



ST NINIAN'S UNITING CHURCH
NOVEMBER 26TH 2025
PRAYERS AND REFLECTION



BASED ON ISAIAH 60:8-16

What are these ships that skim along like clouds, like doves returning Home? ⁹They are ships coming from distant lands, Bringing God's people home.

They bring with them silver and gold to honor the name of the Lord, the holy God of Israel, who has made all nations honor his people.

¹⁰The Lord says to Jerusalem, "Foreigners will rebuild your walls, and their kings will serve you.

In my anger I punished you, but now I will show you my favor and mercy. ¹¹Day and night your gates will be open, so that the kings of the nations may bring you, their wealth. ¹²But nations that do not serve you will be completely destroyed.

¹³"The wood of the pine, the juniper, and the cypress, the finest wood from the forests of Lebanon, will be brought to rebuild you, Jerusalem, to make my Temple beautiful, to make my city glorious. ¹⁴The descendants of those who oppressed you will come and bow low to show their respect. All who once despised you will worship at your feet. They will call you 'The City of the Lord,'
'Zion, the City of Israel's Holy God.'

¹⁵"You will no longer be forsaken and hated, a city deserted and desolate. I will make you great and beautiful, a place of joy forever and ever. ¹⁶Nations and kings will care for you as a mother nurses her child. You will know that I, the Lord, have saved you, that the mighty God of Israel sets you free.

QUIET TIME IN PRAYER

Creator God, I am here with you inspired by Isaiah's promises. Thank you for calling me out of the darkness into your marvelous light, shining my path with hope and purpose. As the nations come to your light, may my heart be filled with a desire to be a beacon of light in your world. Help me to embrace your mission in this place, reflecting your love and grace to those around me. I offer you my praise for your faithfulness, knowing that in you, my worth is renewed and my life is transformed. May this special time together be a testament to your goodness to me and my faithful love in you.

Amen

PRAYER POINTS OF PRAISE

- Praise God for Isaiah's image of a restored Jerusalem symbolising hope and renewal. God's intervention can transform desolation into something beautiful.
- Praise God for Isaiah's emphasis that the blessings of God aren't limited to Israel but extends to the whole of creation. This universal call reflects God's desire for all of us to experience grace and mercy, a vision of unity and peace amongst diverse groups of people.
- Praise God for God's unwavering commitment to God's people offering us steadfast love and promises, reinforcing the idea that we are cherished and valued by God where hope can be discovered in troubling times.

PRAYER POINTS OF CONFESSION

- Forgive me Lord for the times when I'm spiritually blind
- Forgive me Lord when I am the creator of division and harm in my community.
- Forgive me Lord for the moments when I forget your abundant generosity.

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

We greet the wisdom of Isaiah with hope and assurances from God which are particularly relevant in the context of the challenges we face in 2025. In an era marked by social upheaval, economic uncertainty, wars, and environmental concerns. Isaiah's words are a great reminder that even though we feel darkness surrounds us the light of God pierces through and lights our path. The imagery of nations coming to the light reflects the universal search for hope and healing, inviting us to recognise that we aren't alone in our struggles – a feeling very often forgotten.

We're gifted by the transformative power of God's presence in our lives as we come to terms with personal and collective challenges. We are called to continue to look out for the light of Christ as it serves as a reminder that our challenges can lead to a deeper reliance on God, bringing us closer to God and prompting a reassessment of our values and priorities. The assurance that God would bless us bringing us restoration is crucial in a world that often feels divided and chaotic. It calls us to nurture a spirit of unity and collaboration, essential for overcoming the challenges we face on any given day.

Isaiah places a focus on the inclusivity of God's grace, showing us that God's blessings extend beyond Israel's borders. This prophetic vision encourages us to embrace diversity and work toward inclusivity in our communities. In 2025, as we confront issues of justice, inequality, and division, we are reminded to extend compassion and support to one another, reflecting God's love.

Ultimately, Isaiah is calling us to remain steadfast, not only in faith but in action. By embodying the light that God shines upon us, we can inspire hope and healing in a world that desperately needs it. Our daily reading for today serves as a powerful reminder of God's faithfulness and an encouragement to be conduits of God's grace as we live through each challenge we face.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

Heavenly Father, after my time of reflection I come before You with a heart full of gratitude for the promise of Your light and glory. Lord, I lift up my community, my nation, and the world to You, interceding for those who are lost in darkness. Shine Your light upon them and guide them toward the hope found in You.

I pray for those who are struggling with despair, loneliness, and hopelessness. May Your presence break through their darkness, revealing to them that they are not alone. Help St Ninian's to be instruments of Your peace and love, reaching out to those in need with compassion and grace, just as You have called us to do.

Lord, I also intercede for our leaders and decision-makers. May they be filled with wisdom and discernment, recognising the importance of unity and inclusivity. Grant them the vision to see beyond borders and barriers, nurturing a spirit of collaboration that mirrors the promises in Your Word. I ask that they govern with honesty and integrity, seeking the welfare of all people, especially the marginalised and oppressed.

As I reflect on Your promises, I pray for the healing of our land and the restoration of relationships within our communities. Help us to embody the principles of Your Kingdom, standing against division and hostility. Let our lives be a testimony to Your faithfulness and love.

Finally, I pray for the global Church, that it may reflect Your light to all nations, drawing people to Your saving grace. Empower us to be bold witnesses, sharing the hope of the Gospel with urgency and love.

In the name of Jesus, the Light of the World, we pray. Amen.

In the dawn of hope, the city shines,
From shadows deep, His promise aligns.
The wings of the faithful, a gathering throng,
Drawn to the light, where they truly belong.

O radiant glow, from the East you rise,
Boldly proclaiming, beneath endless skies.
Mountains of sorrow fade, giving way,
As love intertwines on this glorious day.

Nations will come, with treasures in hand,
To witness the beauty of a promised land.
Gold and frankincense, gifts from afar,
Each heart a compass, guided by a star.

No longer forsaken, no longer alone,
The joy of the Lord is a cornerstone.
From every corner, each voice will sing,
Declaring the glory our Savior can bring.

Lost in the struggle, yet found in His grace,
Through trials enduring, we run the race.
United we stand, in His love we grow,
Reflecting His light, for the world to know.

From ruin to wonder, from pain to delight,
We share in the journey, embraced by His light.
A tapestry woven with threads of His care,
In the heart of the nations, His love we declare.

So rise, O Jerusalem, let your heart soar,
For the promise of God opens every door.
In every heartbeat, in each shared decree,
We find our purpose—forever set free.