

Night Prayer

Summer - June/July 2021



Introduction

The liturgical elements of our service this evening are from 'Liturgies from Lindisfarne'.

These night prayer services are designed to be used as often as you wish during the relevant season.

Opening

The earth is the Lord's
and everything in it.
Let all the people give God praise
and all creation bless God's name.

God of the longest days,
may my life be a long day for you,
always reflecting your light.
Open, awake.

There may be singing.

Or you may like to listen to Summer Time by George Gershwin for the 1935 Opera Porgy and Bess. Sung here by Natalie King.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFWJUGyCHDg>

Summertime,
And the livin' is easy
Fish are jumpin'
And the cotton is high

Your daddy's rich
And your mamma's good lookin'
So hush little baby
Don't you cry

One of these mornings
You're going to rise up singing
Then you'll spread your wings
And you'll take to the sky

But till that morning
There's a'nothing can harm you
With daddy and mamma standing by.

Psalm 8

For the director of music. According to *gittith*. A psalm of David.

- ¹ Lord, our Lord,
 how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory
 in the heavens.
- ² Through the praise of children and infants
 you have established a stronghold against your enemies,
 to silence the foe and the avenger.
- ³ When I consider your heavens,
 the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars,
 which you have set in place,
- ⁴ what is mankind that you are mindful of them,
 human beings that you care for them?
- ⁵ You have made them a little lower than the angels
 and crowned them with glory and honour.
- ⁶ You made them rulers over the works of your hands;
 you put everything under their feet:
- ⁷ all flocks and herds,
 and the animals of the wild,
- ⁸ the birds in the sky,
 and the fish in the sea,
 all that swim the paths of the seas.
- ⁹ Lord, our Lord,
 how majestic is your name in all the earth!

We Pray

May summer and sunshine praise you.
May streets and hillsides praise you.
May wind and blossom praise you.
May plants and treetops praise you.
May books and pictures praise you.
May fish and birdsong praise you.
May thought and action praise you.
May earth and seashore praise you.
May all that breathe praise you.
Let us praise the King of glory.

Reading

Deuteronomy 11:13–21 or another reading

¹³ So if you faithfully obey the commands I am giving you today—to love the Lord your God and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul— ¹⁴ then I will send rain on your land in its season, both autumn and spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and olive oil. ¹⁵ I will provide grass in the fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied.

¹⁶ Be careful, or you will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods and bow down to them. ¹⁷ Then the Lord's anger will burn against you, and he will shut up the heavens so that it will not rain and the ground will yield no produce, and you will soon perish from the good land the Lord is giving you. ¹⁸ Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ¹⁹ Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ²⁰ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, ²¹ so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth.

Lament

For the rain forests gone, and the deserts caused
by human destruction,
dear God, we grieve with you.
For polluted seas, dirty streets and litter,
dear God, we grieve with you.
For not being content to savour the simple gifts of
creation,
dear God, we grieve with you.

Reading Matthew 6:25-34

Do Not Worry

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be

given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

There may be silence for a time of reflection.

Intercessions

We thank you for colours of day;
put colour into jaded lives.
We thank you for brightness of sun;
put brightness into faded lives.
We thank you for growth of green;
put growth into stunted lives.

Creator God, teach us to care for your earth, and
to be good stewards of all that is in it.
May our eyes be open to see your hand in nature;
may our hands be open to cherish your gifts in
the material things around.
May we learn how to live in harmony with your laws.

As the sun circles the world,
circle this land, O God.
Circle the soil and the waters,
keep harm without, keep good within.
Circle the crops, circle the homes,
keep mistreatment without, keep care within.

As the sun circles the world, circle our dear ones,
O God, in every place, especially . . . (*People or
places may be mentioned.*)

There may be circling or free prayers and singing.

Closing

May the blessing of the Sun of suns be on us,
giving you light without and light within,
so that the light shines out of our eyes.
May the blessing of the rain and the earth and the
wind be on us.
The blessing of the Three be always on us.

We quieten our souls under the stillness of sky;
peace be upon our breath,

peace be upon our eyes,
peace be upon our sleeping and awaking.

Closing Music

We close with 'Sure on this shining night' by Morten Lauridsen, sung at St Cyprian's church, Clarence Gate, London, by the Contempo Ensemble.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KhBWrDhNO_M

The song is based on a poem by James Agee in a book entitled "Permit Me Voyage" published 1934.

Sure on this shining night
Of star made shadows round,
Kindness must watch for me
This side the ground.

The late year lies down the north.
All is healed, all is health.
High summer holds the earth.
Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night I weep for wonder wand'ring far
alone
Of shadows on the stars.

