

**Transformation – NOW!
Christ is our Rock**

Opening prayer

Living God,
we thank you that we can put our hands in yours,
and walk where you will lead us,
confident that, though all else may fail, you will not,
though heaven and earth pass away,
your words will endure forever.

So we come in faith,
with joyful hearts and in glad thanksgiving,
to offer our worship,
and to dedicate our lives once more to your service.

You have given us hope,
and hope does not disappoint us.

Receive our praise,
in the name of Christ. Amen

©Nick Fawcett

Christ is made the sure foundation
sung by St Martin's Voices

Christ is made the sure foundation,
Christ the head and corner-stone,
chosen of the Lord, and precious,

binding all the church in one,
holy Zion's help for ever,
and her confidence alone.

To this temple, where we call thee,
come, O Lord of Hosts, today;
with thy wonted loving-kindness
hear thy servants as they pray;
and thy fullest benediction
shed within its walls always.

Here vouchsafe to all thy servants
what they ask of thee to gain,
what they gain from thee for ever
with the blessed to retain,
and hereafter in thy glory
evermore with thee to reign.

Laud and honour to the Father,
laud and honour to the Son,
laud and honour to the Spirit,
ever Three, and ever One,
consubstantial, co-eternal,
while unending ages run.

Anonymous Latin translated by John M Neale (1818-1866)

Bible Reading: Psalm 40: 1-3 (The Voice)

I waited a long time for the Eternal;
He finally knelt down to hear me.
He listened to my weak and whispered cry.
He reached down and drew me
from the deep, dark hole where I was stranded,
mired in the muck and clay.

With a gentle hand, He pulled me out
To set me down safely on a warm rock;
He held me until I was steady enough to continue the
journey again.

As if that were not enough,
because of Him my mind is clearing up.
Now I have a new song to sing—
a song of praise to the One who saved me.
Because of what He's done, many people will see
and come to trust in the Eternal.

Reflection

We're often told that walking is good for our health and that we should do more of it. The trouble is, walking in the country especially has lots of hazards: cows, barbed wire fences and, above all, mud. Muddy bits which are so deep you think you might disappear for ever or at least be up to your knees in them. If we're lucky someone has put some rocks in the middle of the mud to provide stepping stones and we can get across without sinking if we stand on them but if we miss or slip off then the mud threatens to drag us down so we're lost for ever.

Life is a bit like those walks. Every so often we come to a very boggy bit where we're in danger of sinking and we're thankful for the rocks we can stand on to get through the mud. As Christians we know that these rocks are gifts to us from God, they are a way of showing his love, showing us he'll never let us drown in the mud and morass of life.

Christ is our Rock – we say it glibly, but do we recognise that Rock when we see it and give thanks for it or do we

take it for granted? After we've stood on the rock to get through a bad patch do we stop and say, 'Thank you'? Or are we so glad to get over the bad patch that we forget who put in place the rocks which we stood on to get through?

Christ is our Rock, and he will always be our Rock. We will never drown or be engulfed by life's trials and tribulations because he will always provide us with a safe path to the other side. For that we give him eternal thanks and praise.

Reflective prayer

Oh Lord, my Rock, how grateful I am for You.

Thank You for Your immovable safety. You are not fleeting or changing, but solid and reliable. I am so grateful that when all around me seems uncertain and I don't know what to do next, I can rely on You.

Lord, all around me seems to be shifting. But as long as I stay rooted on you, and wait in hope for you to work, I am safe. It is only the security that you provide that holds me up.. You even tell me I can pour my heart out to You, my mighty Rock. Thank You Lord for being my Rock.

Susan Macias (adapted)

God of the poor

from St James Road Methodist Church, Southampton

Vocals: Sophie Hambley

Piano and Violin: Oliver Hack Author

Beauty for brokenness

Hope for despair

Lord in the suffering

This is our prayer

Bread for the children
Justice joy peace
Sunrise to sunset
Your kingdom increase
Shelter for fragile lives
Cures for their ills
Work for the craftsmen
Trade for their skills
Land for the dispossessed
Rights for the weak
Voices to plead the cause
Of those who can't speak

*God of the poor
Friend of the weak
Give us compassion we pray
Melt our cold hearts
Let tears fall like rain
Come, change our love
from a spark to a flame*

Refuge from cruel wars
Havens from fear
Cities for sanctuary
Freedoms to share
Peace to the killing-fields
Scorched earth to green
Christ for the bitterness
His cross for the pain

Rest for the ravaged earth
Oceans and streams
Plundered and poisoned
Our future, our dreams
Lord, end our madness
Carelessness, greed
Make us content with
The things that we need

God of the poor

Lighten our darkness
Breathe on this flame
Until your justice
Burns brightly again
Until the nations
Learn of your ways
Seek your salvation
And bring you their praise

God of the poor

Graham Kendrick
© 1993 Make Way Music

Prayers

Come, people of God!
Take refuge in the Lord,
who listens when we cry out,
who rescues us when we call,
and who leads and guides us according to his unfailing love.

You are our God;
our lives are in your hands.
Praise the Lord,
who has shown us the wonders of his unfailing love;
and who, for the sake of his name,
leads us and guides us.

In you, O Lord, we put our trust.
You are our God,
and our lives are in your hands.

Lord, let the light of your face shine on us

Unknown

Lord, you are more reliable than the ground I stand on and
your faithfulness is more than I can comprehend. Thank You
for hearing my voice and rescuing me when I cry to You.
When I am shaken, you steady me. When I am in trouble,
you save me. Amen.

Ann Spangler

The 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

© Mothers' Union

All my hope on God is founded

sung by the Choral Scholars of St Martin-in-the-Fields

All my hope on God is founded;
he doth still my trust renew.
Me through change and chance he guideth,
only good and only true.
God unknown,
he alone
calls my heart to be his own.

Human pride and earthly glory,
sword and crown betray his trust;
what with care and toil he buildeth,
tower and temple, fall to dust.
But God's power,
hour by hour,
is my temple and my tower.

God's great goodness ay endureth,
deep his wisdom, passing thought:
splendour, light, and life attend him,
beauty springeth out of nought.
Evermore,
from his store
new-born worlds rise and adore.

Daily doth the almighty giver
bounteous gifts on us bestow;
his desire our soul delighteth,
pleasure leads us where we go.
Love doth stand
at his hand;
joy doth wait on his command.

Still from man to God eternal
sacrifice of praise be done,
high above all praises praising
for the gift of Christ his Son.
Christ doth call
one and all:
ye who follow shall not fall.

Meine Hoffnung stehet feste Joachim Neander (1650-1680)
Paraphrased Robert Bridges (1844-1930)

Dismissal

Whatever today may hold,
whatever tomorrow might bring,
the future is secure,
for Christ is with us,
the same yesterday, today and forever.
Live each moment with him
in quiet confidence and joyful celebration,
for he is ours
and we are his
for all eternity. Amen

©Nick Fawcett

Thank you for joining in with Thursday Prayers.

Choral music: The Church of England St Martin in the Fields

Material: as stated

Theme music: Catherine Hilton

Theme image: Aarn Giri on Unsplash.com

Readers: Christine Sharp, Sandra Bradshaw, Ross Garner,
Margaret Shewring, Judith Hilton, Jennifer White,
Andrea Walsh, Tricia Stokes

Background image: Mitchell Luo on Unsplash.com

CCLI: 5097385

**Thursday Prayers next month will be on 11th August 2022
- Mary Sumner**