

give us vision, give us courage, give us joy



Summer with the Psalms

Psalm 63

Sun 30-July to Wed 2-August
1030 St Wulstans Sunday 30th July

Psalm 150

Sat 19-August to Tue 22-August
10am St Barnabas Sunday 20th August
1115 St Wulstans Sunday 27th August

Psalm 84

Thu 3-August to Sun 6-August
10am St Barnabas Sunday 6th August
1115 St Wulstans Sunday 6th August

Psalm 121

Wed 23-August to Sat 26-August
10am St Barnabas Sunday 27th August

Psalm 46

Mon 7-August to Thu 10-August
10am St Barnabas Wednesday 9th August

Psalm 131

Sun 27-August to Wed 30-August
10am St Barnabas Wednesday 23rd August

Psalm 103

Fri 11-August to Mon 14-August
10am St Barnabas Sunday 13th August
1115 St Wulstans Sunday 3rd September

Psalm 86

Thu 31-August to Sun 3-September
1115 St Wulstans Sunday 20th August
10am St Barnabas Wednesday 30th August

Psalm 139

Tue 15-August to Fri 18-August
1115 St Wulstans Sunday 13th August

Psalm 104

Mon 4-Sept to Thu 7-September
10am St Barnabas Wednesday 16th August
10am St Barnabas Sunday 3rd September

Northeast Worcester Cluster

ABIDE Summer 2023

St Barnabas, Christ Church, St Nicholas, St Wulstans

give us vision, give us courage, give us joy

This ABIDE booklet offers ideas for daily prayers for use at any time of the day during the next forty days. Use them at home and on holiday. Use them individually or as a household, or maybe form a triplet for the summer.

This season we are spending 'Summer with the Psalms'. We begin on Sunday 30th July in our joint service at St Wulstans, where Archdeacon Nikki will be sharing her journey with Psalm 63. In both Wednesday and Sunday services for the rest of the holidays, we will hear different team members reflecting on their own choices of companion psalms.

We know almost nothing of the circumstances in which the one hundred and fifty psalms were written. David is the most named author, but most are anonymous. But that hardly matters. The Psalms don't exist in a particular moment of geography or history or culture. Everything that anyone can feel or experience in relation to God is in these prayers. We find in them the best place in Scripture to explore all the parts of our life and help us to say who we are and what is in us --- guilt, anger, salvation, praise --- to the God who loves, judges and saves us in Jesus Christ.

The Psalms are not a set of feel-good mantras, taking us from strength to strength. In fact, quite the opposite. The Psalms give voice to our experience that life has its ups and downs. The Psalms are so real, and often so raw, because they have the same ups and downs going on in them. They say it as it is - brutally sometimes! From profound praise to outbursts of unspeakable anger and inconsolable doubt, the Psalms declare that in the midst of light and darkness, joy and despair, God is surprisingly present.




Psalm 63


Sun 30-July to Wed 2-August

1030 St Wulstans **Sunday 30th July**

The First Step

 *Take five deep breaths. Check-in with how you are feeling – in body, in mind, in spirit. Take five more deep breaths and ask God to abide with you in this moment.*

The Second Step

 *Slowly read through the psalm. You might like to do this out loud.*

O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.


So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory. Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on your name.

My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast, and my mouth praises you with joyful lips when I think of you on my bed and meditate on you in the watches of the night; for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.

My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me. But those who seek to destroy my life shall go down into the depths of the earth; they shall be given over to the power of the sword, they shall be prey for jackals. But the king shall rejoice in God; all who swear by him shall exult, for the mouths of liars will be stopped.

How does it describe what happened yesterday, and today? Talk to God about this.

The Third Step


 Read the Psalm again and find a short phrase to use as a breathing prayer. For example, say to yourself on an in-breath:

with the out-breath:
Repeat the phrase enough times that you can do it naturally and comfortably. When your mind wanders, which it will, that's ok. Pause and notice where your mind has gone, pray about it, and then

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return to your breathing prayer. During the rest of the week, try this prayer whenever it comes to mind.

The Fourth Step

 *How are you feeling about the things coming up the rest of today and tomorrow? Talk to God about them. When you are ready, finish by savouring the Lord's Prayer.*




Psalm 84

Thu 3-August to Sun 6-August


10am St Barnabas and 1115 St Wulstans

Sunday 6th August

The First Step

 *Take five deep breaths. Check-in with how you are feeling – in body, in mind, in spirit. Take five more deep breaths and ask God to abide with you in this moment.*

The Second Step

 *Slowly read through the psalm. You might like to do this out loud.*

How lovely is your dwelling place,
O LORD of hosts! My soul longs,
indeed, it faints for the courts of the
LORD; my heart and my flesh sing for
joy to the living God.

Even the sparrow finds a home, and
the swallow a nest for herself, where
she may lay her young, at your altars,
O LORD of hosts, my King and my God.


Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise. Happy are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion. As they go through the valley of Baca they make it a place of springs; the early rain also covers it with pools. They go from strength to strength; the God of gods will be seen in Zion.

O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob! Behold our shield, O God; look on the face of your anointed.

For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than live in the tents of wickedness.

For the LORD God is a sun and shield; he bestows favour and honour. No good thing does the LORD withhold from those who walk uprightly. O LORD of hosts, happy is everyone who trusts in you.

The Third Step


 Read the Psalm again and find the part about the little birds. You might like to try picturing the birds nesting in the Temple. And take the chance to watch some birds for real, even for a moment or two. When your mind wanders, which it will, that's ok. Pause and notice where your mind has gone, pray about it, and then return to the scene you were imagining or observing.

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During the rest of the week, try repeat this piece of holy daydreaming whenever it comes to mind.

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. Matthew 10:29-31

The Fourth Step

 How are you feeling about the things coming up the rest of today and tomorrow? Talk to God about them. When you are ready, finish by savouring the Lord's Prayer.




Psalm 46


Mon 7-August to Thu 10-August

10am St Barnabas **Wednesday 9th August**

The First Step

 Take five deep breaths. Check-in with how you are feeling – in body, in mind, in spirit. Take five more deep breaths and ask God to abide with you in this moment.

The Second Step

 Slowly read through the psalm. You might like to do this out loud.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its


waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns. The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Come, behold the works of the LORD; see what desolations he has brought on the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire.

‘Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth.’ The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

The Third Step

 *You can try using this phrase from the psalm as a breathing prayer.*


Be still and know that I am God
Be still and know that I am
Be still and know
Be still
Be
[silence]
Be
Be still
Be still and know
Be still and know that I am
Be still and know that I am God

You can even try going around the two versions as continuous loop.

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As always, when your mind wanders, that’s ok. Pause and notice where your mind has gone and start over. During the rest of the week, make moments to pray this verse through again.

The Fourth Step

 *How are you feeling about the things coming up the rest of today and tomorrow? Talk to God about them. When you are ready, finish by savouring the Lord’s Prayer.*




Psalm 103

Fri 11-August to Mon 14-August


10am St Barnabas **Sunday 13th August**

1115 St Wulstans **Sunday 3rd September**

The First Step

 *Take five deep breaths. Check-in with how you are feeling – in body, in mind, in spirit. Take five more deep breaths and ask God to abide with you in this moment.*

The Second Step

 *Slowly read through the psalm. You might like to do this out loud.*

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits—who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who

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satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The LORD works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger for ever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love towards those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion for his children, so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him. For he knows how we were made; he remembers that we are dust.

As for mortals, their days are like grass; they flourish like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments.

The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. Bless the LORD, O you

his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, obedient to his spoken word. Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers that do his will. Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The Third Step



Put your name into the opening verses (instead of Charlie's!!)

- **Charlie's iniquities are forgiven**
- **Charlie's life is redeemed**
- **Charlie is crowned with steadfast love and mercy,**
- **Charlie is satisfied with good**
- **Charlie is renewed like the eagles**

Pause and notice where your mind has goes as you say each one. Which ones feel most true today? Which ones seem furthest from your experience today? Choose one of these to make into a breathing prayer for the next days

The Fourth Step



How are you feeling about the things coming up the rest of today and tomorrow? Talk to God about them. When you are ready, finish by savouring the Lord's Prayer.



Psalm 139

Tue 15-August to Fri 18-August

1115 St Wulstans Sunday 13th August

The First Step



Take five deep breaths. Check-in with how you are feeling – in body,

in mind, in spirit. Take five more deep breaths and ask God to abide with you in this moment.

The Second Step



Try to replay the last 24 hours like a video or radio broadcast in your imagination. Take some time to review the challenges, the joys, and the surprises.

The Third Step



Slowly read through the psalm. You might like to do this out loud.

O LORD, you have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, O LORD, you know it completely. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.

Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast. If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night', even the darkness is not dark

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to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.

For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed.

How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! I try to count them—they are more than the sand; I come to the end—I am still with you.


O that you would kill the wicked, O God, and that the bloodthirsty would depart from me—those who speak of you maliciously, and lift themselves up against you for evil! Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them my enemies.

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.

Which words and phrases from this Psalm stand out as important for you right now, in the light of the day you

have been reflecting on? Can you use any of them as a breathing prayer?

The Fourth Step

 How are you feeling about the things coming up the rest of today and tomorrow? Talk to God about them. When you are ready, finish by savouring the Lord's Prayer.




Psalm 150

Sat 19-August to Tue 22-August


10am St Barnabas **Sunday 20th August**

1115 St Wulstans **Sunday 27th August**


The First Step

 Take five deep breaths. Check-in with how you are feeling – in body, in mind, in spirit. Take five more deep breaths and ask God to abide with you in this moment.

The Second Step

 Try to replay the last 24 hours like a video or radio broadcast in your imagination. Take some time to review the challenges, the joys, and the surprises.

The Third Step

 Slowly read through the psalm. You might like to do this out loud.

Praise the LORD! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty firmament! Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his surpassing greatness! Praise him


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with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe! Praise him with clanging cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals! Let everything that breathes praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!

Is today a day when gratitude has come easily for you? What words might you swap for the musical instruments listed? What objects and actions are part of your daily life?

- ✓ Praise him on the laptop
- ✓ Praise him on the dog walk
- ✓ Praise at the kitchen sink

The Fourth Step

 What opportunities for praise do you have coming up the rest of today and tomorrow? Talk to God about them. When you are ready, finish by savouring the Lord's Prayer.




Psalm 121

Wed 23-August to Sat 26-August

10am St Barnabas **Sunday 27th August**

The First Step

 Take five deep breaths. Check-in with how you are feeling – in body, in mind, in spirit. Take five more deep breaths and ask God to abide with you in this moment.


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Psalm 131

Sun 27-August to Wed 30-August

10am St Barnabas **Wednesday 23rd August**


The Second Step

 *Slowly read through the psalm.
You might like to do this out loud.*

I lift up my eyes to the hills — from where will my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.


The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade at your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and for evermore.

The Third Step

 *Are you someone who finds it easy to ask for help? Are you someone who finds it hard to receive help?*


How does it feel to reflect on the God who made heaven and earth taking time to be your helper?

The Fourth Step


 *What coming in and going out do you expect for the rest of today and tomorrow? Talk to God, inviting the Lord to watch over each one of these entries and exits. When you are ready, finish by savouring the Lord's Prayer.*



The First Step


 *Take five deep breaths. Check-in with how you are feeling — in body, in mind, in spirit. Take five more deep breaths and ask God to abide with you in this moment.*

The Second Step

 *Slowly read through the psalm. You might like to do this out loud but, in a whisper, like you are trying not to wake a baby!*

LORD, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvellous for me. But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; my soul is like the weaned child that is with me. O Israel, hope in the LORD from this time on and for evermore.


The Third Step

 *Are you a worrier? Are you someone with unanswered questions? What helps you calm and quieten yourself? Reread the psalm as a whisper to yourself once again.*

Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:6-7

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The Fourth Step

 *What opportunities for trusting God do you have coming up the rest of today and tomorrow? Talk to the Lord about them. When you are ready, finish by savouring the Lord's Prayer.*




Psalm 86

Thu 31-August to Sun 3-September


1115 St Wulstans **Sunday 20th August**

10am St Barnabas **Wednesday 30th August**

The First Step

 *Take five deep breaths. Check-in with how you are feeling – in body, in mind, in spirit. Take five more deep breaths and ask God to abide with you in this moment.*

The Second Step

 *Slowly read through the psalm. You might like to do this out loud.*

Incline your ear, O LORD, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. Preserve my life, for I am devoted to you; save your servant who trusts in you.


You are my God; be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you do I cry all day long. Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O LORD, I lift up my soul. For you, O LORD, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you. Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer; listen to my cry of supplication. In the day of my trouble, I call on you, for you will answer me.

There is none like you among the gods, O LORD, nor are there any works like yours. All the nations you have made shall come and bow down before you, O LORD, and shall glorify your name. For you are great and do wondrous things; you alone are God.

Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart to revere your name. I give thanks to you, O LORD my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify your name for ever. For great is your steadfast love towards me; you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

O God, the insolent rise up against me; a band of ruffians seeks my life, and they do not set you before them. But you, O LORD, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. Turn to me and be gracious to me; give your strength to your servant; save the child of your serving-maid. Show me a sign of your favour, so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame, because you, O LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

The Third Step

 **give me an undivided heart to revere your name**

How do you picture the idea of AN UNDIVIDED HEART? Is today a DAY OF TROUBLE? Who do you know who might be feeling like the Psalmist today? How could you pray for them?

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The Fourth Step



How divided does your heart feel about the things coming up the rest of today and tomorrow? Talk to God about them. When you are ready, finish by savouring the Lord's Prayer.



Psalm 104

Mon 4-Sept to Thu 7-September

10am St Barnabas **Wednesday 16th August**

10am St Barnabas **Sunday 3rd September**

The First Step



Take five deep breaths. Check-in with how you are feeling – in body, in mind, in spirit. Take five more deep breaths and ask God to abide with you in this moment.

The Second Step



Take the chance to connect with the natural world for a moment. Gaze out of the window, go for a walk, watch a wildlife programme, look after your houseplants, look at the countries of origin of the food products you have in the cupboard and in the fridge. You are part of a much bigger story than you alone!

The Third Step



Slowly read through the psalm. You might like to do this out loud. It could be a good idea to pause and picture each idea in these verses as you read along.

Bless the LORD, O my soul.

O LORD my God, you are very great.

You are clothed with honour and majesty, wrapped in light as with a garment. You stretch out the heavens like a tent, you set the beams of your chambers on the waters, you make the clouds your chariot, you ride on the wings of the wind, you make the winds your messengers, fire and flame your ministers.

You set the earth on its foundations, so that it shall never be shaken. You cover it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. At your rebuke they flee; at the sound of your thunder they take to flight. They rose up to the mountains, ran down to the valleys to the place that you appointed for them. You set a boundary that they may not pass, so that they might not again cover the earth.

You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills, giving drink to every wild animal; the wild asses quench their thirst. By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing among the branches. From your lofty abode you water the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.

You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for people to use, to bring forth food from the earth, and wine to gladden the human heart, oil

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to make the face shine, and bread to strengthen the human heart.

The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted. In them the birds build their nests; the stork has its home in the fir trees. The high mountains are for the wild goats; the rocks are a refuge for the coney.

You have made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting. You make darkness, and it is night, when all the animals of the forest come creeping out. The young lions roar for their prey, seeking their food from God. When the sun rises, they withdraw and lie down in their dens. People go out to their work and to their labour until the evening.

O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. Yonder is the sea, great and wide, creeping things innumerable are there, living things both small and great. There go the ships, and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it. These all look to you to give them their food in due season; when you give to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things. When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground.

May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works — who looks on the earth and it trembles, who touches the mountains and they smoke. I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being.

May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the LORD. Let sinners be consumed from the earth and let the wicked be no more.

Bless the LORD, O my soul.

Praise the LORD!

The Fourth Step



How does your heart feel about the things coming up the rest of today and tomorrow? Talk to God about them. When you are ready, finish by savouring the Lord's Prayer.



Wednesday 6th Sept at 12pm
The ABIDE Café

All welcome at St Wulstans for a midweek communion and lunch to celebrate the Forty Days of Summer we've shared together

KEEP AN EYE ON OUR WEBSITE

saintwulstans.online

FOR MORE RESOURCES AND IDEAS