

Mothers' Union Thursday Prayers 27th November, 2025

Refuges

Zoom Details: 10.30am Meeting ID: 852 0929 8628 Passcode 080127

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85209298628?pwd=VDTrciGq12BVz8luyEa34M6BRLZDIK.1>

Welcome to the Mothers' Union November Thursday Prayers which have the theme "refuges"

Introduction: We meet to pray for refuges, both physical and spiritual, in our world and in our hearts.

We begin with a prayer and then we will sing our hymn. Please join in the words in **BOLD**

November's Thursday Prayer

Lord, we come to you today to remember those in the community, local and worldwide, homeless or abused by loved ones. We pray that they will find peace and comfort in the places they now call home. We pray that the material gifts that are collected may help them in realising there is love and goodness in the world today. We pray all the residents will grow towards a positive hope for their future. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen**

HYMN – (George Herbert 1593-1632)

**Let all the world in every corner sing,
My God and King.**

**The heavens are not too high, His praise may thither fly,
The earth is not too low, His praises there may grow.
Let all the world in every corner sing,
My God and King.**

**Let all the world in every corner sing,
My God and King.
The Church with psalms must shout,
No door can keep them out;
But above all the heart
Must bear the longest part.
Let all the world in every corner sing,
My God and King.**

Reading: 1 John 3. 16-18 (New English Bible)

16. God loved the world so much he gave his only Son, that everyone who has faith in him may not die but have eternal life.

17. It was not to judge the world that God sent his Son into the world, but that through him the world might be saved.

18. The man who puts his trust in Him does not come under judgement but the unbeliever has already been judged in that he has not given his allegiance to God's only Son.

TALK:

Today, to take refuge is to find a safe place. You might take refuge under a bridge in a hail storm, or in a basement during a tornado. Refuge comes from a French word (se réfugier dans) derived from Latin meaning "to flee," and, in most cases, a refuge is a place to flee to in order to get away from people or places that are unsafe.

What is the meaning of refuge in the Bible?

In the Bible, "refuge" signifies a place of safety and protection, both physically and spiritually. It is most often used to describe God as a shelter and protector from danger, trouble, and anxiety. Many biblical passages, especially in the Psalms, refer to God as a "refuge" or "shelter" and an "ever-present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1). The term refuge is linked to God's strength, security, and ability to provide ultimate safety in a world filled with threats, both physical and spiritual. In a deeper sense, God is also seen as a refuge from the consequences of sin, offering forgiveness and protection from judgment.

The concept of "Refuge" is also represented by physical places like the Old Testament description of six Cities of Refuge where those who had accidentally killed someone could flee to escape revenge. These cities symbolized God's mercy and justice, providing a safe place to go until their case could be resolved. The Bible also uses other physical imagery for refuge, such as a fortress, tower, or a secure dwelling, to represent the protection God offers.

The history of "refuge" has evolved significantly, from those ancient "cities of refuge" and 19th-century institutions for women in "sinful circumstances" to the modern concept of a safe house, which began in 1971 with the opening of the first refuge for women and children fleeing domestic violence. The modern refuge movement was a product of the women's liberation movement, and the UK charity Refuge <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Refugee> was founded in 1971 to provide these services. More recently, "refugee history" has focused on the study of forced migration and asylum policies, which gained momentum in the 20th century, especially after World War II. They also symbolized Christ as a spiritual refuge in Christianity.

In our area we have:

Fenland refuge, Mid Cambs. refuge, Whitworth House for young women, Cambs. Woman's aid and Wheatsheaf Close for young people, in addition to Mary's Child. If you have seen the most recent Diocesan newsletter there is a wish list together with contacts for each of these. Our Cathedral Mother's Union event in December is a fundraiser for some of them.

Sometimes we need a refuge of our own, just for a while. My research suggested your refuge space should feel like a warm hug. Think cozy blankets, a favourite chair, or maybe a soft rug that feels good under your feet. You want a place where you can sink in and just relax, whether you're reading a book, meditating, or just taking a quiet moment to yourself. Here is an alternative picture for us as Christians: in times of troubles, large or small, we are all spiritual refugees who seek refuge in our Lord Jesus. We flee to Him. We assess the troubles and craziness of our lives and say, "to God we go!" Our Lord offers rest and safety in himself for all who would come.

PAUSE FOR REFLECTION

WE PRAY TOGETHER

Heavenly Father, you have called us apart to share in a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer. Take our prayers we humbly ask, fill them with love and power, and use them in the cause of your glorious kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Let us join in the MU NOVEMBER MIDDAY PRAYER on the theme of
Spreading our wings*

“Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.”

Isiah 40: 31

Restore our faith in your eternal purposes; renew in us the hope that never fails; lift our eyes to the things that are unseen and eternal; that we may discern and embrace the new things that you have prepared for us. In Chris’s name. Amen

From the MU Prayer Diary for this month – the theme is “Spreading our wings” and links with the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. The prayer for each day looks at a different aspect of this issue.

This Thursday’s prayer.

Lord, we pray for young teenagers forced into child marriages, especially considering their consequent high risk of abuse. We pray that our work, through Mothers’ Union members, will continue to bear fruit as we work to protect the most vulnerable in society.

IN OUR INTERSESSIONS;

We pray for:

- The worldwide work of the Mothers’ Union;
- Kathleen Snow our Worldwide President;
- Our Chief Executive, Bev Jullien; All who work in Mary Sumner House;
- Our Diocesan President Hazel Williams and Trustees; the Task Group Leaders in: Faith in Action, Praying our Faith, Finance & Administration, and Communications;
- Our province of Canterbury and Kathryn Anderson, our Provincial President.
- Our Worldwide Links: Lusaka in Zambia; Shyogwe in Rwanda; Sokoto & Ikka in Nigeria; Karimnagar in India; Plus the Diocesan Links with Kigali & Vellore.

Lord, we pray for Mothers’ Union worldwide, in the

WAVE OF PRAYER: Zululand in South Africa; Lodwar in Kenya; Isiala Ngwa South in Nigeria; Accra in Ghana; Bangor in Wales and Colombo in Sri Lanka.

We also pray:

- For the King and the Royal family, the Prime Minister, the Cabinet, all those in government, and all MPs.
- For the family of the Bev Sweet: may she rest in peace and rise in glory.
- For our local parishes, our families, and our friends, and give thanks for our many blessings.
- For anyone known to us who is in need or unwell.
- For all in Local Government, in the Health Service, Emergency Services, and Transport and Travel Industry; those in Education, especially remembering children and young people.
- For the many countries around the world where there are troubles and people are suffering.

Reflective prayer

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 mine end, and at my departing. **Amen**

PAUSE FOR REFLECTION

WE SAY TOGETHER:

MOTHERS' UNION PRAYER.

Loving Lord, we thank you for your love so freely given to us all. We pray for families around the world. Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life. Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship, and in love and service, reach out as your hands across the world. In Jesus' name. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

WE SAY THE GRACE TOGETHER

May The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and evermore. Amen.