

A prayer

Thank you for drawing us into community, here in this place, that has been called home for so many. Inspire us with the lives of those before us, those ancient ones who have lived here in faith and opened up and given away your love to all those who needed it. May you change us with a vision to continue here as a constant presence for those who travel through life, a community of welcome that cares for all, believing into what is still yet to be.

Teach us to discern your voice as those before us have discerned your voice, guided by its call and feeding on its promise of life and hope and belonging.

May we hear your word: a comforting word in its familiar sound, yet a disturbing word in what it speaks anew and longs for us to become. Hold us within the faith of our forebears, those who chose to meet you here in this place, who recognised this thin place as a trysting place where your miracle of grace abides.

May we be moved by that grace into all the places that make up our community, sharing what you have given abundantly, like an ever flowing stream.

Call us from our past, through the voices of our ancestors, in the songs they have sung and the prayers they have spoken, that have shaped peace within this place,

And may we join our voice with their voice, in the one great song of love that will be lived and celebrated yet, in and through this church.

(Roddy Hamilton, [Listening to the Stones](#))

Blessing: For Those Who Walked With Us *(Jan Richardson)*

For those who walked with us,
this is a prayer.

For those who have gone ahead,
this is a blessing.

For those who touched and tended us,
who lingered with us while they lived,
this is a thanksgiving.

For those who journey still with us
in the shadows of awareness,
in the crevices of memory,
in the landscape of our dreams,
this is a benediction.



(art, Wassily Kandinsky, [Allerheiligen](#))

All Saints' Day

Many churches recognise All Saints' Day (November 1), using this day not as an occasion to invoke the saints but to give thanks for all who have gone before and to celebrate Christian unity with the "great cloud of witnesses" that precedes us (Hebrews 12:1).

All Saints Day can helpfully focus God's grace in the lives of both well-known and ordinary, not-well-known saints. People like us!

We are ourselves borne on the shoulders of others – a vast communion of saints, past, present and to come. We are a wonderfully rich and varied family of faith:

- that prays for us when we can no longer pray for ourselves
- that believes for us when our own faith falters
- that supports us in times of weakness
- that enlightens us in hours of darkness
- that embraces us in moments of despair
- that endures even in the face of the gates of hell.

(Rev David Gill, Secretary of the UCA Assembly, 1980-88)

For All the Saints Who've Shown Your Love

(Words: John Bell; Tune: O Waly Waly)

For all the saints who've shown your love,
in how they live and where they move.
For mindful women, caring men,
accept our gratitude again.

For all the saints who loved your name,
whose faith increased the Saviour's fame.
Who sang your songs and shared your word,
accept our gratitude, good Lord.

For all the saints who named your will,
and showed the kingdom coming still.
Through selfless protest, prayer and praise,
accept the gratitude we raise.

Bless all whose will or name or love
reflects the grace of heaven above.
Though unacclaimed by earthly powers,
your life through theirs has hallowed ours.

Rejoice in God's saints today and all days! (TiS 470)

(words: Fred Pratt Green; tune: LAUDATE DOMINUM)

Rejoice in God's saints, today and all days!
A world without saints forgets how to praise.
Their faith in acquiring the habit of prayer,
their depth of adoring, Lord, help us to share.

Some march with events, to turn them God's way;
some need to withdraw, the better to pray;
some carry the gospel through fire and through flood:
our world is their parish: their purpose is God.

Rejoice in those saints, unpraised and unknown,
who bear someone's cross, or shoulder their own:
they shame our complaining, our comforts, our cares:
what patience in caring, what courage is theirs!

Rejoice in God's saints, today and all days!
A world without saints forgets how to praise.
in loving, in living, they prove it is true:
The way of self-giving, Lord, leads us to you.

Beatitude Song HaND541

*(words Helen Wiltshire based on Mt 5:1-12; music: C16 French Melody)
(art: Jan Richardson, A Gathering of Saints)*

Blest are the faithful,
loving and steadfast,
strong in their spirits,
welcoming yet outcast,
trusting God's promise:
love's way will prosper;
grace and shalom to share.

Blessed are the grieving,
hope now departed;
blessed are the powerless,
walking paths uncharted;
blessed are the humble,
kind and open-hearted;
grace and shalom to share.

Blessed are the seekers,
insight revealing;
blessed are the Christ-like,
hunger ever feeling;
blessed are the gentle,
hands of hope and healing;
grace and shalom to share.

Blessed are the peaceful,
God's loving offspring;
blessed are the fearless,
hope and justice bringing;
blessed are these pilgrims,
songs and praises singing;
grace and shalom to share.

