdom come to my heart's tablet  
from my Saviour.**

\* Christ without sin, Christ of wounds,  
I am placing my soul and my body  
under Thy guarding this night,  
Christ of the poor, Christ of tears.  
Thy cross be my shielding this night,  
O Thou Son of tears, of the wounds, of the piercing.

**I am going now into the sleep:  
O be it in Thy dear arm's keep,  
O God of grace, that I shall awake.**

\* My Christ! my Christ!  
my shield, my encircler,  
each day, each night,  
each light, each dark.

\* My Christ! my Christ!  
my shield, my encircler,  
each day, each night,  
each light, each dark.  
Be near me, uphold me,  
my treasure, my triumph.

***Circle me, Lord,  
keep protection near  
and danger afar.***

\* Circle me, Lord,  
keep light near  
and darkness afar.

\* Circle me, Lord,  
keep peace within;  
keep evil out.

**The peace of all peace  
be mine this night  
+ in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.**

**Amen.**

## SHORT PRAYERS

Almighty and ever living God, look favourably upon us in this time of transition as we search for a new priest. We pray for the life of our parish, that we may continue to be guided by your love and strengthened in our mission to serve you through worship, ministry, and fellowship. We pray for the search committee, that their hearts and minds may be open to what your Spirit is saying. We pray that the priest whose name is yet known to you alone, is open to your call. Give us your grace to follow where you would lead us and grant us your peace. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

O Christ who are a most true pilot and guide, and also most expert, faithful and friendly, put out Your hand, open our eyes, make Your high way known to us which you first entered into. You are the way: lead us to the Father by Yourself, that we all may be one with Him as You and He together be one. Show us the way we should walk in, for we lift up our souls unto You. Amen.

(H. B., 1566, in Evelyn Underhill's Book of Private Prayers, p. 15).

Almighty God, who knows the needs of your Church in every place: Look graciously at this time upon the people of this parish of St. Aidan; and give to us a faithful Pastor, who will feed your flock according to your will, and make ready a people acceptable unto yourself; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, p. 45, adapted).

Almighty God, giver of all good gifts, look on your Church with grace, and guide those who shall choose a priest for this parish of St. Aidan, that we may receive a faithful servant who will care for your people and support us in our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BAS, p. 676)

**Prayer of St. Aidan** (adapted for our parish)

Lord, this your parish, make it a place of peace.

Here be the peace of those who do your will.

Here be the peace of serving one another.

Here be the peace of holy ones obeying.

Here be the peace of praise by dark and day.

Be this Parish your Holy Parish.

Lord, your Aidanite servants, make this prayer.

Provide your care. Amen.

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