

VIRTUAL PRAYER WALK around HILLSBOROUGH VILLAGE



Join us as we walk around the village, pausing at different places to pray and reflect.

These prayers have been written by members of HOST and others from the congregation.

We hope you will use them as you pass the various locations which mark our community life.



HILLSBOROUGH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

We begin our walk at Hillsborough Presbyterian Church, and our Minister, Rev Dr Allen Sleith, has written the following prayer.

Living God, you have made this wonderful world, beautiful and diverse, a space for us to inhabit, a place to call our own. In our homes, we share the blessings of being with others, who have loved us dearly, and nurture us still. As you, and they, provide for our needs of body, mind and companionship, we pray that we will also be mindful of and grateful for, the church of Jesus Christ, a body of people seeking to reflect his grace and truth. On our journey of faith, with all its comings and goings, its giving and receiving, may we keep in step with your Spirit. Be with us now, as we step out in hope, from our place of worship, through an open gate, to our local village, assured that your presence goes before us to bless, to guide, and to inspire. Amen.



HILLSBOROUGH SHOPS & BUSINESSES

We think about all the shops and businesses which serve our community in a variety of ways.

This prayer has been written by Joyce , a member of HOST.

God:

You are present in every aspect of our lives, including the work of business and commerce. You placed your baby son into the care of a skilled artisan and businessman, someone who worked hard to provide for his family and meet the needs of his community.

We thank you for:

- Those with the vision, commitment and creativity to start and run a business;
- For the employment and opportunities local businesses provide to those seeking work and for the prosperity they bring to our community;
- For the way that business helps our community grow; for the lasting relationships they build with customers and for the friendships built up over many years; and
- For the contribution local businesses make to creating and maintaining the character and wellbeing of Hillsborough

We pray for all those businesses – for their owners, their employees and their customers – who are uncertain or fearful of the future.

We ask that you would help each one of our local businesses to:

- Rely on you for their true security
- Find new sources of courage and energy to move forward with fresh ideas and plans for the future
- Restore supplies of resilience and energy to keep going despite the uncertainties and setbacks brought about by COVID
- Maintain their high standards and integrity when dealing with all aspects of their business
- Continue to treat their employees with fairness, openness and care
- Seek your guidance on the business decisions that sustain their dreams and foster their well being

We pray also for wisdom for those in government at all levels who are faced with difficult decisions which impact on businesses. We pray that speedy and unambiguous decisions will be made to the benefit of us all.

Finally, we commit our local businesses and merchants into your care.

Amen



Downshire Primary School & Nursery

This prayer has been written by Ann,
a member of the Board of Governors of the school.

Loving Lord, amid the many difficulties and challenges of the Covid-19 Pandemic, we pause to remember those involved in all aspects of education. In particular we reflect on the blessing that Downshire Primary School has been to the community.

We give thanks for the people who work in the various roles within the school – for those who have planned and reconfigured the accommodation to ensure a safe environment; for those who have constantly cleaned and sanitised; for those who have planned alternative menus and made special arrangements so that lunches could continue to be served. We especially give thanks for the teachers who have worked tirelessly to adjust to and undertake remote learning opportunities for the children; also for the classroom assistants who have contributed significantly to the progress of those children who continued to attend school during lockdown.

Our prayer is that all pupils will be able to continue in full time attendance and that the special provision that is in place will ensure they can achieve their potential as they enjoy the familiar routines of school life.

We offer this prayer in the name of Jesus, the greatest teacher of all,
Amen



THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY CENTRE

This prayer has been written by Denise,
A Physiotherapist who works in the community.

Loving Heavenly Father,

Thank you for our community.

Those family, friends, neighbours who live around us. Even those people who we simply nod to in the street but still feel a connection with. For that feeling of belonging.

And thank you for places like our village centre where we can come to meet old friends and make new ones, to share activities and friendships.

Thank you also for the people who work there to provide facilities, keep the place clean or lead activities. We look forward to being able to use these places again and to participate in sports and activities we have missed in the past year.

Help us, Father, to be an open, caring community, ready to welcome new people, especially those who may be different to ourselves in some way.

Please bless those who feel left out in our community.

Those who are ill, disabled, lonely or struggling with worries that overwhelm them. Help us always to be watching out for these people and for opportunities to help them, make them feel welcome and encourage them to participate.

Finally, Father, help us to pull together as a community. Help us to get on with our neighbours, and to be loving and caring to everyone we meet. Help us not to create division based on language, accent, religion, the way people dress or the colour of their skin but to include everyone in this community you have given us.

Through our community may we all show your love working within us and spread that love in your name.

Amen



HILLSBOROUGH HEALTH CENTRE

Walking back down into the village, we pause at the Health Centre.

The following prayer has been written by Christine, a retired Nurse.

Loving God, as the world is in crisis , we place into your care all our doctors and nurses, especially those in Hillsborough Surgery. Help them to be the best they can be despite the situation of a pandemic and the aftermath health problems.

Give them courage too so they can face the challenges head on. Bless them with a kind manner so they can care for their patients with respect and understanding.

Guide them in providing expert care whilst ensuring the comfort of their patients.

Lord, let the Hillsborough doctors and nurses be a source of strength for their patients and their families.

Let them be a beacon of light in these difficult times. Fill them with energy so they can work in challenging times. Shower them with love which they can give to every person under their care.

Bless all the residents of Hillsborough. Lord be with them if they are sick or lonely and comfort them. Bless them in these challenging days.

We ask this in your holy name.

Amen



We reflect on the wonderful gift of music and this prayer was written by Carson, a member of the Choir and Diane, our Organist & Choir Mistress.

God of all creation, we thank you today for your gift of musicians in Hillsborough. We know that every good and perfect gift comes from you and we thank you for these custodians and their divine service. We thank you for our church choirs and musicians, organists and composers, instrumentalists and directors of music who have served our community for centuries. Lord God we ask that you bless all who guide through the ministry of music worship. May musicians facilitate music that brings you glory. Music that transcends barriers that divide race, class, gender, denominationalism, ethnicity or geography. May their gifts create the atmosphere that lifts you up, for you said “If you be lifted up from the earth you will draw all people unto you”. Today we celebrate musicians for the healers that they are. Providing light and renewal to the soul.

Lord God, gracious and merciful, we pray for their strength, and the strength of their families and loved ones. We ask that you continue to cause them to create and share the gift of music through instrument and voice. May they find joy in their work and may it fill them with peace, comfort and purpose. Fill musicians with your light and love as they generously share with the world. Lord let all creation sing your praise and the host make music in your presence. Bless musicians as only you can. In your name we pray. Amen.



We pause now at gates of The Parish Church...

A prayer of thanks for our faith and for the good relations we enjoy with fellow Christians, in the village, in the Lisburn Church & Faith Forum and wider afield. We include also those from other faith traditions, and those who do not yet profess a faith, living in our community.

This prayer has been written by Rev Jack Richardson, a faithful member of the Faith & Friendship Group.

Almighty God, our loving heavenly Father, we gladly rejoice in the wonderful privilege that is ours to come into your presence in the name of Jesus. On this beautiful spring day we see something of your magnificent creation with all its variety and colour in the trees and hedgerows, flowers, birds and animals around us. And we exclaim with the hymn writer - "How Great thou art."

Having recently lived through the season of Lent, we have tried to identify what Jesus went through during those forty days and nights in the wilderness. On Passion Sunday, with Christians the world over, we thought of the intensity of His suffering as He prepared to bear the enormity of the world's sin. On Palm Sunday we thought of how fickle as human beings we are, as the crowds on that day sang their loud Hosannas but within a few days changed to "crucify him." And then on Good Friday, in quiet contemplation, we thought of the question posed by the Negro Spiritual - "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" And, one by one, we resolved - Yes, we were there when they nailed Him to the tree for our sin was there and Jesus was taking our place as He hung and suffered there on that cruel cross.

But, thank you God, that was Friday and Sunday was coming. Yes, Good Friday did show human sin at its worst but it also showed your love at its best!! As Mrs Alexander wrote in her great hymn - "There is a green hill" - "There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin. He only could unlock the gate of heaven and let us in." Yes, Easter Sunday dawned, and with what joy and thanksgiving, Christians the world over of all nationalities, colours, classes and creeds joined their hearts and voices in praise of Jesus who died and rose again to give us hope that because He lives, we too shall live. What a hope in which to live and what a hope in which to die!! And what a hope to share with those whose lives we come into contact day by day. May they see in us something of the spirit of the Living Jesus in what we say, in what we do and what we are.

And to You - Father, Son and Holy Spirit be all Praise, Honour and Glory. Amen



WAR MEMORIAL

This prayer has been written by Eddie, Captain of our Boys Brigade, one of the uniformed organisations who take an active part on Remembrance Sunday.

We pause to remember those who have lost their lives in the service of others.

Heavenly Father

We pray for all who suffer as a result of conflict and ask that God may give peace

For the many service men and woman who have paid the ultimate sacrifice and died in the violence of war. We thank God for their selfless contribution enabling us to live within a peaceful society. We pray for their loved ones who have been left to carry the burden of loss and a life cut short

We recognise that service men and woman have fought on our behalf over many different battles. Those who fought in world war 1; world war 2; Korean War; Falklands war; Gulf war; Afghanistan, Iraq and the troubles within NI.

We pray for those who due to their experiences suffer from physical and mental health conditions. We think especially of those who suffer from PTSD which can be described as a hidden illness but has significant impact on both the individual and their loved ones.

We pray for all members of the armed forces who are currently in combat and who continue to put themselves in danger on our behalf.

O God of truth and justice we hold before you those whose memory we cherish and those whose names we will never know. Help us lift our eyes above the torment of this broken world and grant us the grace to pray for those who wish us harm. As we honour the past, may we put our faith in your future, for you are the source of life and Hope, now and forever. Amen



HILLSBOROUGH CASTLE

We continue walking up the hill to Hillsborough Castle.

This prayer has been written by Pat & Alan,
members of HOST.

God, thank you for the women and men who serve our country in local and national government. We pray that they will have integrity, compassion and be true to their commitment. May they be a strong force and show respect and consideration for themselves and others. We ask that you help them and their families as they work to establish the laws for all people.

At this time we especially think of the Queen and her family who are grieving at the loss of the Duke of Edinburgh. We also think of all who have lost loved ones. May they feel your love and the strength of your comforting arms.

Amen



HILLSBOROUGH FOREST PARK & AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

This prayer has been written by Michael who lives and works in the beautiful surroundings which this forest and lake setting offers to all of us to enjoy the benefits of exercising surrounded by nature.

Loving Father and creator of all we come to you today deeply grateful for your beautiful creation. As we look around us we are amazed by the greatness and majesty of your creation which surrounds us everyday . We thank you for the vastness of the blue skies and the depth of the earth's oceans, for mountains, forests and valleys, for flowers, fruit and vegetables we can but stand in awe at the vastness of your creation.

For years the earth has sustained us but we have abused your beautiful earth with our greed and lust for our everyday luxuries, we have robbed your earth for fuels, for coal, oil and precious metals, lord forgive us, give us the inspiration to recognise and correct our misuse and care for our precious planet. We think of the melting polar ice caps, the diminished rain forests, and the animal species which have been lost to us and future generations, dear Lord forgive us.

Lord we thank you for those who work on the land, for farmers who till the soil, for those who tend the herds and flocks and who now look to the future of farming systems which will help reduce carbon emissions but still be able to feed an increasing earth population.

Everyday we breath in fresh air, drink fresh water but at the same time we fill our atmosphere with pollutants and fill our waterways and oceans with plastics and rubbish, O Lord forgive our selfish, foolish ways.

Lord you only are the maker of all things near and far,
You paint the wayside flower, you light the evening stars,
The wind and waves obey you, by you the birds are fed,
Much more to us your children, you give us daily bread.

All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above,
Then thank you lord, O thank you Lord

For all your endless love,

Amen



This prayer has been written by Helen & Bill,
whose farm is situated just beyond the village.

We think with gratitude of all the farming community who keep us
supplied with an abundance of fresh food. We think too of those who
struggle to provide food for their families.

Eternal Father, Creator,
Master of the flock.

We are ever mindful of your promise to us.

We give you thanks for all who work on the land,
preserving the countryside for all to enjoy,
from the smallest bug to the largest tree.

Let's not ever destroy them.

We give you thanks for all our food ever mindful of your love
for us.

In your name we pray. Amen

We finish our virtual Prayer Walk here,
but hope that you will keep the Hillsborough
community in you prayers
in the weeks and months to come.

To everyone who has logged onto this
Virtual Prayer Walk, we pray a blessing on you,
your family, your Church ,
and for the health and wellbeing
of our whole community.

The Lord bless you and keep you,
the Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious unto you;
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you
And give you peace.

Amen.

“The LORD, bless you
AND Keep you;
The LORD make His Face
Shine UPON you,
AND BE Gracious
The LORD lift up His
Countenance UPON you,
AND Give you Peace.”

NUM 6:24~26