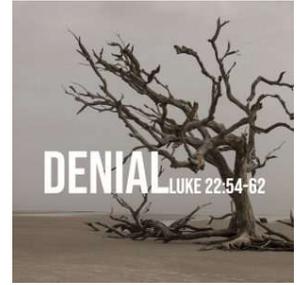




**ST NINIAN'S UNITING CHURCH**  
**SEPTEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup> 2025**  
**PRAYERS AND REFLECTION**  
**BASED ON LUKE 22:54-62**



***Peter Disowns Jesus***

<sup>54</sup> Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance. <sup>55</sup> And when some there had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. <sup>56</sup> A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, “This man was with him.”

<sup>57</sup> But he denied it. “Woman, I don’t know him,” he said.

<sup>58</sup> A little later someone else saw him and said, “You also are one of them.”

“Man, I am not!” Peter replied.

<sup>59</sup> About an hour later another asserted, “Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean.”

<sup>60</sup> Peter replied, “Man, I don’t know what you’re talking about!” Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. <sup>61</sup> The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: “Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times.” <sup>62</sup> And he went outside and wept bitterly.

**QUIET TIME IN PRAYER**

Risen Christ, in moments when I feel weakened by events around me and I deny the important place I hold for you in my heart, remind me of your boundless mercy, love and compassion. Help me to stand firm in my faith, even when I’m being challenged or afraid. May I learn from my failures and seek your forgiveness with a humble heart. Strengthen my resolve to proclaim your love boldly, just as you restored Peter. Let your grace shine through me, so I may honour you in every moment of my life. Blessed by the Spirit of the Lord I pray. Amen

**PRAYER POINTS OF THANKS**

- Thank you, or small fires to gather around and grow old friendships and create new ones.
- Thank you, Lord, for those who have skills and gifts to spread your work, word, love and witness in the community
- Thank you, Lord, for a clean environment, safe work practices, and a loving community

**POINTS FOR A PRAYER OF PRAISE**

- Technology that makes life in the 21st century easier, safer and more enjoyable than previous eras
- For loving and caring people in our lives who remain loyal to us when others flee or are only ‘fair weather friends.’

- For the constant light that shines even in the darkest of moments
- For the obedience of Jesus, the Son of God who faced death on the cross so all of humankind can know eternal life.

### **POINTS OF CONFESSION**

- For the moments I turned away from the discipline of my Christian faith
- For the missed prayers, moments of praise, and denial of knowing who Jesus is and what he did for me.
- For being reclusive with my spare time – preferring my own company to that of others

### **WORDS OF GRACE**

In asking your forgiveness I may know cleansing, renewal and a dislike of doing things against you. Jesus says when we confess our wrongdoing with an attitude to be sorry, we are forgiven. In Christ you are forgiven, thanks be to God, amen

### **REFLECTION**

The scriptures continue to teach us life lessons every time we open our minds to receive the messages they contain. This time Luke is giving a very powerful opportunity to learn more about fear and the complex loyalty we face as Christians. This passage recounts the well known easter story of Peter's denial of Jesus during a critical moment. What we have learnt from this story enables us to explore our vulnerability and the complexities of faith when we're experiencing a high level of stressful anxiety.

In the face of danger Peter who had not long before this event took place, vowed his unwavering loyalty to Jesus, finds himself in a web of fear and self-preservation. As Jesus is arrested and taken away, Peter's initial instinct is to follow at a safe distance – a reaction that mirrors the internal conflict many of us face when our loyalties are put to the test. The distance is characterised not only of his physical separation from Jesus but also of the emotional and spiritual gap that fear can create among friends. His action reflects a universal struggle: the instinct to protect ourselves can take precedence over the desire to remain close to those we love.

Peter's denials spotlights the frailty of loyalty when we're confronted with potential suffering. Each of the three denials-particularly in response to the servant girl- reveals a panic-driven instinct to distance himself from imminent danger. In times of crisis, fear can morph into a survival instinct that compels us to act against our true values. For us as Christians, this reflects the greater truth of our fallen nature, where fear often dominates over faith.

This moment is a turning point for Peter, he hears the rooster crow three times, and he recalls the words of Jesus – as well as his answer. It shatters his façade and exposes the full weight of his betrayal. This moment resonates deeply with us who live lives committed to Christ Jesus emphasising the importance of giving ourselves the opportunity to change direction as we undergo self-examination. Peter's bitter tears represent both remorse and a recognition of his failure to uphold his commitment. Those who read this passage are offered an invitation to confront our own moments of weakness and denial, remembering that as people we all live within vulnerability of the human condition of the fall from God's grace that is spoken of in Genesis.

Peter's own story goes beyond his moment of failure; it offers us a lens in the larger discussion surrounding salvation. In his moment of despair, Peter's weeping is the moment when his own journey of reconciliation with Jesus begins its only later does he understand forgiveness and restoration with God. This perspective of the story is a mainstay of our Christian faith that even amidst our failures, love and grace are available for those who seek a full and enriched loving relationship with Christ.

Navigating through relationships can at times be a bit tricky. Luke gives us a reminder of the complex dynamics of loyalty during troubling times. He challenges us to reflect on how we might respond to fear and the importance of remaining loyal when all you want to do us run in the opposite direction, while also revealing the path to forgiveness and renewed commitment in the face of our moments of frailty. Luke's words encourage us to believe and embrace the assurance that, despite our failures, there is always the possibility of redemption through the resurrection of Christ.

### **PRAYER POINTS OF INTERCESSION**

- Strength and guidance in tricky relationships
- Maintaining loyalty, support, and courage to Christ and His followers
- Wisdom to navigate well with others in challenging situations
- To be real and not have facades

#### **'PETER AND THE ROOSTER' VR 2025©**

In the hush of the night, the shadows drew near,  
A flicker of fire, shrouded in fear,  
Peter stood waiting, his heart racing fast,  
Yet the truth of his loyalty was fading at last.

In the courtyard's dim light, the questions emerged,  
"Are you not one of His?" – his pulse surged,  
With trembling lips, he spoke in denial,  
"I know not the man," – betrayal's cruel trial.

The rooster crowed once, a sound sharp and clear,  
Echoing deep in the silence, a whisper of fear.  
In that instant, the weight of his choices was known,  
The prophecy spoken, a heart turned to stone.

Again came the question, a piercing refrain,  
"Surely you're with Him, are you not one His?"  
But Peter's resolve crumbled beneath the disdain,  
"I do not know Him," – a heart rife with anguish.

As the second crow sounded, the night held its breath,  
A moment of sorrow, a brush with bleak death.  
Memories of footsteps, of miracles shared,  
Faded in twilight, where loyalty flared.

Then came the third call, the rooster's clear cry,  
And the weight of his failure brought tears to his eye.  
He met the gaze of his Saviour, love wrapped in pain,  
In that instant, a heart broke, yet hope would remain.

For in weeping and sorrow, redemption does bloom,  
From the ashes of failure, forgiveness finds room.  
Peter would rise, he would stand firm once more,  
Transformed by the grace of the Christ he adored.

So heed the crow's calling that pierces the night,  
A reminder of vows and the strength to do right.  
In moments of weakness, let love be our song,  
For even in failure, His grace makes us strong.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysDDH06Rcpg&list=RDysDDH06Rcpg&start\\_radio=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysDDH06Rcpg&list=RDysDDH06Rcpg&start_radio=1)

