



a flame among us

These prayers were written for the Cumbria Methodist District, to be used by churches and individuals during the time the Olympic flame was being carried through the County [2012].

They are adapted here for more general use.

Jesus said, I am the light of the world

An Olympic Flame

Praise God whose word is carried like an Olympic Flame
across time and space
till all the world has seen the light of Christ and heard his truth.

Lord, light your flame of love and truth in us and in our churches.
Let it be a sign of your love;
of your presence among us:
Glinting on the fell-tops,
Reflected in lake waters;
Touching lives
in our busy towns and villages;
in the market and the shipyard;
in the fields and the factories;
in our schools and places of learning;
in our hospitals and medical centres;
in every home, family and meeting place.

Make the flame of your word
a message of hope and encouragement for your people.
As we engage Gospel with community.
make us messengers of your goodness,
sharing Jesus' word of healing, and wholeness;
insight and wisdom;
freedom and happiness;
compassion and self-giving love for others.

Keep us fit for your service by our trust in, and obedience to, Jesus.
Make us worthy of our place in his Kingdom of love.

Lord Jesus Christ, re-ignite the flame of your Spirit in us;
Let it burn ever brighter in our communities
as a sign of your presence among us.

Health

Lord, our health and strength,
we give thanks for the flame of your healing love
across our land:
for the privilege of having health
and health services readily available.

In these time of change we pray for those who direct our health services
that they may maintain the loving flame,
inspiring care like that of Jesus
which comes to the help of all in need, without exception.

May all who serve others in ill-health
work together as a team;
be given insight into the needs of patients and clients,
bringing wisdom, care and kindness
together with knowledge and skill
for the wholeness of people
in every kind of ill-health and dis-ease:
infirmity of body and mind;
in hospital and at home;
in surgery and health clinic;
in hospice and care home.

Let the flame of compassionate hope be always going ahead of them

Visitors

Lord God, unite us, your people,
with one vision of your Kingdom
and in the one person – Jesus

We praise you for those places,
where tourism attracts people from all nations
and from all walks of life
to enjoy the beauty of your creation;
to share the creative inspiration of writer, artist, musician;
to meet the challenges of walking, climbing, water sports, riding ..

May people of all races and creeds,
find a common source of praise in beauty and recreation
to lift their thoughts and prayers to you.

May we all catch sight of your living flame of love in Jesus;
in his life and teaching;
in his death and resurrection
- the inextinguishable, eternal light
which unites us with all your people in earth and heaven.

Education

Lord, our teacher,
who in Jesus has given us the source of all truth,
we rejoice in the gift of knowledge and learning
like active flames leaping up in our minds.

We pray for the same excitement and wonder
to be in all the work of education in our land;
in University and College
and in our many schools
scattered across fells and dales, towns and villages.

May those who direct and teach
be inflamed with the love of truth;
the joy of imparting knowledge;
patience with those reluctant to learn;
encouragement for all who struggle to achieve;
and an overriding desire to lead others
to the fullest experience of life.

May children, young people and adults find
fulfilment of their ambition
through the riches of knowledge, truth and justice.

Church

Lord our God, Word of Life,
we praise you as we recall how the Gospel flame
came to light the primitive darkness of our land:
bringing knowledge,
ways of peace,
and gifts of health and learning.
Through many centuries the flame has burned;
sometimes flickering;
sometimes ablaze:
Let the flame burn bright in the church today.

In the strength of our Christian unity;
Through inspired leadership and faithful discipleship
may your church be
inspiration;
healing and reconciliation;
learning and wisdom;
guidance, justice and truth
for all our people and communities;
permeating every part of life
with the truth which Jesus taught and lived;
sharing truth with those of other faiths and ideologies
while affirming your unique Lordship
in the unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Sport

Lord, we give thanks to you for the blessings of sport and recreation.
Inspire a true love for sport in all our communities.
giving people of all ages,
health in body mind and spirit;
encouraging dedication to training for fitness
with a determination to achieve one's best
and be worthy of being chosen for the team.

May all our sporting activities teach us the Christian way
of fairness and mutual respect;
of courage and perseverance;
of competitiveness which is not hostile,
but free from envy and pride

Give these same gifts to us who are your Church;
that by our spiritual fitness
we may show a flame of love, truth, justice and compassion
which will make Christ clearly visible to all our people

Agriculture

God, shepherd and harvester,
may the flame of grace
rise like the morning sun across the fields,
lifting mists from lowland pastures;
tinting higher slopes with golden light.

By the constant yet ever-changing patterns of agriculture
teach us eternal values,
and make them meaningful for
all who farm the land
and all who enjoy its fruits
and the beauty of its continual re-birth.

May your flame of grace
give hope when despair falls like lowering clouds;
give courage when loss and change, low yields
and inclement weather disappoint and frustrate;
give faithfulness to continue steadfast in the furrow;
give joy with the promise of harvest.

As the Church continues to work for your Kingdom harvest
give us wisdom to see signs of its fulfilment,
like new growth in winter,
Renew our hope in Christ and keep us ready for his coming.

Industry

Lord, our Creator,
like the flare on the oil rig,
let a flame of hope burn for the industrial life of our land.

We ask for your guidance, strength and inspiration
for all who work in our many diverse industries:
in the production of fuel to power our daily lives;
in growing our food and milling grain;
in haulage and transport;
in shipyard and marine engineering;
in the production of basic materials – chemicals, plastics, paper;
and in the host of light industries scattered across our land.

Give to all, a pride in the work of their minds and hands:
Give a sense of fulfilled ambition
and hope for future progress and prosperity.

May the flame of hope burn bright
for the unemployed
and all who are unable to share in productivity.
Let your people's love fuel that flame.

Towns

Our One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Let the Gospel flame of unity
burn bright
in the streets of our towns,
to make them places of safety and community.

In our shopping centres and out-of-town trading sites;
enabling prosperity without greed:
in our places of entertainment and pleasure
to bring happiness
and opportunity for mutual care and compassion:
in our homes bringing families together
in harmony with understanding:
in our work places to make them areas of co-operation
and shared purpose for the good of others:
in our meeting places, creating trusting, loyal friendships.

May the light of Christ be
a flame of love in our daily life;
a lamp of grace searching the darkest places of our communities
and irradiating every place of true happiness.

Fells and Lakes

God our Father,
may the light of your love
be seen clearly across the hills
and through the valleys of our communities.
Let the light shine high and bright along the fell-tops,
making a clear witness to all;
let it be reflected from the stilled waters of the lakes
as sign of our calm clear prayerfulness;
let it dance with sparkling enthusiasm
on the turbulent water of many streams
to mirror our excitement with the Gospel.

May your people be as relay runners;
faithful to their chosen calling;
courageously climbing high,
or running into narrow dales,
between shadowed rocky outcrops
where people feel life's shadows falling round them;
running in your strength,
unashamed to own the light of Christ's love before all the world.

Youth

God, whose Son, Jesus shared the aspirations
and dreams of youth,
may his life and words be a flame
to impassion young people everywhere
to live and work for peace, justice and happiness.

Give our young people the enthusiasm
and vision of runners in a race.
Like athletes may they practice
their new-found gifts and skills,
drawn on by ambitious hope of success at the finishing line.

We give thanks for all our young people;
for their friendships and laughter;
for their excitement and hard work;
for their sense of justice and fair play;
their interest in new relationships,
new opportunities, new adventures.

In depressed times when futures are uncertain,
give our young people hope
and the courage not to give up,
but to keep moving forward to the line.

May young people throughout our land
catch the flame of Jesus' Kingdom passion,
and find their true identity in Christian discipleship.