

# Readings and Prayers for week of January 17<sup>th</sup>

## Notices

### **Bible in a Year**

For those with internet access, there is a bible reading plan with short introductory videos each day at [The Bible in a Year | Devotional Reading Plan | YouVersion Bible](#)

For those without the internet, the readings are set here (but you will need your bible).

### **Funeral of Jacky Vallis**

Most of you are now aware that sadly our previous vicar Brett's wife, Jacky passed away on Monday evening. After several weeks in ICU due to complications from the Delta COVID virus doctors told the family that she could not recover. While aged only 52, she did have underlying health conditions that left her highly vulnerable. We will be sending a card on behalf of the church family, but many who knew Brett may wish to send their own. It has also been suggested that if enough people wanted to go to her funeral, that we organise a minibus. At this point, I have no details of when or where her funeral will be, or indeed whether it will be in a large enough venue for many people, but if this would be of interest, then please let the office know ASAP. It will also depend on finding an available driver.

### ***Faith and the World***

O LORD,

The world is artful to entrap, approaches in fascinating guise,  
extends many a gilded bait, presents many a charming face.

Let my faith scan every painted bauble,  
and escape every bewitching snare in a victory that overcomes all things.

In my duties give me firmness, energy, zeal,  
devotion to thy cause, courage in thy name,  
love as a working grace, and all commensurate with my trust.

Let faith stride forth in giant power, and love respond with energy in every act.

I often mourn the absence of my beloved Lord;  
whose smile makes earth a paradise, whose voice is sweetest music,  
whose presence gives all graces strength.

But by unbelief I often keep him outside my door.

Let faith give entrance that he may abide with me for ever.

Thy Word is full of promises, flowers of sweet fragrance,  
fruit of refreshing flavour when culled by faith.

May I be made rich in its riches, be strong in its power,  
be happy in its joy, abide in its sweetness,  
feast on its preciousness, draw vigour from its manna.

Lord, increase my faith.

### **Monday**

Read – Genesis 25-26

Think : What do you make of the way the Lord's word comes true through Esau's lack of wisdom? Why was it so serious to sell his 'birthright' for a bowl of stew? What do you make of the way the

Lord blesses Isaac even though he hides his marriage initially? How is God working to bring about his promise to Abraham to make him into a great nation with many descendants? What do we learn about Isaac from the way he deals with the issues over the wells he keeps digging? How does this fit with Jesus' teaching about humility and grace? How does this challenge your attitude to your work/stuff? What do we learn about God and his work from all of this?

Praise God that he keeps his promises and ensures his people have what they need.

Pray for those who feel like giving up their faith when things are difficult.

Pray that you would be able to show the grace and generosity of Isaac and trust the Lord even when people are taking over what you have done or making your life difficult.

Continue to pray for our building project that we feel God call us to undertake. Pray for the task of fundraising that we would get many more applications in soon and have many great successes. Pray we would soon hit the second big benchmark of 50% very soon.

Pray for Brett Vallis and his two children as they grieve the loss of their wife/mother.

Pray for 'cuppa cake and company' this morning. Give thank for the team that work faithfully. Pray that others join the team when needed. Pray for guidance as we plan.

Pray for Sudan. Open Doors' writes, 'At the time of writing, Abdalla Hamdok has been reinstated as prime minister. However, it's unclear how much power he'll have, as the civilian government is subject to military oversight. Pray that ongoing mediation attempts will be fruitful in further showing the military leaders a better way to use their power.'

Pray: Righteous God, I thank You for who You are. Lord, I thank You because Your Word reminds us that we can do all things through You who strengthens us. Therefore, Lord, we trust not in ourselves, but instead we pray that every leader will lean on You because You understand and see things better than they do. We pray for leadership guidance because being a leader may be hard, but through You, it can be done. In Jesus' glorious name, Amen.

## **Tuesday**

Read – Genesis 27-29

Think : What do you make of Rebekah and Jacob's scheming? What do you feel for Isaac and Esau? When you remember that Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of stew, what do you make of the idea that this is the Lord's bringing justice? What do you make of Jacob's dream? Jacob's dream is recited by Jesus, but when Jesus describes it, He is the stairway/ladder. What do you make of the idea of Him being the way to God? Why do you think it is important who Jacob Married – compare with Isaac? What do you make of the story of Laban's betrayal and Jacob's wiliness to work hard for his wife? How has Isaac changed? How does this challenge you?

Praise God that his plan and purposes will always come to fruition. Praise Jesus that he is the way to heaven and has opened the door for all who come to him.

Pray for those who feel unloved, especially those in marriages that are struggling. Pray for those Christians married to non-Christians, for grace to show them Jesus' love.

Pray for those who feel betrayed by a friend or close family member. Pray God's blessing on his faithful church, that we would see an abundance of all good things this year.

Pray for the unity of the church to be a reality on earth as it is in heaven. As you pray, ask God to show you who in your church needs you to love them.

Pray for those who are struggling with serious ill health and physical ailments.

Pray for our Toddler group taking place this morning.

Pray for those having top work at home. Pray for business that are struggling for staff.

Give thanks that Omicron has seemingly peaking in the UK without a substantial increase in serious cases and hospital levels that are difficult, but manageable. Pray that unvaccinated people (who still make up the majority of the most serious cases) would get vaccinated.

Pray for Bishop Paul and those in leadership, to guide this diocese with wisdom.

Pray: God of All Things New, I believe that through You I can achieve change in my life because You are doing a new thing! Now it springs up; I pray that I perceive it, I pray that I acknowledge that You are the source of my change. Thank You, Father, for making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland! Lord, I thank You for the changes that have occurred in my life and the changes that are about to happen, Amen.

### **Wednesday**

Read – Genesis 30-31

Think : How does Rachel feel initially? What is her solution? How does Leah respond? In the New Testament the ideal for marriage is one woman and one man for life. Wherever polygamy occurs in narratives, negative consequences are described. How does this story show polygamy as a bad idea? Despite all of this, how does the Lord show grace to Rachel? Given the way Jacob has worked 20 years for Laban and yet Laban still tries to avoid paying the wages, what do you learn about God's overruling hand in blessing Jacob. How has 20 years of hard work changed Jacob for the better? (compare with his stealing the blessing). The bible never ducks the fact that the people God uses are deeply flawed, what does this narrative about Jacob teach you about God and yourself?

Praise God that he uses fallen sinners like me and you to build his kingdom.

Pray for those who are childless / cannot have children and struggle with it. Pray for those with children, that they would be good parents and raise their children wisely.

Pray for those who have been trafficked and are forced to live with people against their will.

Pray that you would trust that the Lord, in His sovereignty, really is working for the good of all who love him, even when we cannot understand how or why. Pray that through difficulties and suffering, we would see growth and fruit as we stand fast in Jesus.

Pray for our Wednesday service. Give thanks for answered prayers.

Pray for the nation of Mali where a military government is in place.

Pray for the work of Washington Community Food Project and those volunteering there.

Pray for our new annexe project, especially grant applications that have gone in get a good response and Anna as she prepares more. Give thanks for answered prayer with grants given. Pray for the applications going to the Tudor Trust and Virgin Money North East (formerly Northern Rock). Pray for trustees at Laing, Catherine Cookson foundation, Bernard Sunley Foundation, Clothworkers and William Leech as they consider our applications.

Pray for the police, those working in the prison service, the courts, criminals and victims.

Pray: Oh Lord, help me to be on guard so that I can stand firm in my faith. I know that standing firm requires me to be determined and motivated, so Lord I pray for Your help in this area of my life. I also pray that throughout my trials, I remain courageous and strong because You are always with me and will never leave me. Lord I love You with all my heart and I thank You for giving me the victory that I have received, in Jesus Name Amen.

## **Thursday**

Read – Genesis 32-34

Think: Why do you think he is so fearful about meeting Esau after 20 years? What does he do to try and mitigate his concerns? Given the promises he was made by the Lord in the dream (chapter 28), why do you think he is so fearful? How does he respond in 32v9? How does all this challenge you in your prayers and thinking about God's promises? How does the story show that he need not fear? What does all this show about Jacob's changed character? Chapter 34 moves on to a harrowing story of rape and murder, why do you think the bible includes passages like this? What does this show about humanity? What does it teach us about the need for true justice?

Praise God that he keeps his promises, even when humanly speaking we might think there is a huge risk to them.

Ask God to help you pray more in line with his promises and to remember his promises in times of trouble. Pray that you would not fear when facing hostility or potential issues.

Pray that God's people would grow in humility through hard times. Give thanks for the blessings you have and ask God to help you be generous with them to others.

Ask God to guide this Church and reveal to us where our next steps will be in 2022. Pray about what used to be Monday Club as we think about our work with young people.

Pray for those who are lonely or cut off. Pray more would benefit from our groups/activities.

Give thanks that Omicron case rates are falling across much of the country and follow the pattern of South Africa with much lower serious illness. Pray this would be the last wave.

Pray for those who are sick and grieving this morning. Pray especially for Dave and Maurice.

Pray for the mum's group and the youth group today. Pray for the bible study groups.

Pray: Mighty God, thank you that you give the gift of abundant, eternal life. May my life be free from resentment and filled with thanksgiving and praise for your countless blessings. The Bible teaches that you never fail to provide for your people. Set me free from resentment as I give thanks for your blessings and am assured that you will continue to generously supply my every need. May grace, mercy, and peace be with me, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Son, in truth and love. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

## **Friday**

Read – Genesis 35-37

Think: What does Jacob get his whole family to do? Why do you think he asked them to get rid of their 'gods'? What does God do to Jacob? What does he promise him? How does Jacob respond? What 'gods' might you need to bury? How can you better respond to the lord in worship and sacrifice? Esau becomes the forefather of the Edomites who appear

later in the Old Testament. Why do they move away? Why do you think geologies like this are important in the bible? Joseph is Jacob's favourite son, why is it inevitable that things go wrong for him with his family? How do the dreams exacerbate this? What does this teach you about the importance of humility and grace? How might you fail like Joseph sometimes? What happens? We know the full story, but at this point where do you see God's hand?

Praise God that he always works his plans out even when we cannot see them and even when people do great evil.

Pray that you would never act proudly or put others on a pedestal above others. Pray that we would all recognise that we are equal in Christ irrespective of gifts and 'status'.

Pray for those who live in slavery right now. Pray they would be rescued and blessed.

Pray for those who are fearing death, that they would look to the resurrection hope.

Pray for Open Doors. It's extremely dangerous to live openly as a Christian in Afghanistan, even more so following the Taliban's seizure of power last year. Pray that a wall of protection will guard secret believers from harm, and ask God to surround each one with His loving presence.

Pray for those struggling with the rising cost of living and inflation. Pray that gas prices would come back down and new low cost eco-friendly sources of energy would quickly come on stream. Pray for calm on the Ukrainian border and the geo-politics involved.

Pray for young leaders to emerge to help lead, pray, read and preach in our church family and that others would join. Pray our discipleship would be faithful and effective.

Pray for the pastoral team and how they can develop ministry in the church and community

Pray: Gracious Lord, sometimes I think that my own ways are right, but You weigh my heart and You know my intentions. Instead of my flesh being my internal guide, let Your Spirit instruct me on the way that I should go. I pray that I become sensitive to hearing Your instruction so that I know what to do. Lord help me to live righteously with You and set apart from the world. Teach me patience, I pray, Amen.

## **Saturday**

Read –Genesis 38-40

Think : Judah's son Perez is in the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1. How has Judah failed humanly speaking? What does this teach us about God's grace in his plan? How does the story of Joseph fit in to all of this? Despite being a 'slave' what happens to Joseph initially? How does his faithfulness prove to be costly? Do you think you would be willing to give up all your comforts as a cost of doing what is right? What does it show about Joseph? What happens at the end of Chapter 40? Does it look like God has abandoned him? How does this help you when feeling forgotten or hopeless?

Praise God that he never leaves his people, even when alone or in prison He is there. Praise him that he uses messed up and sinful people for his plans even though we are unworthy.

Pray for those in prison unjustly. Pray for the persecuted church.

Pray for those who have been wronged or betrayed by someone close to them. Pray for those forced into prostitution and those who turn to it in desperation.

Pray for our evangelism and online presence, that many more would utilise this.

Pray for grace amongst church family to abound. Pray for unity and love in the gospel and to avoid disputes about unimportant and secondary issues. Thank god for the unity we have.

Pray for our government after a slew of 'scandals', that they would focus on serving and making the country better for all, irrespective of who is the leader.

Pray for China as the Winter Olympics takes place. Pray that truth about the way they treat minorities and Christians would become unavoidably visible to all.

Pray: Jesus my Saviour, I praise You and thank You for forgiving a wretch like me. Although I didn't deserve Your mercy, You granted me Your righteousness and all the joy of heaven. I pray now that You would grant forgiveness to those in prison for the crimes they committed. May it be that those who were affected would show forgiveness. Where I have been wronged, please let me hold no grudge or lack of love. And most importantly, I pray that You would forgive them their sins and make them as white as snow. Let all heaven rejoice when forgiveness is proclaimed. Amen.

## **Sunday**

Read – Genesis 41-42

Think: How do Joseph's fortunes turn about? Why? Where do you see God's purposes in Joseph being sold into slavery? This does not excuse evil, far from it, but how does it help you face the consequences of evil? How does this story reveal the importance of grace?

Praise God that He is sovereign over all situations and provides for his people in need.

Pray for those who are going hungry tonight, whether because of poverty or bad choices. Pray for those working to alleviate food poverty. Pray for farmers producing food in difficult circumstances and that government subsidies will encourage sustainable food production.

Pray for those with power, that they would use it for good and not ill. Pray that forgiveness and grace would replace anger and revenge.

Pray that we would be ever more thankful. Pray that we would be better at hospitality and welcome. Pray that we would all be bold in our evangelism and see much fruit.

Pray for our Sunday services today. Pray for new people to step forward to help lead in the future. Give thanks for those who serve in this way. Pray for any visitors today.

Pray for the nations of Egypt, Taiwan, India and El Salvador

Pray for our local schools and ministry in them, especially the lunch club at Biddick.

Pray for renewal of the church of England and for new leaders to be raised up to serve at St George's Pray for an extra church warden and verger to help when busy.

Pray for refugees, particularly those coming from war zones.

Pray for our children's leaders. Pray for our young people and our outreach to them.

Give thanks to God for the financial gifts we receive to enable us to do all that we do.

Pray: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy! I look to You for protection. I hide beneath the shelter of Your wings until this adversity passes by. My God Most High, please send help from heaven. Send forth Your unfailing love and faithfulness! I exalt You above the highest heavens! May Your glory shine over all the earth. Thank You for making a road through this sea of hopelessness. Amen.