

Book of Hours

Church on the Corner Day of Prayer
October 2016

Day of Prayer - 7am Morning call

Good Morning. This new day is a gift to be received with joy.
You are invited to join in as we pray together as a community over the course of this day.

Look out to the dawn sky (if you can see through the mist). We begin in stillness as the sun has just risen.

And as we give thanks for a new day, perhaps you could pray these words from Daily Prayer.

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;
let us pray with one heart and mind.

Silence is kept.

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,
so may the light of your presence, O God,
set our hearts on fire with love for you;
now and for ever.

Blessed are you, Sovereign God,
ruler and judge of all,
to you be praise and glory for ever.
In the darkness of this age that is passing away
may the light of your presence which the saints enjoy
surround our steps as we journey on.
May we reflect your glory this day
and so be made ready to see your face
in the heavenly city where night shall be no more.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Blessed be God for ever.
Amen

Day of Prayer 8am - Put your Trust in God

*Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul,
and why are you so disquieted within me?
O put your trust in God; for I will yet give him thanks,*
Psalm 42v6

St Benedict called the rhythm of daily prayer *opus dei* - the work of God. It is real work, and prayer doesn't come easily. Even when we know it is good for us, and we know we should something in us fights against it. Disquieted means anxious and troubled. What are you anxious about today?

You don't need to carry all this.
He is the strong one in this relationship.
Place these before your loving heavenly Father.
And little by little we learn to put our trust in God.

I suspect that much of our anxiety comes from thinking that I should be in control of my life, of my future. But all God offers us is the promise of our daily bread today. And asks us to trust him for tomorrow. And letting go of the need to be in control grants the privilege of being able to enjoy this day as a gift, and let tomorrow worry about itself.

Day of Prayer 9am - Be Grateful

In a world that constantly makes us feel like we don't have enough, the practice of gratitude is an essential discipline.
"The true secret of happiness lies in taking a genuine interest in all the details of daily life."
William Morris
Even the darkest day has within it moments of blessing from God. Don't let them pass by without noticing, enjoying and being grateful for them.
Take a moment to think about the things you are grateful for.
Make a list.
Count your blessings.
Thank God.

Day of Prayer 10am - Pray for Places of Conflict

*The nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts.
Come and see what the Lord has done, the desolations he has brought on the earth.
He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth.*

Praying for our world can seem overwhelming. How do we know what to pray? How can it make a difference?
Even the best of words are not enough. Sometimes the best we can do is to simply hold people and places before God and pray "Your kingdom come". Despite everything, he is ultimately in control, he is working his purposes out, and amazingly he often uses ordinary people like us to do that. Even our stumbling prayers are part of the coming kingdom. In stillness hold before God those places of conflict that you have heard about. Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan. "Your Kingdom come"
Now pray for the forgotten conflicts. The cold wars. The places of bitter stalemate. North Korea, Ukraine, Myanmar. "Your Kingdom come"
Pray for the peacemakers, the victims, the aggressors. "Your Kingdom come"

Day of Prayer 11am Praying Politically

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings should be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. 1 Timothy 2

Western democracy is lurching towards deeply polarised factionism. This is a time for prayer as much for the nature of our democracy as for the issues at hand. All too often our political sympathies dominate our prayers, and our blindness to our own prejudice is reinforced. Jesus said "Pray for your enemies". And I think part of why that is so important is because in doing so we cannot demonise political opponents, and they become human

beings just like us. And old lecturer of mine used to say *“Encourage the good, wherever you find it.”* even in those you disagree with.

Here is a challenge.

Pray for the good of your least favoured political parties.

Pray for the weaknesses of your favoured political party

Day of Prayer 12pm Pray for the church

“When you pray, pray like this - Our Father”

On a day like today it is exciting to know you are praying alongside other members of the COTC community, across London, and across the world. But of course whenever we pray, we join our voices with a vast global family. You are praying alongside Catholics in Rome, Orthodox in Athens, Pentecostals in Sao Paulo, Evangelicals in Texas, Episcopalians on Wall Street, Lutherans in Wittenberg, Anglicans in Abuja, Maronites in Beirut, Copts in Alexandria.

In every tribe and tongue, rich and poor, influential and voiceless God is building his church.

So pray for the church across the world. When it lives up to its calling it is a force for the greatest good. It empowers the powerless, binds up the broken hearted, rebuilds fractured communities, proclaims freedom to the captives, speaks truth to power, models a better way to live and proclaims the glory of the grace of God in the world.

Day of Prayer 1pm Contemplate Creation

*When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have ordained,*

*What are mortals, that you should be mindful of them;
mere human beings, that you should seek them out?*

Psalm 8

The glory of God is revealed in his creation. And if we will let him, the Holy Spirit will speak to us through the created world.

“Ever since the creation of the world God’s eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made.”

Jesus said *“Consider the lillies”* and they will teach you about how much God cares for you.

Sit and look, or go for a walk. Be still, and aware of creation.

Receive the blessings of the day, sunshine or rain, feel the breeze.

Creation is a gift for you to enjoy and to experience the creativity of God.

Pray for our responsible stewardship of Creation

Praise God for the wonder of his creation.

Day of Prayer 2pm Sabbath Rest

Thus the heavens and the earth were completed. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested. So God blessed that day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done. Genesis 2

Whatever happened to the Sabbath? Some of you are old enough to remember when Sunday was different. Now that has changed, and while in theory any day can be a Sabbath, now every day is in danger of becoming just the same relentless pursuit of stuff and self and distraction.

Take a Sabbath rest. Slow down. Listen to music. Deliberately do nothing. Waste time gratefully. Don't feel guilty.

"I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child within me is my soul"

Day of Prayer 3pm Pray for our community

Islington is known for being wealthy and privileged. But that superficial assessment missed the reality of what is going on here.

- Islington has one of the highest child poverty rates in London (38%)
- Cost living means that Islington has one of the highest rates of in-work poverty in the country.
- Islington has the highest rate of male suicide in the UK.
- Of children receiving free school meals 43% leave school at 16 and fail to get any further qualifications.
- Islington has second highest crime rate of all London boroughs

Pray for our community, particularly for the vulnerable and the elderly. Pray for those who feel afraid, or without hope.

Day of Prayer 4pm Pray for the Bemerton Church Plant.

"If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?" 1 John 3

For many years we have been praying about how we should better serve the half of our parish over the Caledonian Road, the other side Barnsbury away from the leafy squares and Georgian townhouses. These communities are among the most marginalised in the country. In September last year we commissioned a team of church planters from COTC and the wider parish to begin the work of establishing a new church, in, for and of that community.

Pray for the hard work of Steve Mawhinney and the team.

Also pray for church planting work up and down the country. For new life in big city centre churches, and for seeds planted in tough estates. And pray for the Bishop of Islington who leads church planting initiatives around the country.

Day of Prayer 5pm Advent project

Advent is not simply the build up to Christmas. Advent means 'Arrival' and it is a season all by itself - the first season of the Church year - focussed on the Advent of the Kingdom of God.

Every year we commit to a community project during this season, often something creative or artistic. This year we are planning to dial it up a bit.

Our project this year is called 'Just Cause' and we will be asking members of our community to prayerfully consider what is the cause that God is laying on their hearts. What is the thing that you are moved to prayer and action over? And what are you going to do about it?

The danger is that we have lots of things that we care about, but don't actually do anything about any of them. This advent we will be challenging each other to choose one. And then in the year ahead to act. Pray, write, protest, advocate, fundraise. What is your just cause?

Pray. Sit quietly before God and examine your heart. What is the just cause that he is laying upon your heart. What are you going to do about it?

Day of Prayer 6pm Pray for Church on the Corner

And so as the evening draws in, we end our day of prayer by praying for COTC. It is part of our calling that we are a generous church. We seek to give of ourselves and our resources to other churches and projects. We are blessed by the commitment of our members to be able to entirely finance ourselves and to be able to support others too.

But Church on the Corner itself matters a great deal too. It is a safe place for people who have had a difficult relationship with church and faith, a church on the intersection between faith and culture. It is a place where community is built in the midst of the city, and lifelong friendships are formed. We take seriously teaching and preaching, discipleship and spiritual growth, community action, justice and service. And despite all this it is a small, often fragile and transient community.

Pray for Church on the Corner

Be grateful for how God has used it in the past, and how you have been blessed through it. Pray for its future, for God to continue to uphold it and call people to be part of it and serve.