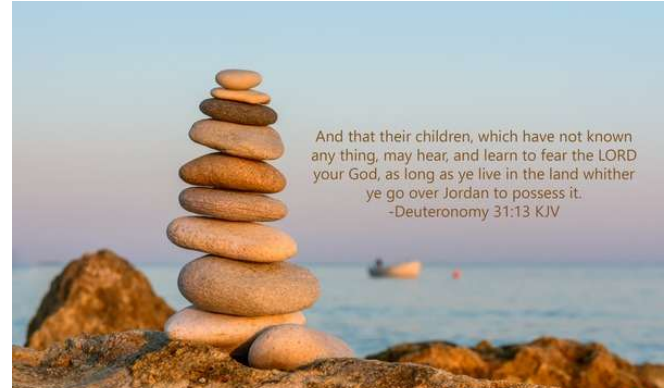




**ST NINIAN'S UNITING
CHURCH
PRAYERS AND
REFLECTION
May 13th 2026**



Based on Deuteronomy 31:1-13

Joshua Becomes Moses's Successor

31 When Moses had finished speaking all these words to all Israel, ²he said to them, "I am now one hundred twenty years old. I am no longer able to get about, and the Lord has told me, 'You shall not cross over this Jordan.'³ The Lord your God himself will cross over before you. He will destroy these nations before you, and you shall dispossess them. Joshua also will cross over before you, as the Lord promised. ⁴The Lord will do to them as he did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when he destroyed them. ⁵The Lord will give them over to you, and you shall deal with them in full accord with the command that I have given to you. ⁶Be strong and bold; have no fear or dread of them, because it is the Lord your God who goes with you; he will not fail you or forsake you."⁷ Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, "Be strong and bold, for you are the one who will go with this people into the land that the Lord has sworn to their ancestors to give them, and you will put them in possession of it. ⁸It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."

The Law to Be Read Every Seventh Year

⁹Then Moses wrote down this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to all the elders of Israel. ¹⁰Moses commanded them, "Every seventh year, in the scheduled year of remission, during the Festival of Booths, ¹¹when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God at the place that he will choose, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. ¹²Assemble the people—men, women, and children, as well as the aliens residing in your towns—so that they may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God and to observe diligently all the words of this law ¹³and so that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as you live in the land that you are crossing over the Jordan to possess."

OPENING PRAYER

God of time and space, as I pause in your presence, I reflect on the words spoken to your people through Moses. I'm reminded that you go before us, guiding our steps and assuring us of your constant presence. Help me to embrace that courage that comes from trusting in you.

Lord, I contemplate just how important it is to pass down your wisdom and teachings to the next generation. May I be diligent in sharing your truth and love with those around me. Grant the strength to encourage others, reminding them to be steadfast in their faith in the same way as Moses.

As I meditate on your promise not to forsake us, I lay before you my fears and uncertainties. Help me to find peace in your unfailing love and assurance. May I draw strength from your Word and the fellowship of my faith family.

Be my guide, O Lord, as I seek to live in accordance with your teachings, based on faith and hope. May your Spirit empower me to uphold your commands and encourage others to follow in your footsteps. I rest in the knowledge that your plans for us are good, and I trust in your divine purpose in my life.

Thank you, Lord, for remaining faithful to your people throughout generations. I commit to remembering and sharing your goodness with others, knowing that your Word is true with no returns. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

PRAYER POINTS OF THANKS

- Thank you, Lord, for the leaders you have placed in each of our lives. I pray for their wisdom and strength to be a reflection of your teachings.
- Thank you for the unwavering faithfulness throughout the generations since Moses journeyed with Joshua
- Thank you for the guidance you have provided through your Word and the Holy Spirit, helping me to navigate through the challenges of life.

PRAYER POINTS OF PRAISE

- praise and honour for you Jesus for always being by my side and for the assurance that the path I tread is one you've already taken.
- praise the Lord for your powerful love that is with me in my 'battles' and I acknowledge that your strength is made perfect in my weakness.
- happily praising you Lord for the plan you have for my life, as I put my trust in your purpose for the events I experience in each season up to the end of my earthly life.

PRAYER POINTS FOR CONFESSION

- I confess Lord, my doubts and fears that have not allowed me to experience the fulness of your faithfulness or purpose for me.
- I confess my moments when I have allowed myself to be compromised lessening my strength and conviction to be able to say 'no,' to temptation.

- Help me to recognise the occasions that I have relied on my own understanding rather than taking a serious look at your wise answers to my problems.

WORDS OF GRACE

Lord, I have placed the worst of my thoughts and actions into your hands of love, mercy and grace. You have promised to cleanse me when I confess my sins. I do now so confess and rest peacefully in the cleansing palm of your hand. Thanks be to God amen.

REFLECTION:

In an era when agism is a reality, where the members of our community are often invisible and unheard the scriptures still have something to say to us. So, what a lesson Deuteronomy has to teach us today in the narrative about Moses. Moses has come to the end of his desert journey with the Israelites about to enter the Promised Land. They have been on quite a journey together and now Moses is preparing to hand over leadership to Joshua who will take the people over the mountains into the land that God had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob so long ago. God keeps God's promises. Moses gives a farewell speech that is both a heartfelt reflection and a call to courage. This passage offers us insights into the nature of faith, leadership, and God's eternal presence.

Moses, is speaking with both the people and Joshua, reminding them that God is faithful to them. Moses wants to tell them in clear language that although he is about to leave them, God never will. This shift in leadership is something that's important for us to acknowledge as well as it's an essential aspect of our lives as followers of Christ. Whilst our leaders change at Assembly, Synods, Presbyteries, Congregations, Social groups, etc. God remains ever present and constant through all generations for all time. God's promise to Joshua to lead and never forsake him echoes through the ages, extending to all of us today. We can rest in the assurance that God has gone before us, paving our way even when challenges appear to be daunting and hopeless.

One of critical out takes of this reading is the call to be strong and courageous. The Israelites faced formidable foes in the land they were about to enter, and God's command to be courageous speaks to the universal struggle against fear and doubt. In our own lives, we encounter uncertainties that can raise our anxiousness to higher levels than we would like. Yet, like the Israelites, we are also reminded to place our trust and faith in God rather than our circumstances. The answer is there, we just haven't seen it yet. God equips us for the journey before us, providing the strength we need when we step out in faith.

Moses also instructs the Israelites to continually remind themselves of God's laws and teachings – don't forget them and don't misrepresent them. This is reinforced by

Paul in 1 & 2 Timothy. We know the importance of following them as a community as well as them being foundational in our spiritual journey. As we gather in our worship services, our small groups, we have the opportunity to share our faith journey with others helping them to strengthen their courage, hope, and faith in God.

Our reading of Moses is a perfect time to reflect on God's enduring presence as we navigate the various seasons of our lives. It encourages us to trust in God's empowerment, to be bold in our faith, and to support one another as a community of believers, founded firmly in the truth of God's presence and promises.

PRAYER OF INTECESSION

Lord, I am so grateful that I can peacefully come to you with a heart full of gratitude that you are always with me not matter where I am. I treasure your guidance and kept promises not just for me, but for all people and nations. Just as you strengthened Joshua and the Israelites, I ask for your courage and strength for our leaders in the church and wider community. Help me to trust in your promises, especially in times of uncertainty. May we all cling to your Word and support one another as we face our challenges that lay ahead of us. Grant us wisdom to follow your ways and to be a light in the darkness. I pray for unity and faithfulness, so together we can reflect your love to the world around us. Amen

