

New Zealand Night Prayer

The angels of God guard us through the night,
and quieten the powers of darkness.

The Spirit of God be our guide
to lead us to peace and to glory.

It is but lost labour that we haste to rise up early,
and so late take rest, and eat the bread of anxiety.

For those beloved of God are given gifts even while they sleep.

Silence

My brothers and sisters,
our help is in the name of the eternal God,
who is making the heavens and the earth.

Dear God,
thank you for all that is good,
for our creation and for our humanity,
for the stewardship you have given us of this planet earth,
for the gifts of life and of one another,
for your love which is unbounded and eternal.

O thou, most holy and beloved,
my Companion, my Guide upon the way,
my bright evening star.

We repent the wrongs we have done:

Silence

We have wounded your love.

O God, heal us.

We stumble in the darkness.

Light of the world transfigure us.

We forget that we are your home.

Spirit of God, dwell in us.

Eternal Spirit, living God,

in whom we live and move and have our being,

all that we are, have been, and shall be is known to you,

to the very secret of our hearts

and all that rises to trouble us.

Living flame burn into us,
cleansing wind, blow through us,
fountain of water, well up within us,
that we may love and praise in deed and in truth.

Invocation

Eternal Spirit, flow through our being and open our lips,
that our mouths may proclaim your praise.

Psalm 4

Answer me when I call, O God,
for you are the God of justice.
You set me free when I was hard-pressed:
be gracious to me now and hear my prayers.
Men and women,
how long will you turn my glory to my shame?
How long will you love what is worthless and run after lies?
Know that God has shown me such wonderful kindness:
when I call out in prayer, God hears me.
Tremble, admit defeat, and sin no more.
Look deep into your heart before you sleep and be still.
Bring your gifts, just as you are, and put your trust in God.
Many are asking, Who can make us content?
The light of your countenance has gone from us, O God.
Yet you have given my heart more gladness
than those whose corn and wine and oil increase.
I lie down in peace and sleep comes at once,
for in you alone, O God, do I dwell unafraid.

Psalm 23

Dear God, you sustain me and feed me:
like a shepherd you guide me.
You lead me to an oasis of green,
to lie down by restful waters.
You refresh my soul for the journey,
and guide me along trusted roads.
The God of justice is your name.
Though I must enter the darkness of death,
I will fear no evil.

For you are with me,
your rod and staff comfort me.
You prepare a table before my very eyes,
in the presence of those who trouble me.
You anoint my head with oil,
and you fill my cup to the brim.
Your loving kindness and mercy will meet me
every day of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of my God for ever.

A Reading from Matthew

Do not ask anxiously, What are we to eat? What are we to drink? What shall we wear? The whole world runs after such things. Set your heart and mind on God's commonwealth and justice first, and all the rest will come to you as well. So do not be anxious about tomorrow. Today has enough problems of its own; tomorrow can look after itself. --*Matthew 6:31*

A Reading from 1 John

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and those who are afraid are not perfected in love. We love because God first loved us. If anyone says, I love God, and hates his brother or sister, that person is a liar; for those who do not love their brothers and sisters whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. --*1 John 4:18*

**God be in my head, and in my understanding;
God be in my eyes, and in my looking;
God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;
God be in my heart, and in my thinking;
God be at my end, and at my departing.**

Into your hands, O God, I commend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O God of truth and love.
Keep me, O God, as the apple of an eye;
hide me under the shadow of your wings.

**Preserve us, O God, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ,
and asleep may rest in your peace.**

Song of Simeon *Nunc Dimittis*

**Praise be to God, I have lived to see this day.
God's promise is fulfilled, and my duty done.
At last you have given me peace,
for I have seen with my own eyes
the salvation you have prepared for all nations -
a light to the world in its darkness,
and the glory of your people Israel.
Glory be God, sustaining, redeeming, sanctifying,
as in the beginning, so now, and for ever.
Amen.**

**Preserve us, O God, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ,
and asleep may rest in your peace.**

**Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord have mercy.**

**Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples
of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and for ever. Amen.**

**Be present, Spirit of God,
within us, your dwelling place and home,
that this house may be one where
all darkness is penetrated by your light,
all troubles calmed by your peace,
all evil redeemed by your love,
all pain transformed in your suffering,
and all dying glorified in your risen life. Amen.**

Lord,
it is night.
The night is for stillness.
Let us be still in the presence of God.
It is night after a long day.
What has been done has been done;
what has not been done has not been done;
let it be.
The night is dark.
Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives
rest in you.
The night is quiet.
Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,
all dear to us,
and all who have no peace.
The night heralds the dawn.
Let us look expectantly to a new day,
new joys,
new possibilities.
In your name we pray.
Amen.