



Prayer Leaflet

January 2008



God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.

The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin
Godmanchester

Hugs of the Heart

Mark 10:13-16

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.' And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.



While Jesus lived on this earth, he took little children in his arms and blessed them (Mark 10:16). And he is still in this child-embracing ministry today.

I heard a story recently; I don't know how true it might be, of a grandmother telling a friend about a touching conversation between her two grandchildren. Five-year old Matthew said to Sarah, age three, "I talk to Jesus in my head!" She responded, "I don't — I just cuddle with him!"

Many other children of God, much older ones, have experienced his unseen everlasting arms around them and beneath them. Brother Lawrence, the 17th-century monk known for sensing the presence of God amid the pots and pans of the monastery's kitchen, spoke of being "known of God and extremely caressed by him." And Hudson Taylor, the pioneer missionary to China, scrawled this note as he neared the end of his life: "I am so weak that I cannot work; I cannot read my Bible; I cannot even pray. I can only lie still in God's arms like a child, and trust."

God wants us to nestle close to him in childlike trust, whether young or old, strong or weak. In response, through his indwelling Spirit, he draws us to himself to comfort and to bless.

Have you and God had a hug of the heart today?

Our Prayers in January are especially requested for:

In the Church

Parish Praise – for the new service, for lively, faithful worship and that those who come, new faces and old, may be uplifted and find love and care in our Church community.

Children and Communion – for discernment in the right way forward for our Church, and especially for the PCC's discussion on January 15th.

NW Corner Development – for a growing vision for this project.

Events – Mayor's Charity Concert (26th) – please pray for this event, and those who will attend it.

Choir – give thanks for such a successful concert for carers and praying for renewed energy in the New Year.

Flower Guild – give thanks for all the skills, hard work and dedication of its members throughout the year.

St Mary's 0s-5s Group – for guidance for the committee as we start a new year at the group. Pray for the provision of some new tea ladies to help those who already do a brilliant job each week providing hot drinks for the Mums - we give thanks for those ladies.

In the Community

The schools in the town – for the health, safety, and well-being of the Children and Staff through the winter months.

In the World

Christian Solidarity Worldwide – Heavenly Father, we thank you for the life of your Son Jesus, and that Christians in difficult situations walk in strength, knowing that he was persecuted and betrayed by his own people. We thank you that through his example we have learnt to strive for justice, peace and love in our nations.

The charity the Church supports through the collection plate in January:

Church Army, whose mission is to reach the least, the last and the lost with the life changing transforming love of Jesus Christ.

This month, in our Street Prayer Mission, we'll be praying for:

Week commencing Sunday 6 January:

Buttermel; Brick Kiln; Ferndown; Golden Rod.

Week commencing Sunday 13 January:

London Street; Betts Close; Barringer Court; Earning Street; Sylton Close.

Week commencing Sunday 20 January:

Holmehill; Hayling Close; Cob Place; Fishers Way.

Week commencing Sunday 27 January:

Cambridge Street; Orchard Way; Linden Grove; Clyde Yard; East Chadley Lane.

Please remember the residents of these streets, those known to us, and especially those, as yet, unknown to us.

Some Prayers for January:

Creator of the heavens,
who led the Magi by a star
to worship the Christ-child:
guide and sustain us,
that we may find our journey's end
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Heavenly Father,
at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son:
may we recognize him as our Lord
and know ourselves to be your beloved children;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Eternal Lord,
our beginning and our end:
bring us with the whole creation
to your glory, hidden through past ages
and made known
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

God of all mercy,
your Son proclaimed good news to the poor,
release to the captives,
and freedom to the oppressed:
anoint us with your Holy Spirit
and set all your people free
to praise you in Christ our Lord.

God of heaven,
you send the gospel to the ends of the earth
and your messengers to every nation:
send your Holy Spirit to transform us
by the good news of everlasting life
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

