

Our Prayer Diary



December 2023



Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:16 NRSV



Friday 1st

Give us sensitivity Lord in our dealings with others, and wisdom to look beyond appearances to see what lies deeper. Remind us that what people allow us to see is rarely the whole story. Teach us that behind the public face that each of us wears for the world lies a private person; help us in all our dealings to allow for both.

Saturday 2nd

Heavenly Father, as we count down the days until Christmas, help us to anticipate the coming of Jesus with the enthusiasm of children. There is so much that makes many of us adults dread Christmas - because of what it costs, the fear of letting people down, sadness as we remember regrets of the past. Forgive us dear Lord and fill us with Your joy.

Sunday 3rd

Today is the first Sunday in Advent when we read, pray and reflect on the Hope God's plan gives us and we meditate on the promise of Christ's coming glory-filled return. Lord Jesus, please be with us as we make our preparations for Christmas. We know that we should always be ready for Your coming. Help us not to overlook this among all the glitter and commercialisation of Christmas.

Monday 4th

We are so grateful to have Mr Rob Petersen as our Parish Assistant, and we are enjoying getting to know him and his family. Lord God we thank You for the great work that he has started in our local schools. His enthusiasm is amazing and we really value the encouragement that he has brought through his work in the churches and in *Together We Pray*.

Tuesday 5th

Lord our hearts cry out for peace - we pray for all who are suffering - please let necessary aid and provisions get to them. They are our brothers and sisters in Christ and we hurt with them too.

Wednesday 6th Prayer Time at Esme's House at 2.00 pm

Father God we know You will be present with us as we meet at Esme's house this afternoon. As You have given a place for prayer, so also give us hearts to pray. We know You hear our prayers and we give thanks for prayers that have been answered. We ask that in this time we will be drawn nearer to You and to those people and situations that we pray for.

Thursday 7th

As we near the end of the year a regular contributor is thinking of just where 2023 has gone. Dividing situations into positives and negatives they feel a positive is perhaps the awareness of all Christians to help out as much as possible, with thoughts turning to Food Banks. Wars in both Ukraine and the Middle East is a big negative. They consider world unity to be at an all time low. Now more than ever we need good leadership and strong faith. *The Lord gives strength to his people, and the Lord blesses his people with peace.* Psalm 29 verse 11. God of Peace, we pray that guns will cease and leaders will find a path of peace. We ask for violence to be ended. May all who mourn know your love.

Friday 8th

Father God we pray for the work of the Caithness Street Pastors as they patrol the streets in Wick and Thurso one Saturday night a month. We pray especially for the three new volunteers that have been recruited, including one from Canisbay. Tonight a Commissioning Service will take place in St Peter's & St Andrew's Church in Thurso.

Saturday 9th

Esme writes: *"Following the long gap of Lockdown and several months spent in hospital including Christmas last year, I have lost touch with very many friends. Using my computer has now become impossible and I am aware that cards will be arriving soon and again it will be impossible for me to respond. Many other people all over the country are in the same position. Loving God, put your arms around us as we remember what we shared together and give thanks."*

Sunday 10th

We give You thanks for the generations before us - for their sacrifice and resilience over many years in the face of social change, the tragedy of warfare, and a falling away of Christian commitment. Inspire us to re-imagine a worshipping community that can share the good news of Your love in fresh ways for today's people. Give us wisdom and courage to grasp new opportunities wholeheartedly. Inspire us by Your Holy Spirit to see the people around us with a renewed vision. Infuse us with a holy boldness as we invite others to come and follow the way of Jesus. May everything we do reflect the values of the gospel, transforming not only ourselves but the wider life of this parish.

Monday 11th

True happiness is giving it away. Loving God at this time of year help us to remember those who are alone or won't see many people. We should all try to spend some time with these people or get in touch to let them know we are thinking about them. A friendly visit, a telephone call, an invite out to see the Christmas lights and displays in the towns and villages - a simple act could mean so much. *The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.* Proverbs 11 verse 25 NLT.

Tuesday 12th

Today Pentland Parish Guild will meet at 2.00 pm in Canisbay Church Hall for carol singing and Christmas activities. Gracious God we bring to You the life of our Guild. We ask for Your guidance as we look to the future - help us to grow in faith, in fellowship and in numbers. We pray for those who specially need your guidance, those facing problems unknown to us, those for whom advancing years brings illness or infirmity, those for whom life is generally difficult. May each in their different situations feel Your presence and know Your support.

Wednesday 13th Prayer Time at Canisbay Church Hall at 2.00 pm

The following few lines written anonymously was recently read in a book. *Be strong enough to stand alone, smart enough to know when you need help, and brave enough to ask for it.* Sound advice, indeed. Loving God, help us to realise when we can push ourselves to do things alone, and not to be too proud to ask for help when tasks are best tackled by more than one person.

Thursday 14th

A dog has lots of friends because it wags its tail and not his tongue. Loving God help us to think carefully before we say something in case it is going to be hurtful to the people who will be listening to it. 4 Paws wishes everyone a lovely Christmas time, remembering not only your friends but your animals too. Be cheered by Christmas music and Christmas films. God Bless you all.

Friday 15th

Lord please help us to share what we have so that none will be without. Please help us to remember what Christmas is really about.

Saturday 16th

Tomorrow *Castletown and Community Free Church* are holding '*Community Carols by Candlelight*' at 4.00 pm in their church. This is a time of community carol singing with tea, coffee and mince pies to follow. A warm welcome is extended for everyone to go along. *Come to us Christ-child of Bethlehem, spirit of wonder: be born in us and Your world once more that joy may be shared, peace proclaimed and love abound, now and for ever.*

Sunday 17th Carol Service in Keiss Village Hall at 2.30 pm

We look forward to welcoming you to our Carol Service in Keiss Village Hall this afternoon. Father in heaven, we ask that we might have Your heart and passion for those around us this season. That we might experience You in a new and living way, and that our hearts will ponder the deep truth that Advent brings freedom, joy and peace. God of Advent, thank You for inviting us into Your family and story, so that we might take part in Your coming to earth. May my heart, like Mary's, long for You, for Your presence this Advent, and may I, in Your power, take forth care for others during this season of wonder.

Monday 18th

Heavenly Father, we pray that you will draw near to all those who will spend Christmas time on their own, either because they are isolated and without a family, or because they are homeless. May they know that You are with them. We pray for the welfare of the homeless, and also for the volunteers who will do their best to provide food and shelter. Father, please bring comfort to them and protect them. May the birth of Jesus fill them with joy.

Tuesday 19th

Heavenly Father we pray for animals - Your beloved creation. May people who are given pets at Christmas love and care for them always, and not dispense of them when they grow older.

Wednesday 20th Prayer Time at Canisbay Church Hall at 2.00 pm

At Christmas, love came down. Lord we pray that everyone will experience and come to know Your love - a love that is unconditional and so true.

Thursday 21st

Today is *National Robin Day*. How many of us enjoy the company of a robin when gardening? At this time of year there is a limited food supply for robins and all other garden birds. If the temperatures are low then water sources can be scarce. Loving God help us to be mindful of feeding the birds and giving them water. It can be a great source of joy to watch from the window and view the various birds at the feeder in the garden. The birds are Your creation, encourage us to care for them.

Friday 22nd

The winter solstice occurs today, the day of the year in the northern hemisphere with the least sunlight and therefore, the longest night. Heavenly Father for many people the shorter day is not something they enjoy. However You are the eternal light. From today we will see the days lengthen and hopefully bring with it people feeling their mood lifting and their energy levels increased. Shield those suffering, Lord, with your comforting mantle which knows no seasons.

Saturday 23rd

At this time of year many people are travelling to see loved ones, sometimes covering quite long distances. God please keep everyone safe as they go on their travels. For those journeying by car we pray for good road conditions, and for those using public transport we ask that it runs to time and the journey is completed as scheduled.

Sunday 24th Christmas Eve Service in Orlig Church at 6.30 pm

Creator God, we have heard of faithfulness throughout the ages, and Your desire to enter so personally into the details of our lives. Let us be confident of Your presence with us, and commit to trusting You ever more deeply, today, this Christmas, over the coming year and always.

Monday 25th Christmas Day Service in Canisbay Church Hall at 11.00 am

Loving Father, we thank You for the miracle of Jesus' birth. Thank You for the joy it has brought to the world. Help us to know the peace of Your spirit. A warm welcome awaits those able to come to our Christmas Day Service this morning. It is always a very special time of worship to be shared with everyone - do invite your friends and neighbours along.

Tuesday 26th

Today is a Public Holiday. Creator God, encourage us to go out for a walk and marvel at your wondrous creation all around us. Inspire us to take advantage of there being less traffic around, and to explore paths and routes not previously travelled. Help us to take time to enjoy the colours of the hedges, the animals in the fields, the formation of the clouds. So often we rush around and don't notice and appreciate all that you have made for us.

Wednesday 27th Prayer Time at Canisbay Church Hall

Caring Father we bring before you all who abuse alcohol. Speak to those who use drink as a means of coping with a problem, those who feel they need another drink to help them get through the day. We ask that You will lead them to places where they can get help. Teach each one of us to know alcohol can be enjoyed in moderation but excess should be avoided.

Thursday 28th

Father we are so thankful for Jesus. Help us to share this wonderful good news with others who don't know Him. Please provide opportunities for us to do so and through Your Holy Spirit give us the words to say.

Friday 29th

Father God I pray your blessings on everyone reading this Prayer Diary - we are so thankful for them and they are so loved and precious to You.

Saturday 30th

Caring God, we remember all those working in hospitals and the caring profession in general. They have been continuing their shift pattern even though many other people have been on holiday over the festive season. Give them patience, skill and love so they may bring healing and comfort to those who they care for.

Sunday 31st

Loving Lord, in the final hours of 2023 we give thanks for all the good things we have been blessed with over the past year. Help us to love and care for others as You love us. May we be a light in the darkness and share Your love with people we meet. Thank You Lord for all You have done for us, and being there for us at all times. Please continue to watch over us and give us wisdom as we go into 2024.



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meeting in four congregations around the Caithness Coast:

CANISBAY, DUNNET, KEISS and OLRIG.

www.pentlandparish.org.uk

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Copies also go by e-mail to a growing number of friends throughout Scotland and we are sincerely grateful for their interest and support. Feel free to commend it to others, and if they express a wish to receive it please forward their contact details to the Editor.

If you have found this Prayer Diary helpful please let us know, and if there is any topic or particular prayer you would like included in a future issue please contact the Editor, Liz Buchan, via:

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Copy date for the January issue is Monday 11th December.

We continue to need your prayers! Thank you!

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