Worshipping at Home
1st November 2026

We gather today on All Saints Day, as we remember before God those who have gone before us, shining a light for us to follow as disciples of Christ. We give thanks for their example, as we pray for the strength to be an example to others.

Hymn 745: For all the saints who from their labours rest

Prayer
Eternal God, we thank you today that you have called us to share in the inheritance of your saints, one with you and all your people across the ages. Once we were not a people, but now we are the people of God. Once we had not received mercy, but now we have received mercy in all its fulness through you. You call us to be your people, called out of darkness into your marvellous light in order to proclaim your mighty acts. By your grace, help us to fulfil that calling.

Teach us to put aside everything that denies our faith and betrays your love – anger, greed, envy and bitterness. Teach us instead to act honourably and with humility, loving and gentle in all our actions, living in unity with you and with one another. By your grace, help us to fulfil that calling.

Help us to look towards your kingdom, to live as those ready for the coming of Christ and to offer an example to those around us, not superior in our attitudes nor thinking of ourselves more highly than we should, but offering ourselves in the service of others, proclaiming the Gospel through faithful discipleship.

Eternal God, we come to you as ordinary, everyday people. There is nothing special about us. But you welcome us into your family and you have called us to be your Church. You have given us a place among the great company of saints in heaven and on earth. By your grace, help us to fulfil our calling through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Readings: Revelation 7:9-17 and Matthew 5:1-12

Hymn 746: For all the saints who showed your love

Reflection
This passage is one of the best-known and most-loved passages in all scripture. It is usually known as the Beatitudes, from the Latin word *beati* meaning 'blessed'. The text is particularly relevant for today, which is All Saints' Day, when the Church traditionally recalls those who have died, especially those who have been killed for their faith.

The Beatitudes mark the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel (Matthew 5:1-7:29). This is the first of five large blocks of teaching we find in the Gospel, which includes some of Jesus' most famous sayings and instructions. It seems to take place near Capernaum by Lake Galilee, but it is very likely that Matthew gathered together teaching that took place on several occasions.

In some senses, the Beatitudes look back to the world of the Old Testament, and especially teachings about what true wisdom meant. For example, the book of Psalms begins with a form of beatitude: "Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked" (Psalm 1:1). Many commentators also make parallels between Jesus and Moses. Both teach God's people, both produce five great blocks of teaching (the Torah), and both go "up the mountain" (Exodus 19).

The Beatitudes also look forward, though, introducing many of the key themes we will find in Jesus' teaching, especially the mysterious concept of the 'Kingdom of Heaven' (vs 3, 10). (The other gospel writers use the term 'Kingdom of God' but Matthew seemingly chooses to avoid using the divine name.) In this topsy-turvy world, which is both present and yet to come, the values of the world are reversed: the rich are poor, the weak are powerful, and even death is not the end.

A key challenge for all readers is how to understand the word 'blessed' in this context. We could translate the original Greek as 'happy' or 'fortunate' but the meaning goes deeper than that. It also challenges both ancient and modern concepts of what true happiness – or blessedness – looks like, in terms of material wealth and personal contentment. It seems to speak of a much deeper, revolutionary truth.

To Ponder:
How would you understand the word 'blessed' here? Can you think of a better translation?
Can those who mourn really be comforted by Jesus' teachings? How?
In what ways do the Beatitudes challenge your way of thinking about your life and the world?

Hymn 141: Abide with me

Prayer
Glorious God, as we celebrate the lives of those Church members who have shone with the brightness of your love, we offer you ourselves and our lives in fresh commitment and conscious awareness of our need for you in our church and in our community.

Powerful God, may your kingdom of love and peace be established in this world and grow. We pray for both the influential and the ignored, both the popular and the disliked, both the ambitious and the vulnerable. Teach us all your ways and your values.

Loving God, we call to mind our families and friends, neighbours and colleagues, thanking you for all the loving care and forgiveness, and asking your light to shine in all areas of hurt and misunderstanding.

Healing God, we bring to you those whose lives are darkened by pain, fear or weariness. Come to our aid; help is to bear what must be carried, and take from us all resentment and bitterness, replacing it with the abundance of peace.

Eternal God, we thank you for all the saints – those recognised by the Church and those known only to a few, and to you. We praise you for their example and rejoice that they live in your heaven with every tear wiped away. In your mercy, may all who have died in your company know your lasting peace.

Gracious God, you can take us as we are and transform us by your life in us. Clear our lives of all that is not of you, so that we let your goodness shine through our lives and in the gifts that you have given us. We ask in this all in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

We share together the Lord's Prayer: Our Father…

Hymn 608: All praise to our redeeming Lord

Prayer of sending
Holy God, help us to live our lives by the values of your kingdom. Open our hearts and minds to all that is good. When we are afraid or disheartened, remind us that you are always with us. Give us courage to never give up, remembering that one day we will worship you with all your people. **Amen**

Service compiled by Rev'd Barbara Evans-Routley
Prayers for all seasons, Nick Fawcett, Kevin Mayhew Publishing, 1999
Prayer of Intercession, Susan Sayers, Kevin Mayhew Publishing, 1999
Reflection from 'Word In Time', 2021