

## Evening Prayer

*(Before beginning the act of worship, you may wish to gather together the following items and place them on a table during the opening responses: a Bible, a Candle and a Cross.)*

### Opening responses

In the beginning when it was very quiet, the Word was with God

**And what God was, the Word was.**

*(Place a Bible on the table)*

In the beginning when it was very dark, God said, 'Let there be light,'

**And there was light.**

*(Place a lit candle on the table.)*

When the time was right God sent the Son.

**He came among us, he was one of us.**

*(Place a cross on the table.)*

*A time of silence to reflect on the day....*

For the love shared

**We are grateful.**

For provision and nurture,

**We are grateful.**

For kindness given

**We are grateful.**

For the sorrow we've caused,

**We pray for forgiveness.**

For injustices ignored,

**We pray for forgiveness.**

For the encounters with God today, in stranger and friend,

**We bid you welcome.**

For the encounters missed today,

**We know that you always see us even when we don't see you.**

For tomorrow,

**May we see you in ways expected and unexpected.**

## A Liturgy of the Night

On the first night God said: 'Let there be darkness.' And God separated light from Dark; and in the dark, the land rested, the people slept, and the plants breathed, the world retreated. The First night.

**And God said that it was good.**

On the second night God said; 'There will be conversations that happen in the dark that can't happen in the day.' The second night.

**And God said that it was good.**

And on the third night, God said: 'Let there be things that can only be seen by night.' And God created stars and insects and luminescence. The Third night.

**And God said that it was good.**

And on the fourth night, God said: 'Some things that happen in the harsh light of day will be troubled. Let there be a time of rest to escape the raw light.'

**And God said that it was good.**

And on the fifth night, God said: ' There will be people who work by night , whose light will be silver, whose sleep will be by day and whose labour will be late.' And God put a softness at the heart of the darkness. The Fifth night.

**And God said that it was good.**

And on the sixth night, God listened. And there were people working, and people crying, and people seeking shadow, and people telling secrets and people aching for company. There were people aching for space and people aching for solace. And God hoped that they would survive. And God made twilight, and shafts of green to hang from the dark skies, small comforts to accompany the lonely, the joyous, the needy and the needed. The sixth night.

**And God said that it was good.**

And on the last night, God rested. And the rest was good. The rest was very good.

**And God said that it was good.**

**A Reading from Scripture: Genesis 45:1-15**

Joseph could no longer control himself in front of all his attendants, so he declared, "Everyone, leave now!" So no one stayed with him when he revealed his identity to his brothers. He wept so loudly that the Egyptians and Pharaoh's household heard him. Joseph said to his brothers, "I'm Joseph! Is my father really still alive?" His brothers couldn't respond because they were terrified before him.

Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me," and they moved closer. He said, "I'm your brother Joseph! The one you sold to Egypt. Now, don't be upset and don't be angry with yourselves that you sold me here. Actually, God sent me before you to save lives. We've already had two years of famine in the land, and there are five years left without planting or harvesting. God sent me before you to make sure you'd survive[a] and to rescue your lives in this amazing way. You didn't send me here; it was God who made me a father to Pharaoh, master of his entire household, and ruler of the whole land of Egypt.

"Hurry! Go back to your father. Tell him this is what your son Joseph says: 'God has made me master of all of Egypt. Come down to me. Don't delay. You may live in the land of Goshen, so you will be near me, your children, your grandchildren, your flocks, your herds, and everyone with you. I will support you there, so you, your household, and everyone with you won't starve, since the famine will still last five years.' You and my brother Benjamin have seen with your own eyes that I'm speaking to you.

Tell my father about my power in Egypt and about everything you've seen. Hurry and bring my father down here." He threw his arms around his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his shoulder. He kissed all of his brothers and wept, embracing them. After that, his brothers were finally able to talk to him.

**A Reflection**

**Prayer for others.**

Let us pray for light....

Where dark is doubly dark...  
Where wrong dresses up as right...  
And even saints can be distracted;  
Where life has gone into a tunnel  
And all that is known is confusing voices  
And stumbling blocks in the darkness;  
Where faith and hope and love are in ashes...  
Let us pray for light.  
*A time of silence.*

Let us pray for a word from the Lord...  
Where human voices can no longer be trusted;  
Where harsh, hateful and limiting voices from the past echo loudly in our minds;  
Where the voice of God has seemed silent or been submerged beneath jargon.  
Let us pray for a word from the Lord.

*A time of silence.*

Let us pray that we may be used by God...  
To bring encouragement to those in despair...  
To bring company to those who are lonely...  
To take opportunities to speak truth to power...  
To bring a gift to another that will make all the difference.  
Let us pray that we may be used by God...

*A time of silence.*

Help us to hear you in the words of scripture  
and also to recognise your accent in the voices  
of the world.

**Help us to see you in the good others do  
and in the need which calls for love or justice.**

Help us to love you and to trust you and follow  
you.

**Take from us any desire for recognition or  
reward**

**and replace it with the quiet joy which comes  
from knowing that we do your will.**

**Amen**

**Closing Responses.**

God of the watching ones, the waiting ones,  
Give us your benediction, your good word for  
our souls

**That we may rest and rise in the kindness of  
your company.**

**Amen.**

**Acknowledgements**

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