

A service of night prayer

Approach

The angels of God guard us through the night,

All: and quieten the powers of darkness.

The Spirit of God be our guide

to lead us to peace and to glory.

It is but lost labour that we haste to rise up early,
and so late take rest, and eat the bread of anxiety.

For those beloved of God are given gifts even while they sleep.

(silence)

My brothers and sisters,

our help is in the name of the eternal God,

who is making the heavens and the earth.

Dear God,

thank you for all that is good,

for our creation and our humanity,

for the stewardship you have given us of this planet earth,

for the gifts of life and of one another,

for your love which is unbounded and eternal.

We repent the wrongs we have done:

(silence)

We have wounded your love.

O God, heal us.

We stumble in the darkness.

Light of the world transfigure us.

We forget that we are your home.
Spirit of God, dwell in us.

Collect

Visit this place, O Lord we pray,
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy;
may your holy angels dwell with us and guard us in peace,
and may your blessing be always upon us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

One or more of the following psalms may be used.

Psalm 4

Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness!
You set me at liberty when I was in trouble:
have mercy on me, and hear my prayer.

**²How long, will you nobles dishonour my glory?
How long will you love vain things, and seek after falsehood?**

**³But know that the Lord has shown me his marvellous kindness;
when I call upon the Lord, he will hear me.**

**⁴Stand in awe and sin not;
commune with your own heart upon the bed and be still.**

⁵Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord.

**⁶There are many who say, 'who will show us any good?'
Lord lift up the light of your countenance upon us,**

**⁷You have put gladness in my heart
more than when their corn and wine and oil increase.**

**⁸In peace I will both lie down and sleep;
for it is you Lord, only, who make me dwell in safety.**

Psalm 91: 1 - 12

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the most High
and abides under the shadow of the Almighty,
**Shall say to the Lord 'My refuge and my stronghold,
my God in whom I put my trust.'**

For he shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler
and from the deadly pestilence.

**He shall cover you with his wings
and you shall be safe under his feathers;
his faithfulness shall be your shield and buckler.**

You shall not be afraid of any terror by night,
nor of the arrow that flies by the day;
**Of the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,
nor of the sickness that destroys at noonday.**

Though a thousand fall at your side
and ten thousand at your right hand,
yet 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 stronghold,
**There shall no evil happen to you,
neither shall any plague come near your tent.**

For he shall give his angels 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.**

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills-
from where will my help come?

**My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.**

He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.
He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.
**The Lord is your keeper;
the Lord is your shade at your right hand.**

The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.
The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.
**The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in
from this time and forever more.**

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be forever. Amen.**

One of these readings from Scripture shall follow:

Monday

You Lord are in the midst of us, and we are called by your name. Leave us not O Lord our God. *Jeremiah 14:9*

Tuesday

²⁷ "But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹ If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. ³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. ³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you.

³² "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ If you lend to those from

whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. ³⁵ But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. ^[a] Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. *Luke 6:27-38*

Wednesday

Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' ³² For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But strive first for the kingdom of God ^[a] and his ^[b] righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ "So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today. *Matthew 6:31-34*

Thursday

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. *1 John 4:18-20*

Friday

⁶ For 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. ⁸ We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰ always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. *2 Corinthians 4:6-10*

Hymn

Before the ending of the day,
Creator of the world we pray;
that you with steadfast love would keep
your watch around us while we sleep.

From evil dreams defend our sight,
From fears and terrors of the night,
tread under foot our deadly foe,
that we no sinful thought may know.

O Father, that we ask be done,
through Jesus Christ your only Son;
and Holy Spirit by whose breath
our souls are raised to life from death.

or

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,
Be all else but naught to me, save that thou art,
Be thou my best thought in the day and the night,
Both waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.

Riches I heed not, nor folk's empty praise,
Be thou my inheritance now and always;
Be thou and thou only the first in my heart,
O sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art.

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

I commend my spirit.

Keep me as the apple of your eye;
hide me under the shadow of your wings.

Save us, O Lord, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ,
and asleep may rest in your peace.

Song of Simeon (The Nunc dimittis)

Now, Lord, 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;
Alight to reveal you to the nations
and the glory of your people Israel. *Luke 2:29-32*

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be forever. Amen

Preserve us, O God, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ,
and asleep may rest in your peace.

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.

Be present, Spirit of God,
within us, your dwelling place and home,
that this house may be one where
all darkness is penetrated by your light,
all troubles calmed by your peace,
all evil redeemed by your love,
all pain transformed in your suffering,
and all dying glorified in your risen life. **Amen.**

Lord, it is night.
The night is for stillness.
Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day.
What has been done has been done;
what has not been done, has not been done;
let it be.

The night is dark.
Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives
rest in you.

The night is quiet.
Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,
all dear to us,
and all who have no peace.

The night heralds the dawn. Let us look expectantly to a new day,
new joys, new possibilities. In your name we pray. **Amen.**

The liturgy from this service is taken from Common Worship (© Archbishop's Council 2000) and the New Zealand Anglican prayer book.