



## St. Mary's Church SAWSTON

**Open Door: 15<sup>th</sup> November, 10.30am**

**“Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”**

### Welcome and Notices

At home, at work and at school, In the garden and in the street, In church and on zoom, In our heads, our hearts and all around us: God is with us.

**God is with us**

### Opening Prayer with Saying Sorry

#### The Lord's Prayer

We say together

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours.  
Now and for ever.  
Amen**

“The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.” *Psalm 18:2*

### Song: Blessed be your name

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rVPlmVe2WcQ>

### Reading: Ephesians 6:10-18

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit,

which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

### Reading: Matthew 4:1-11

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written:

"He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."

Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

### Talk: Becca Herrick

What does it mean for us to pray **lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil?**

Straight after his baptism, Jesus is led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. His baptism is a high point, where Jesus' calling is confirmed by God himself - "*this is my son, whom I love*" (*Matthew 3:17*). Then Jesus is led away, by the Spirit, to wrestle with that call. God did not tempt Jesus, but He allowed the devil to do so. In Greek, the word used for "tempted", can also be translated as "tested". Jesus is being tested by the devil to see if he sticks to trusting and following God. Jesus, of course, passes the test with flying colours. He was faithful to God to the end.

Jesus' time of testing prepares him for the challenges he will face throughout his ministry. He is tempted by all the things he will have to turn his back on in order to follow God's calling for his life. God could have given Jesus an easy life, but chooses not to, because it furthers His work on earth.

Being a Christian offers us the promise of eternal life in relationship with God, but it doesn't protect us from the messiness of this life. Jesus warns us that to follow Him is hard. He tells us that we must "*deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow*" Him (*Matthew 16:24*), the cross being one of the cruellest forms of punishment that has ever existed. We too will undoubtedly have to turn our back on things, in order to follow God's call.

So when we pray, **lead us not into temptation**, we are asking God to not test us, but trusting that when we are tested, that He will use it for his good. We all will suffer. Life is difficult. God can use those times to make us truly human, truly who he created us to be, and in the bigger picture to bring about His kingdom here on earth. On the night before Jesus died, he prayed, "*Father, not my will, but yours be done*" (*Luke 22:42*). We pray **lead us not into temptation**, with those words in our minds and hearts – that his will and not ours be done.

When we pray **lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil**, we are also asking that God would keep us from the temptation of evil. Evil is anything that takes us away from God, anything that goes against God's will. We can see it in the world around us; in wars, in famine, in people displaced from their homes, in the global pandemic transforming our lives, but we can also feel its affects in our day to day lives. It's the little voice in our head, that says "oh go on, no one will notice if you do that". Or the voice that tells us lies like "you're not good enough". Remember the voice of the snake in the Garden of Eden, persuading Adam and Eve to eat the fruit from the tree?

The devil wants us to question every good thing that God has given us. Even when we choose to follow Jesus, every day is a battle; against our own selfish natures, against the things around us that are against God. That is why our life on this earth is not perfect, yet. Jesus' death on the cross defeated evil once and for all. He was perfect, so took all our imperfections down to the grave. Then he rose again victorious. Death did not defeat Jesus. Therefore death does not defeat us and we are promised eternity with God. An eternity that starts now, with His Holy Spirit living in us. We will still face temptations and struggle this side of our own death, but we have the wonderful promise that one day we will suffer no more – there will be "*no more death, mourning or crying or pain*" (*Revelation 21:4*). The devil may cause problems for us in this life, but he has been ultimately defeated and has no lasting hold upon those of us who trust in Jesus.

We also pray **deliver us from evil** because prayer itself is one of the powerful weapons we have against the things that tempt us and draw us away from God. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul urges us to "*pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests*". We don't have to know the "right" words, we just have to cry out to God. "Please help me not to get angry" "God, take these overwhelming thoughts away" "Lord, heal your world". If you need inspiration, turn to the Psalms, whose beautiful words encompass every human emotion there is.

Prayer is not all we have. Ephesians tells us that we have other defences too, including our faith: our reliance on God's strength, not our own; and our righteousness: our right-ness with God through Christ. And our weapon? The "sword of the Spirit", God's word. When Jesus faced temptation in the desert, where did he turn? The Bible. He quoted scripture. Knowing the Bible gives us truth to hold on to in the face of evil and power in the face of temptation. As Paul says in Romans (15:4) "*For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.*"

Finally, when we pray **lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil** we are praying for *us*. We are asking for our church, for our neighbours, for our community, for our world and for ourselves to be kept from temptation and evil. We are joining together with Christians across the globe, praying our family prayer, the Lord's prayer for *us*. Knowing Jesus, is to be set free from evil, to be the people we were all designed to be. We need to share that knowledge in our relationships with family and friends, showing the hope we have in this dark world. We need to live in a way that shows that truth – standing up against injustices, fighting for the vulnerable and oppressed, helping to bring in the kingdom of God that we long to see in our world today.

*"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* (Romans 8:38-39)

**Song: Before the Throne of God Above**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4MUNywHsZPU>

## Prayers: Sally Bard

Let us pray:

.....'**Lead** us not into temptation, but **deliver** us from evil' .....

God of light, in whom there is no darkness, thank you for the gift of your Son Jesus Christ. According to your will, he gave himself for our sins and has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to your kingdom. (Colossians 1.13,14)

Lord Jesus, as you call us to follow you day by day, give us a desire for the things of your kingdom; help us to choose your will and to return to you quickly each time we choose our own will above yours. Lord, show us how to follow you; increase our desire for you through your Word and through fellowship with one another. Keep us, not only in moments of quietness but in the busyness of life. We hold onto your promise that as we follow you we will not walk in darkness but have the light of life. (John 8.12)

*God, our deliverer*

**Lead us on**

Thank you for this time and this place. Help us to see where you are leading us in our community, this village, at this time. In our dealings with friends and neighbours we want to see your ways.

Give us the light of life, abundant life, in spite of present restrictions.

Lord bless us so that we may be a blessing to others according to your will.

*God, our deliverer*

**Lead us on**

Almighty God whose desire is that all nations may know salvation through your Son, help your church across the world to hold onto and share the message of hope in him. We remember people across the world struggling the same struggle as we are in responding to the corona virus pandemic. We pray for all the scientists around the world who are working on the virus, remembering especially those who are working out their Christian faith through their science. Give them integrity, give them generosity in sharing resources and expertise.

May decisions that will be made benefit the most vulnerable across the world.

We pray for doctors, nurses, carers and family members worldwide who are agents of your healing; prosper their work, give them endurance and daily strength to cope as their lives live out love.

Lord in your good time end this pandemic.

*God, our deliverer*

**Lead us on**

We lift to you those we hold dear. Lead us as we try to communicate and connect and care for each other in this second lockdown. Lord be close to those we know in our church family in any special need this morning...

Thank you that we can bring these prayers through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Saviour.

**Amen.**

## Song: O Church Arise

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A98YQHG8tLY>

## Blessing

Go into the world peacefully; be courageous and bold; hold onto all that is good; keep your thoughts and words gentle; cheer up the sad ones; support the weak ones; help the sick ones; befriend the lonely ones; honour everyone; love and serve God from whom nothing in heaven and earth can separate us. **Amen**

## Breakout Rooms

*Time to catch up with each other!*