



# Pastoral Liturgies at the Time of Death in Contexts of Medically Assisted Dying

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by the Council of General Synod, June 2026*

# Contents

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Introduction .....	page 3	
Ministry at the Time of Medical Assisted Dying: Bedside Service		
About this Liturgy .....	page 8	
Reconciliation of a Penitent.....	page 12	
A Liturgy of Preparation for Death .....	page 13	
Prayers at the Time of Death .....	page 20	
Service for those Unable to Attend in Person .....	page 23	
Guidance for Pastors who Minister in Contexts of Medically Assisted Dying.....		page 29
Prayer in Preparation for Ministry with the Dying in the Context of MAiD .....		page 33
Additional Prayers .....		page 39
Prayers for Discernment .....		page 43
Recommended Scripture Selections.....		page 45
Additional Resources		
Meditations: Paraphrases of Psalms 23 and 139 .....	page 57	
The Commissioning of Parish Eucharistic Visitors .....	page 59	
Acknowledgements.....		page 60

# Introduction

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## Part I: About this Resource

The purpose of this resource is to provide liturgical and pastoral guidelines for Canadian Anglican clergy and other members of pastoral teams when they are called to accompany the dying, specifically with those who have opted to use Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD). It is to be used only where permitted by the Diocesan Bishop. Bishops are asked to make clear their policies on the use of this resource, so that clergy and other pastors are not put in the position of having to seek permission at short notice or at awkward times.

Regardless of how people arrive at the decisions they do regarding their end-of-life plans, all persons should be able to call upon the pastoral ministry of the church at the time of their dying. All are worthy of the dignity of prayerful reminder that they are beloved by God.

Many of the conversations around what constitutes a good death seek to enshrine dignity of the dying person as the highest value. Very often, the understanding of dignity is tied to one's autonomy in agency – being able to think, act, and make decisions on one's own. Human dignity, however, rests in our being created by a loving God. It is not something to be tied to a question of worth to be determined according to standards that place autonomy as the highest value of dignity. God has given us dignity and worth as part of who we are as God's creatures. Our agency in health care decisions is, furthermore, something that we need to entrust to God in our discernment. We do not make decisions alone, but in the presence of God.

Some Anglicans have had profound experiences in which a death by MAiD has been accompanied by faithful prayer and strong pastoral care. Other Anglicans hold that MAiD does not offer any moral good, and may indeed be against God's wishes for humanity. Many of us share concerns about the potentials for abuse of the practice through coercion or in the fragilities of a health care system that is in crisis. All of us in Canada, especially clergy and other pastoral care ministers, are likely at some point in our ministries, to be met with a request for pastoral care and prayer by someone who has opted for a medically assisted death.

Our intention is to help the church's ministers to respond pastorally to the needs before them. It is not our intent to enter into the ethical arguments regarding MAiD, nor to provide a moral argument for or against MAiD.<sup>1</sup> This resource is about responding to pastoral needs of those who are dying; the project came about because some local leaders, including some bishops,

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<sup>1</sup> The General Synod has produced several resources since the legalization of medically assisted dying. *In Sure and Certain Hope*, 2017, presented a pastoral response with some pastoral and prayer resources, upholding the duty of pastoral care, and also holding up some key theological principles of caution with respect to MAiD. *Faith Seeking Understanding: Medical Assistance in Dying: Reflections by Canadian Anglicans*, 2024, gathered up over forty reflections from theological, pastoral and ethical perspectives by Canadian Anglicans, representing a wide collection of experiences and positions on the ethics of MAiD.

identified the pastoral need to develop such resources. No matter where people are in their life journey, we as a Christian community and Christian leaders in particular are called to respond pastorally to the needs and concerns of the people before us. Wherever the church serves, we are the Body of Christ reaching out to the suffering, the sick, and the dying. When someone reaches out for pastoral care, the church responds: there is a duty of pastoral care.

Pastoral accompaniment of those who are sick and who are dying always relies on prayerful presence. In the context of MAiD, pastoral presence also needs to be deeply attentive to signs of coercion or abuse of power in and amongst any of the relationships of the person at the centre of care.

As part of our Baptismal Promises, baptised Anglican Christians are called to “respect the dignity of every human being.”<sup>2</sup> We are called to be faithful in our discernment and decision making and to be guided by conscience under the leading of the Holy Spirit. Human dignity and freedom of conscience is *not* about the *autonomy* of decision-making alone; human dignity comes from being a creature of God in the image of God. Part of respecting dignity includes valuing the freedom and responsibility of personal conscience. Faithful decision making, similarly, is not about a simple autonomous act, but about faith being exercised in free will. Faith is relational: we make decisions in communion with God and with others. In the end, it is the dying person with whom we are exercising this ministry at the time of their death, in a context of shared faith, in which together we pray for and listen to God’s presence. It is to this inherent dignity of human persons, especially to persons of faith, that we are responding in offering pastoral presence and prayer.

Human relationships are vulnerable to misuses of power. Use of coercive and manipulative power by others to sway decisions (in any direction) and actions stands against the dignity of the human creature created in the image of God and given with free will. This is in part why we decry systems that make MAiD an option where it ought not to be – where there is poor access to proper health care, for example, rather than being a potentially faithful, conscience-led turn towards death.

The experience of wrestling faithfully with one’s conscience can be most poignantly felt in the tender times of discernment regarding health care treatments. This resource is not to be understood in any way as a guide for, nor a blessing upon, that discernment and the decisions coming from it. Instead we presume the starting place to be after a decision has been made. We take our baptismal commitments as a cue to help us in these contexts “to be in relationship with God and with one another [thereby fostering a] loving and supportive community.”<sup>3</sup>

A critical consideration for some pastors will be the question of whether or not in pronouncing God’s blessing on the person who is dying, they are blessing the act of the decision towards

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<sup>2</sup> General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, *The Book of Alternative Services*, 159.

<sup>3</sup> Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). *The Call to Faithfully Journey with Those Who are Dying: An ELCIC Resolution*. (June 2018), 2.

MAiD, or blessing the procedure itself. To some following some Dioceses' guidance or their own consciences, it will be important to walk the challenging path in choosing and adapting prayers in this resource that do not imply that the *procedure*, the medical assistance in dying itself, and the *decision* to employ MAiD, are *not* being given God's blessing. It is, however, a normal part of pastoral care to be praying for and to offer God's and the Church's blessing on the person who is dying.

These resources are for use where permitted by the Ordinary (Diocesan Bishop) and where the ministry personnel is able to walk with someone who is dying through the decision of MAiD. No ministry personnel should use these resources if they have personal moral reservations about the situation, or without the express permission of their bishop. We encourage you to take the time in planning and in spiritual preparation for this ministry. Read the entirety of this resource before looking for particular pieces to use. While the liturgies developed can be used as written, we encourage local adaptation of these resources to suit your local context, languages, and cultures. Please note the many options are provided to be suitable to diverse pastoral contexts. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with all that is in this resource in your planning.

## **Part II: Reflections on the Pastoral Context**

### **Dying and Sacred Space**

It is a privilege to minister to the sick and dying and to be present with them in their last moments of life. When death is near we enter a "Thin Space," or Holy Ground, where Heaven and Earth intersect as we, through prayer and sacrament, accompany the transition from this world to the next, where we all will one day see our Creator and Redeemer face to face. Time stands still in this space, even if it is for a moment. While we may not fully understand all that may be happening, nor can we fully comprehend what happens once we die; this is still an intimate moment. When planned well, these occasions can be times of peace, reconciliation and thanksgiving. For these and many reasons, ministry with the sick and dying form part of the core pastoral offices of the church and are deeply valued by clergy and lay alike.

From its early origins the church has been called to a presence that bridges the gap between the dying, their families, friends, and other care givers. At the center of this ministry is a deepening relationship with God. Jesus is the centre of this relationship and the life and mission that we are invited into as the People of God. Those commissioned for the pastoral care of the sick and dying join in the apostolic ministry of healing, comfort, and support to the sick and dying. Calling upon God's ever-present grace in these tender moments, they help to frame a holy death within the course of a Christian life of holiness.

Death is a natural part of life, and in the spirit of the Church's continued ministry, we are called to walk alongside health care agencies and practitioners to offer a pastoral response and

presence to those who are dying. As the *Book of Alternative Services* notes, “if the sick could not get to church, then the Church [. . . should] come to them.”<sup>4</sup>

Those who choose MAiD are persons nearing the end of their life. They are creatures of a loving God, and their status as children of God alone grants them dignity worthy to receive the ministry of the church. Church leaders who through moral or theological conviction cannot themselves accompany a person in this choice have a responsibility to ensure that another cleric or pastoral care team is available to be present with the dying and their family. Christian communities carry a duty of pastoral care for all those who are dying.

### **Rites of Passage**

The Anglican tradition has a dynamic liturgical life. Our beliefs and values are articulated through our worship practices. In a complex world, with competing morals, values and interests, our rituals offer a way for us to express our faith and core beliefs of the community when words and logic fall short. Ceremony and ritual practices allow for complex feelings and thoughts to be named, honoured, and offered to God in a supportive and life affirming way.

The liturgies of ministry with the sick and dying may be seen as rites of ultimate passage. Rites of passage are ritual actions, including liturgies, that help us to accompany people through the major events of life such as birth and marriage. For Christians our life events unfold with a consciousness of God accompanying us through these stages of life. People undergoing a death by medical assistance are also accompanied by God; God’s church can be present in this ultimate passage from life into death and into God’s hands. Many who are considering this option may feel alone and estranged from their parish community, family, and friends at a time when they are needing their support the most, a need to which the church is placed to respond.

There are many resources available around the Anglican Communion and within other denominations that offer resources and guidelines in the ministry to the sick and dying including amongst the authorized liturgical texts of the Anglican Church of Canada, such as *The Book of Alternative Services* and *The Book of Common Prayer*. Some of those prayers are also found here. What is unique about the guidance and liturgies presented in this resource is that they are nuanced and centered around pastoral care for those persons opting for MAiD specifically and the pastoral care of their families and health care providers. They do not serve to replace liturgies and resources already approved, but rather to supplement them.

### **Being ‘Ready to Go’**

People who choose MAiD freely and without coercion may indeed be ready to go. They have been living with and suffering through complex health challenges and they want the pain to stop. They want to be able to sleep. They desperately do not want their families and loved ones

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<sup>4</sup> General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, *The Book of Alternative Services*, 8. pr (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1985), 551.

to watch and wait, wondering how much longer? They have exhausted all medical options, and they know, everyone knows, that there is no cure. Some wish, most of all, not to be alone at the time of their death, and to die well. Some, who are Christian, also desire not to be alone at the time of their death, and to die well, and with the grace and blessing of God and with the presence of the Church at their side.

These resources offer pastoral care teams, care givers and clergy resources to assist the dying in a holy death, one grounded in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection where pain and suffering are no more, but life, and life eternal.

## **Ministry at the Time of Death in Context of Medical Assisted Dying**

- Bedside service
- Reconciliation of a Penitent
- A Liturgy of Preparation for Death
- Prayers at the Time of Death
- A Service for those Unable to Attend in Person

## **Ministry at the Time of Medical Assisted Dying: Bedside Service**

### *About This Liturgy*

As with the planning of any liturgy, it is important to pay attention to the contextual elements.

This rite is particularly suited for use on the day and in the moments before and after the person dies. The various options provided for in the text permit the adaptation of the liturgy to best suit the pastoral needs of those present. Further adaptations can be made for those gathering for prayer other than at the bedside. For example an order for Ministry at the Time of Death or Personal Confession may be omitted in favour of the General Confession and concluding the service following Communion, Blessing and Dismissal.

Where circumstances dictate, this service can also occur a day or two before the death, with an abbreviated order of service to follow at the bedside. When there is a need is for a shortened version of the bedside service, the following order may be appropriate: The Gathering rite, one reading from scripture, selected prayers noted in the appendix to this liturgy, the laying on hands and anointing, concluding with Prayers at the Time of Death and/or quiet reflection.

The pastors and officiants of these liturgies may be presumed to be clergy, either priests or deacons, and may also be licensed lay pastoral visitors under the supervision of clergy. Specific rubrics direct modification of certain texts to make them appropriate to a lay officiant. Directions are given at a diocesan level regarding who can officiate the laying on of hands and anointing.

It is important to note at this point that while there may be many people gathering in different ways to honour and support the dying, not everyone will share the same beliefs or values, and there may be conflict about the decision made by the patient.

In planning this liturgy it is important to be mindful that what is blessed, prayed for and honoured is not the choice itself or the process leading to the decision for a medically assisted death. We acknowledge that this is a difficult place to hold. We are here to support a person who is at the end stages of their life. In this way we gather as a community near and far in a supportive manner during this transition.

### The Gathered Community

People can come together for this service in different ways. Some will be present in the room, while others may be holding the person and family in prayer from different locations. There may be some who are not able to be present. It is important to meet with the patient and family and others who will be participating, in order to talk about the liturgy, and to hear what their wishes, hopes, and fears may be in relation to this time of prayer. It may be pastorally beneficial

to acknowledge how and where people are gathering for this ritual.<sup>5</sup> Depending on the context and the relationships, acknowledging tension or disagreement may be a helpful way for those gathered to name these and offer them to God in prayer so that they do not distract from the intention and intimacy of the occasion.

In all preparation, it is important to be mindful of the context, be it in a home or in a hospice or other health care setting, in which institutional policies may be in effect and shape what can be offered.

### Symbols

Symbols carry real power because they are capable of evoking deep meaning. As such they are integral to Christian worship. In this rite, use of symbols important to the dying person is encouraged. Obvious Christian symbols such as a cross or chalice may be joined by other items that may hold deep meaning for the patient. A photograph, article of clothing, or artwork, for example, may be used as an unspoken offering of prayer. It is important at the same time to be mindful of any institutional policies that may affect where this liturgy is offered such as a hospital. An example of this might be use of a lighted candle or incense.

### Music & Hymnody

There is always room for music and song, and this service notes several places where these can be included. While biblical readings are included in the service, music selected may not strictly be related to the readings selected but should emphasise the person's favourite hymns and music. This is an occasion with mixed emotions and complex thoughts. On the one hand, we are sad as we come to terms with one of our friends and family who no longer will be with us. At the same time, we may rejoice that their pain and suffering are ending, and they will be reunited with their Creator and Redeemer and where they can enjoy the vision of God forever. Music is a powerful way to name and to set in context many of these feelings that are hard to place in words alone.

### The Liturgy of the Word

While it is appropriate to use the readings for the day, it is equally appropriate to select Scripture that better suits the pastoral sensitivity of the occasion and the worshiping community's values and theology on death and dying. The appendix to this rite includes a robust list of suitable Scripture readings that may be used. *The Book of Alternative Services* also has a list on page 558 and pages 604-605. This may be an occasion to include a favourite bible verse or text outside of Scripture such as poetry that the dying person or family have found to be particularly inspirational or formative in their life.

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<sup>5</sup> For example, some people might be gathering through videoconference, or there may be a group gathered at the local church to join in prayer.

## Anointing

The liturgy includes an option for anointing with oil of unction. You must follow diocesan guidance regarding who can offer anointing and in what contexts. In most contexts anointing is understood to be a sacramental act restricted to bishops and priests. It is best to check with your own diocesan practice regarding the licensing of lay persons and deacons to the ministry of anointing.

## The Liturgy of the Table

We meet Jesus in the sacraments, in bread broken and wine outpoured. In the moment of this *Thin Space* where a person transitions from life into death it is appropriate to include the celebration of the Eucharist. There is also provision for communion from the Reserved Sacrament for when circumstances prevent the full consecration of bread and wine.

In addition to authorised liturgical texts at the diocesan level, the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada has authorised a breadth of Eucharistic Prayers and practices that may be included in this ritual.<sup>6</sup>

## Confession

The end of life is another significant moment where the person dying may wish to make their personal confession. It is recommended that this be done privately before others gather in the room for the service. Alternatively, the service that follows includes an opportunity for an order of General Confession and Absolution to be made.

## The Concluding Rite

The service may naturally conclude following Prayers at the Time of Death whether or not the Eucharist is celebrated. This is also a natural time for family and friends to have a brief moment of personal reflection with their loved one before the medical team arrives.

It is anticipated that following this, the medical team will proceed with their responsibilities. The point of death offers another opportunity for personal reflection or thoughts by individuals with the deceased before leaving. Care and flexibility in planning should be accommodated to ensure all who wish are able to pay their respects in a manner that is most comfortable to them. Depending on the administrative protocols, family and friends may be permitted to stay in the room while others are invited to gather in a designated waiting area.

Alternatively, all present may gather as a group in the designated waiting area until the medical team have concluded their role.

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<sup>6</sup> Under The Waterloo Declaration of full communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (2001), Anglicans are free to use the worship resources of the ELCIC under the guidance of their Diocesan Bishop.

## Silence

There is no need to rush. In the pause between phrases and the breath between prayers and the transitioning from one part of the liturgy to the next, silence allows space for thoughts to settle, the presence of the Divine felt and the small still voice of God heard. Remember to breathe.

## Pastoral Care of the Pastor

Ministering with those who are dying can be challenging. While death is a natural part of human life, emotions can surface in varying and complex ways. This can especially be so at a time while supporting persons who will receive MAiD. The appendix to this rite includes a service of compline and other prayers that may be helpful for care givers and clergy to use independently or with other colleagues as they prepare to minister to the dying.

Other forms of self-care and attending to the pastoral needs of those exercising leadership in this service or the family can include the group meeting beforehand to discuss, pray and reflect on the ministry they are about to offer. This may be particularly helpful for the congregation or other groups who may be praying for the family and the person dying at alternative locations.

## Follow Up

As people may be mindful and present during this rite in a variety of ways, it is important for the Pastoral Care Team to take the time to follow up and check in with certain individuals in the days that follow. Some of this may naturally happen during the funeral preparation, but it may not include others who could benefit from additional support.

## Language, Names and Pronouns

It is expected that some may wish to alter some of the language of some prayers, for example, to alter the use of “Lord” or “Father” for something else. This practice is encouraged if the guiding principle is what language is able to be best received and prayed by the patient (not the pastor, in the first place).

Throughout this resource, the designation *N* is used to note where a person’s name should be inserted. The pronouns *they* and *them* are used as placeholders for the particular pronouns to be used for the person or people being prayed for.

## Reconciliation of a Penitent: Individual Confession and Absolution

*This rite is designed for personal confession of the penitent and may best be offered before the service in private. The officiant of this rite is a priest.*

*Priest:* Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

*Penitent:* **God's mercy endures for ever.**

*The priest then says to the penitent,*

Dear friend in Christ, God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy, healing the sick and forgiving the sinful. May God, who enlightens every heart, help you confess your sins confident in God's forgiveness.

*The penitent says,*

Most merciful God, have mercy upon me,  
in your compassion forgive my sins,  
both known and unknown,  
things done and left undone,  
(especially . . . ).  
O God, uphold me by your Spirit  
that I may live and serve you in newness of life,  
even into life everlasting,  
to the honour and glory of your name;  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

*The priest may, with the consent of the penitent, offer words of comfort and counsel, and then says,*

*Priest* Do you recommit to Christ?

*Response* **I recommit to Christ.**

*Priest* Do you receive God's gifts of forgiveness and reconciliation?

*Response* **I do, with God's help.**

*The priest then says,*

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who offered himself as the perfect sacrifice to the Father, and who conferred power on his Church to forgive sins, absolve you through my ministry by the grace of the Holy Spirit, and restore you in the perfect peace of the Church. Amen.

# A Liturgy of Preparation for Death

## The Gathering & Greeting

*The Officiant welcomes those present and, where appropriate, recognizes that there are others who hold vigil elsewhere, acknowledging the purpose for which they gather.*

*When appropriate, an order for personal confession and absolution may be offered ahead of the service before others gather using the order found in this liturgy or an order of the Reconciliation of a Penitent on page 167 and following of the Book of Alternative Services.*

*The Officiant may set the context with these or similar appropriate words:*

We gather today in a space that may be foreign to us. There are sounds, lights, and activity outside of this room that can distract and take us away from this space. But God meets us here, in this time and place, a thin-space that is sacred. We gather as friends and family [and health care professionals] with our hopes, our dreams, and our differences. While some of us may not always agree with the choices of others, we are united in our common love and compassion for N. May we know the presence of God as we pray together.

Let us pray.

May God be with us,  
May God's love unite us,  
May God's purpose steady us,  
May God's Spirit comfort us.

*In a quiet way intended to set a tone of helping to create sacred space, the officiant may introduce a symbol that is important to the dying person, and to name who is present physically, and who is present spiritually.*

*The officiant begins with the following or other appropriate greeting.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the love of God,  
and the fellowship/communion of the Holy Spirit,  
be with you (all).

*Response*      **And also with you.**

## Collect

*Either this collect, one of the collects found starting on page 39, or another appropriate prayer may be used.*

Let us pray:

God of mercy,  
look with love on *N*,  
and receive *them* into your heavenly kingdom.  
Bless *N* and *their* family and friends.  
Let *them* live with you for ever.  
We ask this grace through Christ the Lord.

*Response*      **Amen.**

*If desired a hymn or other music may be included here.*

## **The Liturgy of the Word**

*Choose up to three pieces of suggested Scripture or readings that have special meaning for the person who is dying and for those gathered around them. A list of recommended Scripture readings can be found in Appendix beginning on page 45. It is appropriate to include a reading from the Gospel that expresses the hope in the resurrection. This is particularly appropriate for a celebration of the Eucharist.*

*A hymn or other music may be included here.*

## **Confession and Absolution**

*Whether the individual Confession and Absolution have been celebrated privately before others gather at the bedside or not, this General Confession is suitable for all present at the bedside.*

*The people are invited to confession in these or similar words.*

*Officiant*      Dear friends in Christ,  
God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy;  
God welcomes sinners  
and invites us to this table.  
Let us confess our sins,  
trusting in God's forgiveness.

*Silence is kept.*

*Officiant*      Most merciful God,

*All*              **we confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us and forgive us,  
that we may delight in your will,  
and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

*The Priest says,*

Almighty God have mercy upon you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in eternal life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All*

**Amen.**

*Or*

*If the Officiant is a Deacon or Lay Person, the Officiant says,*

May Almighty God have mercy upon you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in eternal life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All*

**Amen.**

## **Prayers of the People**

*The Prayers may be led by a family member or the pastoral care team. Suitable collects, prayers and litanies can be found beginning on page 39 of this document or in the BAS Pages 110-129. The Prayers on page 593 or 602 of the BAS may be particularly appropriate and can be adapted to suit the specific needs of the community gathered for this rite. It is good practice to include moments of stillness and quiet, where few words are spoken. Individuals may be invited to add in their own prayers.*

## **Laying on of Hands and Anointing - Form I**

*The Officiant begins with the following declaration.*

Holy scripture teaches us  
that in acts of healing and restoration  
our Lord Jesus and his disciples

laid hands upon the sick (and anointed them).  
By so doing they made known  
the healing power and presence of God.  
Pray that as we follow our Lord's example,  
you may know his unfailing love.

*Then the Officiant lays hands upon the person, saying the following:*

N, may God in love and mercy uphold you  
by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*Or, if the person is to be anointed, the officiant anoints the person's forehead with oil, making the sign of the cross and saying,*

N, through this holy anointing  
may God in love and mercy uphold you  
by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*Anointing and laying on of hands may be offered to others present. When the anointing is completed, the officiant may add,*

As you are outwardly anointed with this holy oil,  
so may God grant you  
the inward anointing of the Holy Spirit.  
May God in mercy forgive you your sins,  
release you from suffering,  
and embrace you in love.  
May God deliver you from all evil,  
preserve you in all goodness,  
and bring you to everlasting life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*or*

## **The Laying on of Hands - Form II**

*The Officiant, with any others invited, in silence lays hands on the person; then using the name if desired, may say these or others words.*

In the name of God most high  
we lay our hands upon you.  
Receive Christ's healing touch to make you whole  
in body, mind and spirit.

The power of God strengthen you,  
the love of God dwell in you  
and give you peace.  
**Amen.**

## **The Anointing**

*The Officiant dips a thumb in the holy oil and makes the sign of the cross on the person's forehead, saying*

N, I anoint you with this holy oil.  
Receive Christ's forgiveness and healing.  
The power of the Saviour who suffered for you  
flow through your mind and body,  
lifting you to peace and inward strength.

*If the person wishes, other parts of the body may also be anointed. Anointing and laying on of hands may be offered to others present.*

*When the laying on of hands and anointing are complete, the Officiant continues with the concluding collect:*

God our healer,  
keep us aware of your presence,  
support us with your power,  
comfort us with your protection,  
give us strength  
and establish us in your peace.

## **The Liturgy of the Table**

### **Holy Communion**

*If the Holy Eucharist is celebrated, the service will continue with the Great Thanksgiving, the Lord's Prayer, and the Communion. Provision for communion from the Reserved Sacrament is appropriate for when those circumstances permit per diocesan custom.*

*If the sacrament has been brought from the church, the service continues as follows:*

*Officiant*      The Church of Christ,  
of which we are members,  
has taken this bread and wine  
and given thanks according to the Lord's command.

We now share together  
in the communion of Christ's body and blood.

As our Saviour taught us, let us pray,

*All are invited to pray in their own languages, or using the following forms:*

*All*            **Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.**

*or*

*Presider*      And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us,  
we are bold to say,

*All*            **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.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

*The Officiant may say the following invitation.*

*People*            The gifts of God for the People of God.  
                      Thanks be to God.

*The sacrament is then given with the following words.*

The body of Christ (given for you).

The blood of Christ (shed for you).

*Or*           The body of Christ, the bread of heaven.  
The blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.

*The communicant responds each time, Amen.*

*The following doxology may be said.*

*Officiant*    Glory to God,  
*All*            **whose power, working in us,  
can do infinitely more  
than we can ask or imagine.  
Glory to God from generation to generation,  
in the Church and in Christ Jesus,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

## **Quiet Reflection**

*What follows is a time of silence and quiet reflection. The medical team may enter soon for their role at this point. Family and those gathered who wish to share last thoughts or conversation with the dying can do so now, or before the liturgy begins. Anyone who does not wish to be in the room during the medical procedures may go to a space prepared for them.*

## Prayers at the Time of Death

*The following may be done with the Officiant and the person receiving MAiD privately. Alternatively family and others may be present depending on the wishes and needs of the person.*

### Litany/prayers

*During the transition to prepare for the medically assisted death, it is appropriate to hold space for silent prayer. It should be decided ahead of time who will be in the room during the death, whether just the pastor, patient, and medical team, or whether loved ones will be present as well. The focus of prayer will be on the person who is about to die.*

*The following may be said by the Officiant; the patient may be encouraged to repeat these words:*

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, help me.

Father, I place myself in your hands.

Holy God, I believe in you.

I trust you.

I love you.

*The Nunc Dimittis may be said or sung:*

Lord, now you let your servant go in peace;  
your word has been fulfilled.  
My own eyes have seen the salvation  
which you have prepared in the sight of every people;  
a light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel.  
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. **Amen.**

### Prayers at Death

*Space is to be made around the care of the medical team in order that the following prayers may be offered, in these or similar words. Additional prayers can be found in the appendix beginning on page 39.*

Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints,  
where sorrow and pain are no more,  
neither sighing, but life everlasting.

You only are immortal, the creator and maker of all;  
and we are mortal, formed of the earth,  
and to earth shall we return.

For so did you ordain when you created me, saying,  
"You are dust, and to dust you shall return."  
All of us go down to the dust;  
yet even at the grave we make our song:  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints,  
where sorrow and pain are no more,  
neither sighing, but life everlasting.

*or*

Depart, O Christian soul, out of this world;  
in the name of God the Father almighty who created you;  
in the name of Jesus Christ who redeemed you;  
in the name of the Holy Spirit who sanctifies you.  
May your rest be this day in peace,  
and your dwelling place in the paradise of God.

*or*

Loving and merciful God,  
we entrust *N* to your mercy.  
You loved *them* greatly in this life;  
now that *they* are freed from all its cares,  
give *them* happiness and peace for ever.  
The old order has passed away;  
welcome *them* now into paradise  
where there will be no more sorrow,  
no more weeping or pain,  
but only peace and joy  
with Jesus, your Son,  
and the Holy Spirit,  
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*Or*

Into your hands, O merciful Saviour,  
we commend your servant *N*.  
Acknowledge, we pray,  
a sheep of your own fold,  
a lamb of your own flock,  
a sinner of your own redeeming.  
Receive *them* into the arms of your mercy,  
into the blessed rest of everlasting peace,  
and into the glorious company of the saints in light. **Amen.**

*If the Officiant is a priest, a simple blessing may be offered in these or similar words.*

God grant us to share  
in the inheritance of the saints in glory;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be with us, now and always. **Amen.**

*or*

God grant us to share  
in the inheritance of all the saints in glory,  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Holy Trinity of love  
be with us now and always. **Amen.**

*If the Officiant is a deacon or lay person, the following may be offered in these or similar words.*

God of abundant love,  
you are present in our midst with compassion.  
Give us your blessing, we pray,  
in the name of the Father, the Son,  
and the Holy Spirit, one God now and always. **Amen.**

*The service concludes with a dismissal.*

*Officiant*      May the God of peace give us peace in all ways and at all times.  
*People*        **Thanks be to God.**

## **Prayers at the Time of Death: A Service for Those Unable to Attend in Person**

*This prayer service can be used by those who are not able to be at the bedside at the time of death. This can be used by the faith community or friends and family who wish to gather when the time for the administration of MAiD is to happen.*

### **The Gathering**

We meet in the name of Jesus Christ, who died and was raised to the glory of God the Father.  
We join with those in (*place*) in remembering before God our *sibling/brother/sister N*;  
to give thanks for *their* life;  
to commend *them* to God our merciful redeemer and judge,  
and to comfort one another in our grief.

Let us pray.

God, of all consolation,  
your Son Jesus Christ was moved to tears at the grave of Lazarus, his friend.  
Look with compassion on your children in their loss;  
give to troubled hearts the light of hope  
and strengthen in us the gift of faith, in Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>7</sup>  
**Amen.**

### **Reading/Word**

*One or more of the following or other appropriate passages of scripture may be read. Or other readings or poems may be used as appropriate.*

*A reading from the Psalms:*

In you, O God, have I taken refuge;  
let me never be put to shame;  
deliver me in your righteousness.

Incline your ear to me;  
make haste to deliver me.

Be my strong rock,  
a castle to keep me safe,  
for you are my crag and my stronghold;

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<sup>7</sup> Common Worship: Pastoral Services, material from which is included here, is copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2000, 2005 and published by Church House Publishing.

for the sake of your Name, lead me and guide me.

Into your hands I commend my spirit,  
for you have redeemed me, O God of truth.

*Psalm 31:1-3, 5*

*A reading from the first letter of John:*

"We ourselves have known and put our faith in God's love toward ourselves. God is love, and anyone who lives in love lives in God, and God lives in him" *1 John 4:16*

*A reading from Romans:*

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Romans 8:35, 37-39*

*A reading from Revelation:*

I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

'See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.'

And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.' Then he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children.'

*Revelation 21:1-7*

## **Reflection**

*The leader may offer a reflection or invite others to share remembrances or offer a space of silence.*

## Prayers of the community

*The Nunc Dimitis may be said or sung:*

Lord, now you let your servant go in peace;  
your word has been fulfilled.  
My own eyes have seen the salvation  
which you have prepared in the sight of every people;  
a light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel.  
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. **Amen.**

*A hymn may be sung or a piece of music played.*

*The following litany or other appropriate prayers may be prayed.*

With the faithful of every time and place, let us place ourselves in God's hands  
[Saying "We put our trust in you"]

With Sarah and Abraham, who set out from home for a land unknown:  
God of the promise,  
**We put our trust in you.**

With Moses, who prayed for his people before going up the mountain to die:  
God of the promise,  
**We put our trust in you.**

With Ruth, who pledged faithfulness until death to her mother-in-law, Naomi:  
God of the promise,  
**We put our trust in you.**

With the disciples who left their nets to follow Jesus;  
God of the promise,  
**We put our trust in you.**

With Mary the mother of Jesus, and the women who watched at the cross:  
God of the promise,  
**We put our trust in you.**

With our Lord Jesus, who commended himself into your hands when he breathed his last:  
God of the promise,  
**We put our trust in you.**

With *N*, whom we now place into your strong arms, confident of your grace and mercy:  
God of the promise,  
**We put our trust in you.**

*Other prayers may be added. See pages 39-42 for options.*

*The prayers conclude with these or similar words.*

God our wisdom,  
we commend to your care our beloved *N*,  
in hope, in sorrow, and in love,  
praying that we may be encompassed by your grace  
and know your mercy and love.  
through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**

*or*

O God,  
you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending,  
by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown.  
Give us faith to go out in good courage,  
not knowing where we go,  
but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>8</sup> **Amen.**

And now, as our Saviour has taught us, we are bold to pray in the language of our choice:  
*All are invited to pray in their own languages, or using the following forms:*

*All*            **Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,**

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<sup>8</sup> Evangelical Lutheran Worship Pastoral Care

now and for ever. Amen.

*or*

*All*           **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.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

*A hymn may be sung or a piece of music played*

Eternal and ever-loving God, we are gathered here in your presence,  
in this last hour of *N*'s life.

We give you thanks for the gift they are to the world.

You were there when *N* took their first breath,  
you have been walking with them their whole life long.

In the good times, in the bad times,  
in the joy and in the sorrow,  
and now here in this final hour, you are with us.

As we gather together in this goodbye time,  
We give thanks for all that we have cherished about *N*:

*Open prayers*

Thank you for love that bind us together and binds us to you.

Thank you that you will never let us go.

As *N* takes this final step towards you,  
we give them into your hands.

Grant them peace, eternal peace,  
and may light everlasting greet them as they step towards you.  
We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour,  
who stands at the door, waiting, ready to welcome us home. Amen.

*Additional prayers may be offered. See pages 39-42 for options.*

Glory to God, **whose power, working in us,  
can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.**  
**Glory to God from generation to generation,  
in the Church and in Christ Jesus, for ever and ever. Amen.**

May *N* and all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.  
**Amen.**

Let us go forth in peace,  
**In the name of Christ, Amen.**

## Guidance for Pastors who Minister in Contexts of Medically Assisted Dying

Medical Assistance in Dying evokes strong and opposing views amongst some persons and communities, including amongst health care providers and amongst Anglican Christians. Some Christians, including clergy, find that MAiD violates their understanding of the ethical values to which Christians are called. It is important to acknowledge the effects of this reality of conflict. The Anglican Church of Canada is not of one voice on the topic, but leaders generally are in agreement that the Church has a duty of pastoral care to all who are dying. The question of what the nature of that pastoral care is one that differs from diocese to diocese. It is critically important that Diocesan Bishops communicate well their directives with respect to MAiD.

Knowing that there are numerous strains and stressors in these pastoral contexts, we encourage intentional preparation by all who will be offering this pastoral ministry. The following guidance is provided as a resource to assist in this preparation. “Pastors” may be presumed to be clergy, either priests, deacons, or bishops, but may also be licensed lay pastoral visitors under the supervision of clergy.

### Preparing for Pastoral Ministry with a Person who has Chosen Medically Assisted Dying

The Canadian Association for Spiritual Care has provided the following guidance to the members of their profession. Please note that this guidance is intended for those who are professional spiritual care providers in health care settings

*“...Spiritual Care Practitioners and Psycho-Spiritual Therapists must:*

- *Assess their own feelings, emotions, and competencies when entering into end of life care conversations.*
- *Have the ability to be present and attend to the end of life needs of the client and family in a non-judgmental way.*
- *Acknowledge the request for information in a competent and compassionate way. Knowing that the client’s request for additional information or further consultation on MAiD is their right and must be honoured.*
- *Be willing to openly discuss not only the client’s existential/ spiritual angst and concerns, but also any unmet needs, feelings, and desires about their care.*
- *Pay attention to their own reactions and responses to suffering and death and seek support as needed*
- *Continue to provide care and support to patient/family members and staff before, during and after MAiD has occurred.”<sup>1</sup> -Canadian Association for Spiritual Care*

We offer the following guidance to Anglican pastors involved in ministry with those who have chosen medically assistance for their dying:

- Be guided by the direction of your bishop and by any diocesan policies or directives that have been given.
- If you have not been present at a death that has involved medical assistance, it can be helpful to talk with a pastoral colleague who has been involved.
- Examine your own conscience. If your own level of ethical or personal and pastoral discomfort is too great to be able to set aside effectively to be able to pray in a truly focused way in this context, it is best to seek alternative pastoral support for the patient from a colleague in ministry in a neighbouring parish, or from a health care spiritual care provider.
- Approach with a healthy sense of role clarity and with knowledge of the roles of others.
  - If you are a priest, your role is as pastor and priest to the person dying, and to those loved ones around the patient first. Licensed lay ministers are also representing the church and that is a very specific role distinct from any other inter-personal relationship they may have with the patient.
  - Your care in these moments will also take in the presence of others, notably medical personnel. These may or may not be comfortable with the role in which you are ministering, and may or may not welcome your prayers for them. Be clear with all about what is your role. This is particularly important, for example, when requesting privacy for a personal confession.
  - Your role is to represent the Church of Christ, to offer prayers and pastoral counsel. You are bringing the prayers of the Church in to this setting, whether a home, hospice, or hospital room.
- If you have a pastoral relationship in which you have discussed the discernment and decision that has led to the MAiD option, that is a precious pastoral relationship in which you will know more about what the patient's circumstances are, have been, and may be at the time of their death. You will know what conflicts or challenges have presented themselves during the decision making process, and who around the person is supportive, and who may have difficulties with the decision. All of this needs to be held within an overarching care for the person who is dying.
- Be aware of the possibilities of triangulation and coercion being exercised on you as well as possibly on the patient. Individual autonomy is not a Gospel value; neither are coercion and manipulation.

- Community is also critically important, and the care for someone in a process of decision making about their own death has profound effects on all those around them. You will need to discern how to support those around the person during this process as well.
- In relationship with medical staff and others: Medical professionals are in the first place health care professional who are trained to care for the health and wellbeing of all. Medically assisted deaths are contexts in which the best caring for health has been judged to be the cessation of attempts to cure, and the engagement of treatment that will bring about a peaceful death. For some health care staff, even those well experienced in MAiD, this is still a particularly difficult process in which to engage, and may indeed be morally and spiritually painful. It is important to know that there may be a complex range of emotions in the room, including from health care providers.

### What is different about this sort of death?

Every life is unique; every death is different. And yet there are some important things to say about deaths that take place through medical assistance. We recommend that you look at some of the experience-based essays in *Faith Seeking Understanding: MAiD: Reflections by Canadian Anglicans*.<sup>9</sup>

Pastors can be expected to be called to a bedside and to expect an imminent death when someone of any age is gravely ill, whether conscious or unconscious, when someone has sustained grievous injury, and when someone has aged into the final dissolution of their body's capacity to sustain living. These processes can be swift, or they can take time. One may be on a death watch along with family over hours, days, or even weeks. There may be medical watch administering pain relief; there may be at a certain point a withdrawal of treatment, including the removal of feeding tubes, breathing apparatus, and other life supports. When death comes, it may be silent and peaceful, or accompanied with struggle and pain.

We have now had approximately a decade of experience with medically assisted dying in Canada. Those who have been present as pastors and spiritual care providers in these contexts most frequently report the following amongst the experiences that make these deaths different from others, and that require both preparation ahead of time, and debriefing and follow up care afterwards (including self-care):

#### *Sudden Death:*

- Upon arrival, the patient may be fully aware, awake, and able to engage in conversation, and to speak to say goodbyes and to offer other words to loved ones and to you as pastor.

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<sup>9</sup> Faith Seeking Understanding: MAiD – Reflection by Canadian Anglicans, 2024.  
<https://www.anglican.ca/resources/faith-seeking-understanding-maid>

- There may be a time in this beginning of the end when the room does not appear overly-medicalized, even if one is in a health care setting. Once the medical team arrives and begins their work, it can feel a sudden and stark intrusion. In these moments, reality can hit the patient's loved ones in the room quite suddenly and cause reactions of immediate anticipatory grief, confusion, and desire to say No to the death.
- Once the pharmaceutical drugs have been administered, death can come very quickly. One can have the experience of having someone sitting up and talking, then within a matter of minutes they can be dead.
- All of this process can be experienced as peaceful, and swift in its peacefulness; it can also be experienced as sudden and painful in its suddenness.

### *Complex Grievs and Trauma*

- Because of the fact that this manner and time of dying was a matter of the patient's own decision, the grief of those who remain can be complex. The complexity may be furthered by the speed of the death.
- The complexity can be varied: some will experience relief and peace that the person was able to choose the time of their death, and that further suffering has been alleviated; others may move swiftly to the anger part of grief, in frustration with the decision. Conflicts amongst loved ones can complicate the grieving process and require supportive intervention.
- To witness a death is itself a trauma, and this includes the act of witnessing a death by medical assistance. We may celebrate the release from further suffering, and we may trust God deeply with all that is to come, and be secure in our faith that the person is in God's care, "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection." But we have still experienced a trauma. It is important to name these things. Amongst other things, trauma is a deep-seated emotional response to something disturbing. Witnessing a body wracked by illness to near-death, and the decision-making process to let go of life, challenges us in ways beyond words. It is a land where holy mystery and human power meet. It may be an occasion where grace is experienced; it is also a place that marks us with the trauma of death, including the approach of our own.

### The Pastor Taking Care of the Pastor

Within all of this complexity it is important that pastors tend to themselves well in preparation for the ministry with the dying, as well as afterwards. Reach out to community in the form of peer colleagues and specialists in death and dying to talk about your experiences. Avail yourself of the pastoral supports that exist through your diocese and local community. Talk through the feelings that emerge from the experience, including reaching out to a counsellor or therapist who has experience in accompanying people through death and grief processes. Pray.

## A Pastoral Office of Prayer in Preparation for Ministry with the Dying in the Context of MAiD

*It is important to take some time in community with a small group of trusted colleagues in ministry, or privately to centre oneself and to pray before attending the bedside of someone who is dying. The following are recommended readings and prayers to assist in centring oneself in God. These may be used in a focused way in a time of prayer, or be integrated into your practice of keeping Daily Office in Morning, Noonday or Evening Prayer. The format is an abbreviated Office, but keeps the Penitential Rite within the liturgy following meditation on Scripture, and before the Prayers. It is presumes a community gathered, and therefore includes community responses in **bold**. It may also be used by a person praying by themselves. With the assurances of joining our prayers with those of the communion of saints we know that when we pray we never pray truly alone.*

O God, let our mouth proclaim your praise and your glory all day long. Christ has triumphed over death: **O come let us worship.**

Glory to God, Source of all being, eternal Word, and Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. **Amen. (Alleluia.)**

*or*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. **Amen. (Alleluia.)**

### *Responsorial*

Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead. And Christ shall give you light.

**Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead. And Christ shall give you light.**

You have died and your life is hid with Christ in God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on the earth.

**Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead. And Christ shall give you light.**

When Christ our life appears you will appear with him in glory.

**Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead. And Christ shall give you light.**

## Psalmody and Scripture

*Any of the following, or selections from the Recommended Scripture Readings (pages 45ff), passages from one of the appropriate Lectionary texts, or other passages of Scripture may be read.*

*Psalm 31.1–5*

In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; \*  
deliver me in your righteousness.  
Incline your ear to me; \*  
make haste to deliver me.  
Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag and my stronghold; \*  
for the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.  
Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me, \*  
for you are my tower of strength.  
Into your hands I commend my spirit, \*  
for you have redeemed me, O Lord, O God of Truth.

*or*

*Psalm 16.1, 5–11*

Protect me, O God, for I take refuge in you; \*  
I have said to the Lord, “You are my Lord, my good above all other.”  
O Lord, you are my portion and my cup; \*  
it is you who uphold my lot.  
My boundaries enclose a pleasant land; \*  
indeed, I have a goodly heritage.  
I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel; \*  
my heart teaches me, night after night.  
I have set the Lord always before me; \*  
because he is at my right hand I shall not fall.  
My heart, therefore, is glad, and my spirit rejoices; \*  
my body also shall rest in hope.  
For you will not abandon me to the grave, \*  
nor let your holy one see the Pit.  
You will show me the path of life; \*  
in your presence there is fullness of joy,  
and in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now and will be for ever. **Amen.**

*or*

Glory to God, Source of all being, eternal Word and Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now and will be for ever. **Amen.**

## Readings from Holy Scripture

### *2 Corinthians 4.6–10*

It is the God who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies.

### *Ephesians 3.16–19*

I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

### *Romans 14: 7-8*

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s.

### *Matthew 11:28-30*

“Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

*Allow a generous period of silence for reflection.*

Let us pray.

God of all compassion,

help *us/me* this day to recall that we are servants and ministers of Christ himself, who has reconciled us with you and with all your beloved creation.

Help *us* to make your comfort known to *N* as *they* prepare for their death.

Help *us* to journey beside *N*, and, with your help to watch and wait with *them*.

Help *us* to witness to the love of Christ by our presence and prayers with *N*.

Relieve *us* of anxiety about *our* own inadequacy for this ministry,

and strengthen *us* with the knowledge of what *we* need in order to do your will faithfully.

Guide *us* with your loving presence,

for you are the Holy One who can accomplish

more than we can ask or imagine in this tender time and always. **Amen.**

## Confession and Forgiveness

Let me hear of your loving-kindness in the morning, for I put my trust in you; show me the road that I must walk, for I lift up my soul to you. *Psalm 143:8*

Seek the one who made the Pleiades and Orion, and turns deep darkness into the morning, and darkens the day into night; who calls for the waters of the sea, and pours them out upon the surface of the earth; the Lord is the name of the Holy One. *Amos 5:8*

If we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. *1 John 1:9*

God of all mercy,  
we confess that we have sinned against you,  
opposing your will in our lives.  
We have denied your goodness in each other,  
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.  
We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done,  
and the evil done on our behalf.  
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us  
through our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
so that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.

*The following Absolution is given. If the officiant is a lay person, it may be turned into a prayer of Assurance of Pardon by using the parenthetical "May the" at the beginning of the sentence.*

(May the) Almighty God of love and power forgive *you* and free *you* from your sins, heal and strengthen *you* by the Holy Spirit and raise *you* to new life in Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

## The Prayers

Into your hands, O God, I commend my spirit;  
**For you have redeemed me, O God of truth and love.**

Keep us, O God, as the apple of your eye;  
**Hide us under the shadow of your wings.**

*The Apostles' Creed or the Shema may be said.*

**I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

*or*

**Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.  
Love the Lord your God with all your heart,  
with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.  
This is the first and the great commandment.  
The second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself.  
There is no commandment greater than these.**

*After a silence, one or more of the following prayers may be used.*

This is a time of stillness, the breathing space of preparation.  
Let us be still in the presence of God.  
What has been discerned has been decided: let us offer it up to God's care.  
What is to come is unfolding before us: let us entrust it all to God's love.  
Let us pray from this place of quietness as we are held in God's peace.

Come, O Spirit of God, and make within us your dwelling place and home.  
May our darkness be dispelled by your light,  
and our troubles calmed by your peace;  
may all evils be redeemed by your love,  
all pain transformed through the suffering of Christ,  
and all dying glorified by his risen life. **Amen.**

Let us pray for our own needs at this time, and for the needs of others.

*A time of free prayer, or prayers found beginning on page 39, or other prayers may be offered at this time.*

*It is appropriate to pray:*

*For the person who is dying*

*For their loved ones*

*For specific needs of the community surrounding the dying person*

*For all who are working in health care, social work, personal support, palliative care, and other support roles*

*For vocational guidance for those offering pastoral care and prayer and for care for their own needs.*

Gracious God, support us all the day long of this earthly life,

until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes,  
the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over,  
and our work is done.  
Then, O God, in your mercy, grant us safe lodging,  
a holy rest, and peace at the last; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*The Song of Simeon may be said or sung.*

**Lord, now you let your servant go in peace; \*  
your word has been fulfilled.  
My own eyes have seen the salvation \*  
which you have prepared in the sight of every people;  
a light to reveal you to the nations \*  
and the glory of your people Israel.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: \*  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

As our Saviour taught us, and in our own languages we pray, Our Father...  
**in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in  
heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin  
against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the  
power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.**

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy  
Spirit. **Amen.**

*or*

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in Christ  
Jesus. **Amen.**

*or*

May the God of peace give us peace in all ways and at all times. **Amen.**

## **Additional Prayers**

### **General**

God our refuge and strength, close at hand in our distress;  
meet us in our sorrow and lift our eyes  
to the peace and light of your constant care.  
Help us so to hear your word of grace  
that our fear may be dispelled by your love,  
our loneliness eased by your presence  
and our hope renewed by your promises in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Generous God,  
we give you thanks for your beloved Jesus Christ,  
in whom you have shared the beauty and pain of human life.  
Look with compassion upon all for whom we pray,  
and strengthen us to be your instruments of healing in the world,  
by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Suffering God, you came into the world as one of us,  
and bore agony as we do.  
As we sit in this time of pain and uncertainty,  
help us to realize that you are with us at all times and through all distress.  
You who have known our hearts since we were in our mothers' womb  
know all that we fear, all that we love, and all that we hope.  
Enfold us in your grace for all eternity, and carry us home.  
This we pray in the security of your loving embrace. Amen.

Christ be with you: Christ within you;  
Christ before you: Christ behind you;  
Christ on your right: Christ on your left;  
Christ above you: Christ beneath you;  
Christ around you: now and ever. Amen.

### **For Wholeness and Relief from Suffering**

Almighty and merciful God,  
you are the only source of health and healing;  
you alone can bring calmness and peace.  
Grant to your child *N* an awareness of your presence  
and a strong confidence in you.  
In *their* pain, weariness, and anxiety,

surround *them* with your care,  
protect *them* by your loving might,  
and grant to *them* the gifts of wholeness, strength and peace;  
through Jesus Christ, the Physician of our Souls. Amen.

Loving God, your heart overflows with compassion for your whole creation.  
Pour out your Spirit on *N*  
and all people living with illness for which there is no cure,  
as well as their families and loved ones.  
Help them to know that you claim them as your own;  
deliver them from fear and pain;  
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our healer and Lord.

O God our Creator, all our life is in you.  
Receive our prayers for *N*.  
We thank you for the love and companionship we have shared with *them*.  
Give us grace now to accept the limits of human healing  
as we commend *N*. to your merciful care.  
Strengthen us, we pray,  
and help us to continue to serve and care for one another;  
in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life,  
through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

O Lord, support us all the day long of this troubled life,  
until the shadows lengthen and  
the evening comes and the busy world is hushed,  
the fever of life is over, and our work is done.  
Then, in your mercy, grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest,  
and peace at the last, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

That we may know your near presence with us, blessed God:

**Holy One, help us**

That *N*. may be released from the agony of suffering, blessed God:

**Holy One, help us**

That our actions may proceed from love, blessed God:

**Holy One, help us**

That our best judgements may accord with your will, blessed God;

**Holy One, help us**

That you will hold *N*. and us in the palm of your hand this day, blessed God:

**Holy One, help us**

That all our fears may be relieved as we place our trust in you, blessed God:

**Holy One, help us**

That as *N*. labours into new resurrection birth, we may surround *them* with love, blessed God:

**Holy One, help us**

That although we now grieve, joy may return in the morning, blessed God:

**Holy One, help us**

**Prayers that may be Offered by the Patient**

Merciful God,

I thank you that since I have no strength to care for myself,  
you serve me through the hands and hearts of others.

Bless these people that they may continue to serve you  
and please you all their days. Amen.

God, you are my help and comfort;  
you shelter and surround me in love so tender  
that I may know your presence with me, now and always. Amen.

O God, our lives are in your hands.  
Help me to look bravely at the end of my life in this world,  
while trusting in my life in the next.  
Journey with me toward my unexplored horizon  
where Jesus my Saviour has gone before. Amen.

Merciful Jesus, you are my guide,  
the joy of my heart, the author of my hope,  
and the object of my love.  
I come seeking refreshment and peace.  
Show me your mercy, relieve my fears and anxieties,  
and grant me a quiet mind and an expectant heart,  
that by the assurance of your presence  
I may learn to abide in you, who is my Lord and my God. Amen.

**Prayers for the medical community**

Healing God, we pray for all who are suffering from incurable illness.  
This day we pray especially for *N* in *their* suffering.  
By your grace lift their souls beyond the immediacy of the pain.  
Give to medical professionals the patience and wisdom  
to provide true care with kindness and skill.  
We pray for those engaged in medical research  
that by your inspiration and their skill  
suffering from illness may be alleviated.

God, our Healer and Redeemer,  
we give thanks for the compassionate care *N* has received.  
Bless these and all health care providers.  
Give them knowledge, virtue, and patience;  
and strengthen them in their ministry of healing and comforting;  
through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

O Lord, we are at the limits of our power to help.  
For what we have left undone, forgive us.  
For what you have helped us to do, we thank you.  
For what must be done by others, lend your strength.  
Now shelter us in your peace which passes our understanding. Amen

### **At and After the Time of Death**

God who holds all things together, we commit *N* to your loving care,  
and hold before you all those who loved *them*.  
May *N* now return to where *they* began life  
under the peace of your loving gaze,  
where death and birth become one,  
and care and pain are smoothed away.  
Help all who are gathered here to know  
that all love in this life flows from your love,  
a love that is stronger than death and can never be quenched by it.  
Comfort those who have gathered here  
with the knowledge that their final gift to *N*  
was to see *N* safely home.  
All this we pray through Christ,  
who died and lives with you and the Holy Spirit  
in a new world without end. Amen.

*Also: See BAS, pages 563-564*

## Prayers for Discernment

Lord Jesus,  
as you faced the pain and conflict leading to your own death,  
you prayed intensely, struggling before God.  
Be with *N* (and all who love *them*) as they face complex choices  
and the solemn consequences of decisions to be made at this time.  
Through it all, compassionate Jesus,  
be a strong companion and guide along the way,  
for your love's sake. **Amen.**

God our Wisdom,  
*I/we* offer to you the decisions *I/we* have made in faith, hope, and love.  
Help us now to place our whole trust in you,  
knowing that we do not walk this path alone,  
but that you are here with *me/us*.  
Enfold *me/us* in your perfect love,  
through Jesus Christ who died and rose for us all. **Amen.**

Loving God,  
our true guide and hope,  
at Gethsemane Jesus toiled with terrifying choices.  
You are here with *me/us* now.  
Make your presence known better to *me/us*  
as *I/we* struggle with decisions that are heavy to bear.  
Help *me/us* to know what path to follow  
and that you will reveal your blessing to *me/us* in these decisions.  
This we ask through our constant companion  
and compassionate brother, Jesus. **Amen.**

Holy God,  
whose wisdom surpasses our human understanding,  
send your Holy Spirit to guide *me/us*,  
that all our decisions may be made  
in faith, in hope, and in love,  
with reverence for your gift of life.  
This we ask through the Lord of Life, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Loving God,  
you are the source of all life  
and the Lord of all wisdom.  
We come before you now  
as we struggle with decisions about life and death  
that belong rightly to you alone.

We confess before you  
our own uncertainty and insecurity  
as we sit in discernment.  
Hold us in your peace  
and help us to hear your own call to us  
in the stillness of our hearts.  
Lead us in your loving care  
and bring us to the light  
of your deep presence in all that we face.  
This we pray through Christ  
and in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## Recommended Scripture Selections

*Ecclesiastes 3.1-14*

For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven:  
a time to be born and a time to die;  
a time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted;  
a time to kill and a time to heal;  
a time to break down and a time to build up;  
a time to weep and a time to laugh;  
a time to mourn and a time to dance;  
a time to throw away stones and a time to gather stones together;  
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;  
a time to seek and a time to lose;  
a time to keep and a time to throw away;  
a time to tear and a time to sew;  
a time to keep silent and a time to speak;  
a time to love and a time to hate;  
a time for war and a time for peace.

What gain have the workers from their toil? I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover, he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil. I know that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it nor anything taken from it; God has done this so that all should stand in awe before him.

*Isaiah 25.6-9*

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples  
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,  
of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear.  
And he will destroy on this mountain  
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,  
the covering that is spread over all nations;  
he will swallow up death forever.  
Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces,  
and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,  
for the LORD has spoken.  
It will be said on that day,  
"See, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us.

This is the LORD for whom we have waited;  
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

*Lamentations 3.22-26,31-33*

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases,  
his mercies never come to an end;  
they are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness.  
"The LORD is my portion," says my soul,  
"therefore I will hope in him."  
The LORD is good to those who wait for him,  
to the soul that seeks him.  
It is good that one should wait quietly  
for the salvation of the LORD.

*Psalm 23*

The Lord is my shepherd; \*  
I shall not be in want.  
You make me lie down in green pastures \*  
and lead me beside still waters.  
You revive my soul \*  
and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.  
Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, \*  
I shall fear no evil;  
for you are with me; \*  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.  
You spread a table before me \*  
in the presence of those who trouble me;  
you have anointed my head with oil, \*  
and my cup is running over.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, \*  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

*Psalm 25*

To you, O Lord, \*  
I lift up my soul;  
my God, I put my trust in you; \*  
let me not be humiliated, nor let my enemies triumph over me.  
Let none who look to you be put to shame; \*

let the treacherous be disappointed in their schemes.  
Show me your ways, O Lord, \*  
and teach me your paths.  
Lead me in your truth and teach me, \*  
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.  
Remember, O Lord, your compassion and love, \*  
for they are from everlasting.  
Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; \*  
remember me according to your love and for the sake of your goodness, O Lord.  
Gracious and upright are you, O Lord; \*  
therefore you teach sinners in your way.  
You guide the humble in doing right \*  
and teach your way to the lowly.  
O Lord, all your paths are love and faithfulness \*  
to those who keep your covenant and your testimonies.  
For your name's sake, O Lord, \*  
forgive my sin, for it is great.  
Who are they who fear you, O Lord? \*  
You will teach them the way that they should choose.  
They shall dwell in prosperity, \*  
and their offspring shall inherit the land.  
You are a friend to those who fear you \*  
and will show them your covenant.  
My eyes are ever looking to you, O Lord, \*  
for you shall pluck my feet out of the net.  
Turn to me and have pity on me, \*  
for I am left alone and in misery.  
The sorrows of my heart have increased; \*  
bring me out of my troubles.  
Look upon my adversity and misery \*  
and forgive me all my sin.  
Look upon my enemies, for they are many, \*  
and they bear a violent hatred against me.  
Protect my life and deliver me; \*  
let me not be put to shame, for I have trusted in you.  
Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, \*  
for my hope has been in you.  
Deliver Israel, O God, \*  
out of all their troubles.

*Psalm 91*

Those who dwell in the shelter of the Most High, \*

abide under the shadow of the Almighty.  
 They shall say to the Lord, "You are our refuge and our stronghold, \*  
 our God in whom we put our trust."  
 The Lord shall deliver you from the snare of the hunter \*  
 and from the deadly pestilence.  
 The wings of the Lord shall cover you, and you shall find refuge under them; \*  
 the faithfulness of God shall be a shield and buckler.  
 You shall not be afraid of any terror by night, \*  
 nor of the arrow that flies by day;  
 of the plague that stalks in the darkness, \*  
 nor of the sickness that lays waste at mid-day.  
 A thousand shall fall at your side and ten thousand at your side, \*  
 but it shall not come near you.  
 Your eyes have only to behold \*  
 to see the reward of the wicked.  
 Because you have made the Lord your refuge, \*  
 and the Most High your habitation,  
 there shall no evil happen to you, \*  
 neither shall any plague come near your dwelling.  
 For the angels of God shall have charge over you, \*  
 to keep you in all your ways.  
 They shall bear you in their hands, \*  
 lest you dash your foot against a stone.  
 You shall tread upon the lion and adder; \*  
 you shall trample the young lion and the serpent under your feet.  
 "Because they are bound to me in love, \*  
 therefore will I deliver them;  
 I will protect them, \*  
 because they know my name.  
 They shall call upon me, \*  
 and I will answer them;  
 I am with them in trouble; \*  
 I will rescue them and bring them to honour.  
 With long life will I satisfy them, \*  
 and show them my salvation."

*Psalm 103*

Bless the Lord, O my soul, \*  
 and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.  
 Bless the Lord, O my soul, \*  
 and forget not all the benefits of the Lord.  
 The Lord forgives all your sins \*

and heals all your infirmities;  
redeeming your life from the grave \*  
and crowning you with mercy and loving-kindness;  
satisfying you with good things, \*  
and renewing your youth like an eagle's.  
The Lord executes righteousness \*  
and judgement for all who are oppressed.  
O Lord, you made your ways known to Moses \*  
and your works to the children of Israel.  
You are full of compassion and mercy, \*  
slow to anger and of great kindness.  
You will not always accuse us, \*  
nor will you keep your anger for ever.  
You have not dealt with us according to our sins, \*  
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.  
For as the heavens are high above the earth, \*  
so is your mercy great upon those who fear you.  
As far as the east is from the west, \*  
so far have you removed our sins from us.  
As parents care for their children, \*  
so do you, O Lord, care for those who fear you.  
For you yourself know whereof we are made; \*  
you remember that we are but dust.  
Our days are like the grass; \*  
we flourish like a flower of the field;  
when the wind goes over it, it is gone, \*  
and its place shall know it no more.  
But your merciful goodness endures for ever on those who fear you, \*  
and your righteousness on children's children;  
on those who keep the covenant \*  
and remember the commandments and do them.  
The Lord is enthroned in heaven, \*  
and has dominion over all.  
Bless the Lord, you angels, you mighty ones who do the bidding of God, \*  
and hearken to the voice of the word of the Lord.  
Bless the Lord, all you hosts, \*  
you ministers who do the will of God.  
Bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord, in all places of the dominion of the Lord; \*  
bless the Lord, O my soul.

*Psalm 121*

I lift up my eyes to the hills; \*

from where is my help to come?  
My help comes from the Lord, \*  
the maker of heaven and earth.  
The Lord will not let your foot be moved \*  
and the One who watches over you will not fall asleep.  
Behold, the One who keeps watch over Israel \*  
shall neither slumber nor sleep.  
The Lord, the Lord, watches over you; \*  
the Lord is your shade at your side,  
so that the sun shall not strike you by day, \*  
nor the moon by night.  
The Lord shall preserve you from all evil \*  
and shall keep you safe.  
The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in, \*  
from this time forth for evermore.

*Psalm 130*

Out of the depths \*  
have I called you, O Lord;  
Lord, hear my voice; \*  
let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.  
If you, Lord, were to note what is done amiss, \*  
O Lord, who could stand?  
For there is forgiveness with you; \*  
therefore you shall be feared.  
I wait for you, O Lord; my soul waits for you; \*  
in your word is my hope.  
My soul waits for you, O Lord, \*  
more than sentinels for the morning, more than sentinels for the morning.  
O Israel, wait for the Lord, \*  
for with the Lord there is mercy;  
with whom there is plenteous redemption, \*  
and who shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

*Psalm 139*

Lord, you have searched me out \*  
and known me.  
You know my sitting down and my rising up; \*  
you discern my thoughts from afar.  
You trace my journeys and my resting-places \*  
and are acquainted with all my ways.

Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, \*  
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.  
You press upon me behind and before \*  
and lay your hand upon me.  
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; \*  
it is so high that I cannot attain to it.  
Where can I go then from your Spirit? \*  
Where can I flee from your presence?  
If I climb up to heaven, you are there; \*  
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.  
If I take the wings of the morning \*  
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,  
even there your hand will lead me \*  
and your mighty hand hold me fast.  
If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, \*  
and the light around me turn to night."  
Darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day; \*  
darkness and light to you are both alike.  
For you yourself created my inmost parts; \*  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.  
I will thank you because I am marvellously made; \*  
your works are wonderful, and I know it well.  
My body was not hidden from you, \*  
while I was being made in secret and woven in the depths of the earth.  
Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb; \*  
all of them were written in your book;  
they were fashioned day by day, \*  
when as yet there was none of them.  
How deep I find your thoughts, O God! \*  
How great is the sum of them!  
If I were to count them, \*  
they would be more in number than the sand;  
to count them all, \*  
my life span would need to be like yours.  
Oh, that you would slay the wicked, O God! \*  
You that thirst for blood, depart from me.  
They speak spitefully against you; \*  
your enemies take your name in vain.  
Do I not hate those, O Lord, who hate you? \*  
And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?  
I hate them with a perfect hatred; \*  
they have become my own enemies.  
Search me out, O God, and know my heart; \*

try me and know my restless thoughts.  
Look well whether there be any wickedness in me \*  
and lead me in the way that is everlasting.

*Romans 6:3-4, 8-11*

Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.

But if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

*Romans 8:35, 38-39*

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*Romans 14:7-8*

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.

*1 Corinthians 12: 26-27*

If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is Community honoured, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

*1 Corinthians 13*

If I speak in the tongues of humans and of angels but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains but do not have

love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions and if I hand over my body so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable; it keeps no record of wrongs; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part, but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see only a reflection, as in a mirror, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love remain, these three, and the greatest of these is love.

#### *1 Corinthians 15:51-58*

Look, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.” “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

#### *2 Timothy 2:8-12a*

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David—that is my gospel, for which I suffer hardship, even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, so that they may also obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. The saying is sure:

If we have died with him, we will also live with him;  
if we endure, we will also reign with him;  
if we deny him, he will also deny us;

*1 Peter 1:3-9*

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Although you have not seen him, you love him, and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

*Revelation 21:1-7*

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;

they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them and be their God;

he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away.”

And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.” Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God, and they will be my children.

*Matthew 11:28-30*

“Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

*Mark 15:33-39; 16.1-7*

When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the centurion who stood facing him saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

*Luke 24:13-16, 28-35*

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

... As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

*John 10:11-16*

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me, just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

*John 11:17-27*

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

*John 14:1-3*

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.

## **Additional Resources**

### **Meditation on Psalm 139 by Joanne Davies, 2016**

O God, you have searched me and known me. I know I am journeying from this world. Will I endure? If I am in pain and want to escape, may I choose death? I know that you are with me, even here. Even now. For you search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. You will find me wherever I am in my thoughts and call me to listen. Please tell me, what must I do with suffering? With pain? With loss? What will happen to me as I leave this body and come to rest and joy? You know my question before I ask. But I need to ask. I am praying. Are you listening to me? It is with wonder that I know you are. Help me find my way. I seek to show you my love for the goodness of life. But I am unsure I want to endure the path ahead. Help me know what is right for me. I know you will find me, but I don't want to lose myself. I do not want to be in my body and yet painfully spiritually separate from my body. I want to know the people I love, and who love me, are here. I fear to share these thoughts with them. Yet, I know you ask me to share my life. How do I share my death? Please do not call me wicked for my questions. I fear one day I will not even be able know my own questions.

You set life in front of me. You did not remove obstacles but delighted in me finding my own way. You loved me and healed me over and over. You taught me to live well with the world and so you rejoiced in my community. You gave me hope. You lifted my spirit to the sunrise. And my darkness became your light. You called me to see your joy and to surrender. I am seeing my desire to fully surrender now, while I know my path.

You gave me home O God in this body. As I was formed in the safety of my mother's womb I was hidden from my family and those who awaited my arrival. But you knew all of me. You knew not only my soul but my body, both fragile and marvelous. You gave me breathing life to explore, and set me free with choices to live the life you gave me. Mine is a life and body co-created with you. Mine is a life you called to live with community. You bring life into being, but you let us journey, together and alone, to find your path before us. Knowing us more deeply than we know ourselves. For all life is your story, and your story is everlasting. Time beyond our hours. I find comfort there, knowing I am part of life that is more than my body and mind in pain. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it. I am grateful you are with me. Would I be denying gratitude to give up something you have given me?

You know my thoughts inside and out, before I can even face them. How can I turn to my pain? May I bring it to you? I know you already have my pain? Will you take it all now? Having faith seems to make all my questions sacred or blasphemous. Will my community and family listen? Will they uphold me, my life, my desires to you? May I ascend to heaven without waiting for the moment my body, the home you gave me, releases me? Is that a path, a choice, you place before me too? Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts.

**Psalm 23:** *A cultural adaptation by Rev. Samantha Caravan*

The wind was cold and dry  
and out of the mist came my provider, the Eternal One, the Creator.  
The Creator taught me to fish so I would want for nothing  
and causes the fish to find my net.  
My entire existence is owed to the Eternal Creator.  
The Eternal Redeemer warms my soul and soothes my heart.  
The Eternal has taught me to see the dangers of the Tundra.  
I walk in confidence that the Eternal has gone before,  
and I can follow the path.  
The Redeemer controls the enemies of my life,  
the bear, the cold, the wind and casts them away when they are too close.  
I walk upright; I walk strong, for the Eternal Redeemer is always present.  
I hear the Redeemer on the wind and see the Eternal in the colours of the night sky.  
When I wander the wrong way  
confused by the light off the snow  
the Redeemer chases me home  
and I turn and run onto the path of the Redeemer.  
May I live there eternally.

## **The Commissioning of Parish Eucharistic Visitors**

*For use in the parish sending forth the Eucharistic Visitors:*

### **Sending Forth Eucharistic Visitors**

*When Communion is brought from the home parish, it is understood that the Eucharistic Visitors will be sent out from the community at the end of the Celebration of the Eucharist with these or similar words:*

In the name of God and [of this community/parish church/the congregation of name of church], we send you forth bearing these holy gifts, that those to whom you go may share with us in the communion of Christ's Body and Blood.

**We who are many are one body, because we all share one bread, one cup.**

# Acknowledgements

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Prayers in the Additional Resources section have been inspired by and heavily adapted from multiple sources, including Common Worship (Church of England), Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Augsburg-Fortress) and from Enriching our Worship (The Episcopal Church, USA).

The Meditation on Psalm 139 is by The Reverend Canon Joanne Davies  
The adaptation of Psalm 23 is by The Reverend Samantha Caravan

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