

Intercessions Sunday 2 March 2025 (Sunday before Lent) **by Charles Ledsam**

I begin by quoting from one of the hymns (404) we will be singing:

*Lord we come to you,
Let our hearts be changed, renewed,
Flowing from the grace
That we found in you.
And Lord we've come to know
The weaknesses we see in us
will be stripped away
By the power of your love.*

As we prepare for Lent and welcome the beginning of Spring, we value longer periods of daylight, clear skies and a lifting of that greyness which has lain heavily on many of us these past few weeks.

Let us pray for the Church and for the world, and let us thank God for his goodness.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, you promised through your son Jesus Christ to hear us when we pray in faith.

Lord God, we have been weighed down by the seeming impossibility of reconciliation of different parties and the search and commitment to peace in many parts of the world

We pray that the leaders of the nations may be guided by truth and justice in all that they do. We pray that they may really listen to one another, recognise that there is more than one point of view, respect one another and seek the common good.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer

Three years on, we pray especially for the people of Ukraine and Russia that there may be an end to this war.

[A moment of silence]

We also pray for the desperate situation in the Middle East, especially in Gaza, and that there will be a ceasefire and a resolution to this longstanding conflict.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer

We pray and give thanks for all charities and organisations helping to support those who have become refugees and are hungry, lonely and homeless. We remember those starving in various parts of Africa.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer

We pray for our nation, for your servant Charles, our King, and all who are in authority under him. Bless Queen Camilla, William Prince of Wales and all the Royal family.

At this massively unsettled time in the world, which faces economic pressures, financial hardship and environmental challenges, give us all in the United Kingdom the ability to settle our differences and work together for the common good.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer

We pray especially for Alan as he prepares for his sabbatical.

Strengthen our Bishops and all your church, including Alan, Bill, Melanie, Geoff, Forbes, Adrian, Maria and Kath, and all who serve here at St Andrew's and St Mary's in any way.

May those who confess your name be united in your truth, live together in your love and reveal your glory to the world.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer

We pray for our Town, especially for its businesses, people who work in offices and businesses and all those who are working today. We also give thanks for St Andrew's School and all involved there.

We also pray for those who are participating in the SEARCHING FOR FAITH Course. May their faith and understanding be increased.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer

We pray for all those who teach, perform and compose music, especially here in our schools and in this town. We give thanks for all those who fill our church with such a wide variety of music each week.

We particularly give thanks for the Hertford Children's Choir run by Sam and Rachel and for an inspiring folk concert last night.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer

We pray for those who are unemployed, suffering from stress, depression and anxiety and all those who love and care for them. Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit including:

His Holiness the Pope, Pauline, Mike, Phoebe, Lucy, Robert, Georgina, Julie, Alexander, Paul, Graham, Dino, Sue and Judy.

Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation.

Hear us as we remember those who have died, including Jeremy Bartlett and Michael Adams.

Give those who have been left behind strength and courage to cope in their time of grief.

We remember those whose anniversaries fall at this time:
Audrey Mann, Eva Woollard, Harold Ranolph Howard, Mabel Lilian Burridge, Dennis Cheesman, Bert Wilbourn and Dorothy Austin

Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer

May we try to be a welcoming church and be good shepherds, offering words of encouragement and hope to those whom we meet and to whom we speak.

We rejoice in the fellowship of St Andrew and all your saints and commend ourselves and all people to your unfailing love. May we be filled with the Holy Spirit.

*Hold me close, let your love surround us,
Bring us near, draw us to your side:*

*And as we wait,
We'll rise up like an eagle,
And we will soar with you;
Your Spirit leads us on
In the pow'r of your love.*

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen