



The Church of Scotland

Light

IN THE DARKNESS

A day of prayer for the Church of Scotland
and the communities of Scotland

**“The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.” - John 1:5**

Day of Prayer

31 OCTOBER 2026



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Add your light

As a national Church, we want to use this day to gather in our local settings and pray towards transformation in Scotland and beyond, leaning into a growing sense of hope overcoming darkness after a long season of change and all that has accompanied it.

Scotland - along with the communities across the world our Church serves - has many places where people are searching for hope, belonging, purpose and peace. There are also challenges facing our churches with declining numbers, changing communities, increasing financial pressures and uncertainty about the future.

In the beginning, John's gospel does not ignore the darkness. Rather we are reminded that the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. This is the hope that we carry for our churches and our communities. Today we gather to pray across our Church, our nation and our world.

We are going to pray for the Church of Scotland, and the communities of Scotland - and beyond.

We pray first for God's Light to bring change, hope and renewed life to us in the Church - because we recognise before God that we are weak and broken people, who need God's power to transform us. We pray that a transformed Church can help transform the world, sharing God's light with the world around us.

We go on to pray for the communities across Scotland and beyond where God has placed us, for God's Light to powerfully break out in situations of darkness to bring life giving transformation. We want to be people looking outwards and praying for those beyond ourselves. We seek more than help for ourselves from God, but rather, hope for the world from God.

We would love to see as many Church of Scotland congregations and presbyteries as possible join in with gathering to pray for an hour on Saturday 31 October.

This resource offers three different ways to gather for prayer - a liturgical service with call and response prayers and sung worship; a group prayer gathering with notes for people to pray in groups together; and a series of prayer stations to set up for people to engage in prayer around. All are focused on praying for the Church of Scotland and the communities of Scotland and beyond - that Light will shine in the darkness.

There are accompanying PowerPoint slides available for the liturgical service and for the group prayer gathering. Each form of gathering also has notes that can be printed for use within it.

Whether you use these resources, or just take some ideas from them, or don't use them at all - we encourage you to do two things:

- To gather to pray for an hour on Saturday 31 October
- To register your church's participation on our 'Light up Scotland' map on the Church of Scotland website



The Church of Scotland

Light

IN THE DARKNESS

Day of Prayer

31 OCTOBER 2026

Add your light

The collective power there is in knowing we are praying together for God's transforming work in Church, nation and world is part of experiencing the Light breaking forth together. Be part of something bigger. Add your light. You can register here:

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/day-of-prayer

For those who can't gather in their own churches or presbyteries - or for those who want to join in with something wider as well as that - we have two national offerings for joining in prayer on Saturday 31 October.

There will be a live streamed prayer service from West Kilbride Parish Church at 11am - follow this link to join in with that:

[YouTube.com/@wkpc](https://www.youtube.com/@wkpc)

There will be an online prayer gathering led by Rev Scott McRoberts and the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Rt Rev Gordon Kennedy, on Microsoft Teams, with a mixture of led prayer all together, and break out rooms for group prayer times, at 4pm on Saturday 31 October - follow this link to register for the meeting:

<https://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/day-of-prayer>

Add your light.

What could happen?



Resource 1 - Liturgical Service

Using this resource

This service has been prepared for congregations across the Church of Scotland to use on the National Day of Prayer.

The theme is **Light in the Darkness**, with a particular focus on praying towards:

- transformation in the Church;
- transformation in our communities; and
- a growing sense of hope overcoming darkness.

The service is designed to be used as a whole or adapted to suit the local context.

This resource contains a full set of notes for leaders to use. The shared prayers for the congregations to follow are available in an accompanying pdf and PowerPoint resources.

Structure

The service consists of seven different sections which develop the theme of Light in the Darkness.

Each section includes:

- a Bible reading
- a short reflection
- the lighting of a candle
- a responsive prayer

Each section also includes suggested songs. Congregations may wish to use a song after each section or select fewer songs according to the length and style of the service.

Each section could also be led by a different person and/or different people could light each of the seven candles.

The candles are lit as a visual reminder that **God's light continues to shine in the darkness.**

After each candle is lit, the following call and response from John 1:5 is spoken:

Leader: The light shines in the darkness,

All: and the darkness has not overcome it.

The candles could be placed together at the front of the church or spread across the worship space.



Leader's notes

Leader's notes are shown in **italics** throughout the service. These provide suggestions for preparation, silence, participation and local adaptation.

Order of service

Welcome

1. God brings the light

Genesis 1:1-5

Lighting the first Candle

Prayers of Approach

2. God searches our darkness

Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24

Prayers of Confession

Lighting of the second Candle

3. God's people shine

Philippians 2:12-16

Lighting of the third candle

Prayers for the Church of Scotland

4. God's light brings hope

Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

Lighting of the fourth candle

Prayers for Children & Young People

5. God's light transforms communities

Reading: Isaiah 58:6-10

Lighting of the fifth candle

Prayers for our Communities

6. God's light overcomes our fears

Reading: Psalm 27:1-6

Lighting of the sixth candle

Prayers for Scotland and the World

7. We are sent to shine

Reading: Matthew 5:13-16

Lighting of the seventh candle

Prayer of Commitment & Lord's Prayer

Benediction



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Light
IN THE DARKNESS

Day of Prayer
31 OCTOBER 2026

Day of prayer service

The service could begin with the worship space dimly lit, with all seven candles unlit.

Welcome

Welcome to this Day of Prayer for the Church of Scotland and the communities of Scotland.

Today we gather from different places and different circumstances, but with one shared purpose:
to pray.

We pray because we believe that God is at work. We pray because we know that there are places in our Church and in our communities where there is darkness. And we pray because we believe that darkness does not have the final word.

Today is 31 October—a day when our culture often turns its attention towards darkness, fear and the things that frighten us. But as Christians, we proclaim something different.

We proclaim that **the light has come**. The light of Christ shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

Today we pray for that light to shine:

in us,
in the Church,
in our children and young people,
in our communities,
and throughout Scotland and our world.

Our service today will include a series of Bible readings, reflections and prayers...



1. God brings the light

Prayers of approach

Bible reading: Genesis 1:1-5

Reflection

The story of Scripture begins in darkness. There is emptiness, disorder and darkness - and then God speaks:

“Let there be light.”

Light is not something humanity creates for itself. Light begins with God. And throughout Scripture, light becomes a picture of God’s presence, God’s goodness and God’s salvation.

As we begin our time of prayer, we remember that transformation begins with God. We do not have to manufacture the light. We pray for the God who brings light into darkness to do what only he can do.

Light the first candle.

Leader: The light shines in the darkness,

All: and the darkness has not overcome it.

Leader:

God of light,

you spoke, and there was light.

You brought order out of chaos,

hope out of despair,

and life out of nothing.

Today we come before you in prayer.

All:

Open our eyes to see where your light is already shining.

Open our hearts to receive your light.

Open our hands to carry your light.

**And open our churches and our communities
to the transforming work of your Spirit.**

Leader:

May this be a day when hope grows,

when faith is renewed,

and when your light shines more brightly

in the Church of Scotland and throughout our communities.

In the name of Jesus Christ,

the Light of the World.

Amen

Suggested songs:

Christ, Be Our Light

Light of the World (Here I am to worship)

Immortal, Invisible, God only wise

O Worship the King

All Creatures of our God and King / All creatures worship God most high

We are a People of hope



2. God searches our darkness

Prayers of confession

Bible reading: Psalm 139:1–12, 23–24

Reflection

We often think of darkness as something outside us. But there can also be darkness within us. There are things we hide from others. Things we struggle to admit even to ourselves.

Yet the Psalm reminds us that there is nowhere we can go where God is absent. Even the darkness is not dark to God. So we do not need to hide.

We can ask God to search us, to reveal what needs to change, and to lead us in the way everlasting. Before we pray for transformation in the Church or in our communities, we allow God to begin that work in us.

Pause for a moment of silence.

Light the second candle.

Leader: The light shines in the darkness,

All: and the darkness has not overcome it.

Prayer of confession

Leader: God who sees us completely,

All: Bring us into your light.

Leader: For the things we have done
that have caused hurt:

All: Bring us into your light.

Leader: For the things we have failed to do
when we could have made a difference:

All: Bring us into your light.

Leader: For the times when fear has been stronger than faith:

All: Bring us into your light.

Leader: For the times when selfishness has been stronger than love:

All: Bring us into your light.

Leader: For the prejudices, assumptions and divisions
we carry within us:

All: Bring us into your light.

Cont.



The Church of Scotland

Light
IN THE DARKNESS

Day of Prayer
31 OCTOBER 2026

2. God searches our darkness

Leader: For the places in our lives
where we have resisted your transforming work:

All: Bring us into your light.

Leader: Search us, O God,
and know our hearts.

All: Lead us in the way everlasting.

Leader:

God our maker –

We need not hide ourselves from your light,

Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour –

You shine upon us and bring us into the presence of God,

Holy Spirit our Counsellor and guide –

you light the path before us.

Make us people who walk in your light

And reflect your light to others.

Amen.

Suggested songs: **Yet not I, but through Christ in me**
 Lord, I need you
 Before the throne of God above
 Just as I am
 Dear Lord and Father of Mankind
 Rock of Ages
 Lumiere de Dieu (Come light of God)



3. God's people shine

Praying for the Church of Scotland

Bible reading: Philippians 2:12–16

Reflection

Paul describes God's people as people who **“shine like stars in the sky”**.

The Church is not called simply to exist. We are called to shine. To reflect something of the character of Jesus:

- To proclaim good news.
- To serve our neighbours.
- To welcome those who feel excluded.
- To bring hope where there is despair.
- To live in such a way that people can see something of Christ and all we do.

Today we pray for the Church of Scotland.

We pray not simply for survival, but for transformation.

We pray for congregations that are alive with the presence of God, confident in the gospel, generous in service and courageous in mission.

Light the third candle.

Leader: The light shines in the darkness,

All: and the darkness has not overcome it.

Prayers for the Church

Leader: For a Church transformed by the love of Christ
and equipped by the Holy Spirit for mission:

All: Lord, shine through us.

Leader: For congregations facing uncertainty or discouragement:

All: Lord, give us hope.

Leader: For congregations experiencing growth and renewal:

All: Lord, give us humility.

Leader: For ministers, deacons, elders and all who serve:

All: Lord, give us strength.

Leader: For courage to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ:

All: Lord, give us boldness.

Cont.



The Church of Scotland

Light
IN THE DARKNESS

Day of Prayer
31 OCTOBER 2026

3. God's people shine

Leader: For wisdom to discern where you are calling us:

All: Lord, give us vision.

Leader: For unity in the midst of our differences:

All: Lord, give us grace.

Leader: For churches that are places of welcome, belonging and hope:

All: Lord, make us your light.

Leader: For the Church of Scotland,
in every congregation and every community:

All: Lord, shine your light among us.

Leader:

In a moment of silence, we now pray for our own congregation.

For the people who worship here.

For those who serve here.

For those who have become discouraged.

For those who are exploring faith.

For the opportunities God has placed before us.

For the places where we need courage to change.

And for the people who are not yet part of our church family.

(Silence)

Leader: Lord, hear our prayers for your Church.

All: Let your light shine through us. Amen.

Suggested song:

Here we stand, the church of the redeemed

Build your Kingdom here

The Church's One Foundation

God of Grace and God of Glory

Christ is Made the Sure Foundation

Kyrie – there are a number of Kyries in CH4 and God Welcomes all that could be used either during or after this prayer to hold us in a place of waiting and prayerful pause with God.



4. God's light brings hope

Praying for children and young people

Bible reading: Isaiah 9:2–7

Reflection

The people walking in darkness are promised a great light.

This is a promise of hope. A child will be born and a new future will begin. God's answer to a world walking in darkness comes in the vulnerability of a child, and ultimately in Jesus, the child who becomes the Light of the World.

Today we pray for children and young people. We pray for those who are excited about the future and those who are frightened by it. For those who feel confident and those who feel lost. For those surrounded by love and those who feel alone.

We pray that children and young people across Scotland might discover that their lives have purpose, that they are deeply loved, and that there is hope for their future.

Light the fourth candle. (If possible, invite a child or young person to light this candle).

Leader: The light shines in the darkness,

All: and the darkness has not overcome it.

Prayers for Children & Young People

Leader: For children and young people in our families and communities:

All: Lord, shine your light upon them.

Leader: For those who are lonely, anxious or afraid:

All: Lord, surround them with your love.

Leader: For those struggling with friendship, identity or belonging:

All: Lord, give them hope.

Leader: For those facing poverty, neglect, abuse or insecurity:

All: Lord, be their refuge.

Leader: For teachers, chaplains, youth workers and children's workers:

All: Lord, give them wisdom and compassion.

Leader: For parents, grandparents, carers and families:

All: Lord, give them strength.

Cont.



The Church of Scotland

Light

IN THE DARKNESS

Day of Prayer

31 OCTOBER 2026

4. God's light brings hope

Leader: For churches seeking to welcome and listen to young people:

All: Lord, make us communities of belonging.

Leader: For a generation discovering the hope of Jesus Christ:

All: Lord, let your light shine.

Leader: In a moment of silence we pray for children and young people known to us.

(Silence)

Leader: Lord, hear our prayers.

All: And let your light shine upon them.

Suggested song:

Jesus, Strong and Kind

My Lighthouse

10,000 Reasons

Bring it all to me

How Great Thou Art

Oh how good it is when the family of God

Written on the palm of God's hand

One Church one voice (Great is our God)



5. God's light transforms communities

Praying for our communities

Bible reading: Isaiah 58:6–10

Reflection

The prophet speaks about light breaking into the darkness. But notice what brings that light. It is not simply religious activity. It is God's people acting with compassion and justice.

- Feeding the hungry
- Providing shelter
- Caring for those in need
- Standing against oppression
- Sharing what we have

The promise is striking: **“Then your light will break forth like the dawn.”**

Our prayer for our communities is therefore also a prayer of transformation within us. We pray not simply that God will make our communities better places. We pray that God will make **us** people who bring his light into them.

Light the fifth candle.

Leader: The light shines in the darkness,

All: and the darkness has not overcome it.

Prayers for our community

Leader: For those who are lonely or isolated:

All: Bring friendship and belonging.

Leader: For families under pressure:

All: Bring strength and support.

Leader: For those experiencing poverty or debt:

All: Bring provision and hope.

Leader: For those affected by addiction:

All: Bring freedom and healing.

Leader: For those experiencing homelessness or insecurity:

All: Bring shelter and dignity.

Leader: For those affected by violence or abuse:

All: Bring safety and justice.

Cont.



5. God's light transforms communities

Leader: For schools, businesses, charities and community organisations:

All: Give wisdom, compassion and strength.

Leader: For those who serve our communities day after day:

All: Strengthen their hands.

Leader: For our churches, that we would go beyond our buildings
and meet people where they are:

All: Lord, make us your light.

Leader:

God of light,

we bring before you the community in which you have placed us.

We pray for its streets and homes.

Its schools and workplaces.

Its shops and businesses.

Its community groups and organisations.

Its places of joy.

Its places of pain.

Its people who are flourishing.

And its people who are struggling.

Lord, you know every person and every place.

Let your light shine in this community.

All:

And make us bearers of your light.

Suggested song:

God of all comfort

We seek your Kingdom

The Kingdom of God is Justice and Joy

Brother, Sister, Let Me Serve You

The Servant King

Where the river flows

Sing a new world into being



6. God's light overcomes our fears

Praying for Scotland and the world

Bible reading: Psalm 27:1–6

Reflection

“The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear?”

The Psalmist does not pretend that there is nothing for us to fear. There are enemies, there is danger and there is uncertainty.

But the presence of God changes how the darkness is faced. We bring before God the places we long for God's light to shine in Scotland and throughout the world:

- Wars and conflicts
- Poverty and injustice
- Fear and uncertainty
- Natural disasters, environmental damage and climate crisis
- People displaced from their homes
- Communities divided by hatred
- Situations that leave people asking, “Where is hope?”

We do not pray because we believe the darkness is imaginary. We pray because we believe that **God is greater than the darkness.**

Light the sixth candle.

Leader: The light shines in the darkness,

All: and the darkness has not overcome it.

Prayers for Scotland and the World

Leader: For Scotland and all its people:

All: Let your light shine.

Leader: For those living with fear and uncertainty:

All: Let your light shine.

Leader: For places affected by war and conflict:

All: Let your light shine.

Leader: For victims of violence and injustice:

All: Let your light shine.

Leader: For those who have lost homes, livelihoods or loved ones:

All: Let your light shine.

Cont.



6. God's light overcomes our fears

Leader: For those working for peace and reconciliation:

All: Strengthen their hands.

Leader: For leaders and all who carry responsibility:

All: Give them wisdom and courage.

Leader: For those who feel that hope has been lost:

All: Renew their hope.

Leader: For your Church throughout the world:

All: Make us faithful witnesses.

Leader: For the coming of your kingdom,
when justice and peace will reign:

All: Lord, let your light shine.

All:

God of hope,

**when we look at the darkness around us,
keep us from despair.**

**When we hear stories of suffering,
keep us from indifference.**

**When we face things we cannot change,
teach us to trust you.**

**And when we see places where your light is already shining,
give us eyes to recognise your work.**

May hope rise.

May justice grow.

May peace come.

And may the light of Christ

shine into every place of darkness.

Amen.

Suggested song:

In Christ Alone

He Will Hold Me Fast

The Lord's My Shepherd

A Mighty Fortress

Be Still, My Soul

Jesus walks beside us in Scotland



7. We are sent to shine

Closing prayers

Bible reading: Matthew 5:13–16

Reflection

We have prayed for God to shine his light. Now Jesus gives us a calling:

“You are the light of the world.”

We are not the source of the light. Christ is. But his light is reflected through his people. So we leave this time of prayer with a question:

Where is God calling us to shine?

Where can we bring hope?

Where can we offer welcome?

Where can we serve?

Where can we listen?

Where can we speak about Jesus?

Where can we help someone take one step out of darkness and towards light?

The transformation we have prayed for begins with God—but it also begins with people willing to respond to God’s call.

Light the final candle.

Leader: The light shines in the darkness,

All: and the darkness has not overcome it.

Prayers for commitment

Leader: Jesus, Light of the World,

All: Shine through us.

Leader: Where there is darkness:

All: Make us bearers of light.

Leader: Where there is loneliness:

All: Make us bearers of friendship.

Leader: Where there is injustice:

All: Make us bearers of righteousness.

Leader: Where there is division:

All: Make us bearers of peace.

Leader: Where there is suffering:

All: Make us bearers of compassion.

Cont.



7. We are sent to shine

Leader: Where there is despair:

All: Make us bearers of hope.

Leader: Where people are searching:

All: Make us faithful witnesses to Jesus.

Leader: Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers,
And hear us as we pray together
saying the words of the Lord's Prayer:

All:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Suggested song:

**I Speak Jesus
Hear the Call of the Kingdom
O Church Arise
Tell Out, My Soul
O for A Thousand Tongues to Sing
There must be more than this
El Mensaje
The Blessing**



The Church of Scotland

Light
IN THE DARKNESS

Day of Prayer
31 OCTOBER 2026

Benediction

Leader: The light shines in the darkness.

All: And the darkness has not overcome it.

Leader:

Go into the darkness without fear,
for Christ is with you.

Go into your communities with hope,
for Christ is already at work.

Go into the world with courage,
for the light of Christ cannot be overcome.

And may the blessing of God Almighty,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with you,
and remain with you,
today and always.

Amen.



The Church of Scotland

Light
IN THE DARKNESS

Day of Prayer
31 OCTOBER 2026

Resource 2 - Group Prayer Gathering

Using this resource

This material could be used as part of an hour of prayer at any point in the Day of Prayer – perhaps following a breakfast together or even in the dark of the evening to pray over your community while Halloween celebrations go on. If you are holding a ‘Light Party’ or equivalent, this material may be something to use with your team when you gather to set up or run concurrently with the event.

If your congregation can be a little reticent about praying out loud, why not ask someone in advance to prepare to lead a prayer on each topic before giving space for the others to pray in whichever way they feel most comfortable - which could include praying silently, praying one sentence prayers, or praying out loud a little more. Our hope is that these days will encourage people to grow in confidence in praying together.

You may wish to begin or intersperse your time together with worship – there is no shortage of songs in CH4, God Welcomes All or online – where you can find contemporary worship that focuses on the theme of light!

You may wish to print out the prayer headings and accompanying prayer points, or you may wish to use the accompanying

For those who like a sensory element to their prayer times, you may want to dim the lights and give each participant a candle which they can light at any point during the gathering so that as you pray together the room visibly lightens.



Outline of Payer Gathering

Welcome those gathering

Introduction

This could optionally be read aloud to set the scene for the time of prayer

In reflecting on the challenges facing our church, community and nation there can be no question that we have been going through a season of significant changes. These have often been accompanied with a sense of loss and desire to lament and it has been right to take time to reflect, repent and seek the Lord.

However, as followers of Jesus, we also don't want to lose sight of the goodness of God, the glimpses of new life emerging across Scotland and the living hope we have in Jesus Christ, our saviour. On this day which is so often associated culturally with darkness, we want to focus together on the 'Light of the World'.

We want to hold onto the words of John 1:5 'The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.' We see the pain that exists in our parishes, the dilemmas facing us as a church and the spiritual darkness that shrouds much of Scotland. However, in prayer, we can also ask God to shed light on our questions, highlight where we can and should be rejoicing and illuminate the way forward.

Reading

John 1:1-5

'The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it'

Give people a minute to reflect silently on this, and start to consider the things they want to bring to God in prayer in response to this

Sung Worship

This could optionally be included to begin together in worship before praying together

Light was the first thing spoken into being in the Genesis 1 creation story, and it is remarkable. Through this time of prayer we will be using the properties of light to help us think through different ways that the light of Christ can and is bringing transformation in our church, community and nation and showing that 'the darkness has not overcome it' as our key verse says. You will likely not have time to pray through all of these points so feel free to choose the ones that speak most clearly to your local situation.

This can be led in two different ways.

- *For those who prefer space for extemporaneous prayer, you may choose to just read the thematic headings and their corresponding verses and then give space for people to pray as they feel led.*

- *For those who find it easier to pray through set points, there are ideas offered below which could be printed in handout format, or you can use the accompanying PowerPoint resource to display these*



Prayer Focus Points

1. The light shines in the darkness and...points the way (e.g. lighthouse)

Psalm 119:5 - Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path

Give thanks:

For the guidance provided by God's word

For the gifts of wisdom, creativity and discernment God gives

Pray for:

Those facing choices that shape our communities, Church and nation

God's Holy Spirit to inspire all those who see no way to see the next step

2. The light shines in the darkness and... gives hope (e.g. light at the end of the tunnel)

*Revelation 22:5 - There will be no more night. They will not need the **light** of a lamp or the **light** of the sun, for the Lord God will give them **light**. And they will reign for ever and ever.*

Give thanks:

That we are praying to a God who answers prayer!

For situations where God given hope has brought transformation

Pray for:

Breakthrough in those situations that break our hearts – ruptured relationships, addiction, poor mental health, challenges facing caregivers, turmoil in healthcare and education, poverty and more

Name those locally and nationally who are hope-bringers in the way that they serve, witness and model their calling to make a difference.

3. The light shines in the darkness and...has power (e.g. laser)

*Psalm 139:12 - even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as **light** to you.*

Give thanks:

For the opportunities that the church has within the nation to bring about change in the lives of individuals and communities as it cares for people, meets their needs and proclaims truth and good news.

Pray for:

Chaplains, prison workers, Christian teachers and politicians (local and national). Pray that we may be bold in speaking truth and loving in the way of Jesus.

Cont.



Prayer Focus Points

4. The light shines in the darkness and...brings understanding/clarity

*2 Corinthians 4:6 - For God, who said, "Let **light** shine out of darkness," made his **light** shine in our hearts to give us the **light** of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.*

Give thanks:

For those challenges and situations faced by the Church, in your community and in Scotland where we have seen progress or answers to prayer in recent years.

Pray for:

Those questions that linger, trusting that our all-knowing God can bring the right answers at the right time. Speak out the questions that you have in prayer.

5. The light shines in the darkness and...brings growth (e.g. plants)

*Matthew 5:14 - "You are the **light** of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.*

Give thanks:

For new worshipping communities, missional opportunities and for the rise of interest in faith among young people.

Pray for:

Those who are called/ will be called into ministry, church planting, pioneering, starting new initiatives and youth ministry.

For the young people you know to grow in faith in Jesus.

6. The light shines in the darkness and... is reflected so it spreads

*1 Peter 2:9 - But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful **light**.*

Give thanks:

For your own congregation and how it reflects the light of Christ

Pray for:

The ways in which each individual carries the light of Christ into their homes, streets, workplaces and friendship groups.



The Church of Scotland

Light
IN THE DARKNESS

Day of Prayer
31 OCTOBER 2026

Sung Worship

This could optionally be included to close your time of prayer together

Closing Declaration

Finish your session by saying the words of John 1:5 together:

“The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it”



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Resource 3 - Prayer stations

Using this resource

These prayer stations may be used as part of an event that you are hosting on the day of prayer or you might have your church open for an hour of time when people can use these stations independently to help them focus their prayers.

The italicised parts in each prayer station brief are notes for setting it up. The non-italicised text can be printed, or copied and written on cards, to guide participants. You can use part or all of what it offered there.

Think about how you will set your space up, including lighting and sound. Soft lighting and some quiet worship music would work well.

Make sure you have some space around each station and have seats available if needed. Each station can be used independently or they can be used as part of a prayer trail. These stations could be set up in a hall or in the sanctuary. You might need to gather or purchase some items but equally you can simplify the station to use what you have.



Prayer Station 1

The Light of Christ

Have this passage written out or printed:

John 1:1-5

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵ **The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it**

Have a large central candle or lantern.

Around it place smaller unlit candles, these could be battery operated depending on your context and the ages of the people involved.

The focus here at this station is Jesus, rather than the problems facing the church.

Start by praying, a few times with pause in between: 'Jesus, be the light of your Church.'

Light one of the smaller candles from the central candle as you pray this.

Have small cards available with the following prayer prompts.

- For Jesus to remain at the centre of the Church of Scotland
- Pray for faith to be renewed in God's people
- For people to discover Jesus for the first time
- For Christians to grow in prayer and discipleship
- For the Church to communicate the good news of Jesus clearly

All age activity - provide some scratch art crosses with this note:

As you scratch and uncover the colours on the cross, pray:

'Jesus, be the light of your Church.'



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Light

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Prayer Station 2

Light for the Church of Scotland

Put a map of Scotland on a table. Perhaps place small tea lights around the map.

Have different cards with different aspects of church life written on them:

Congregations	Mission
Ministers	Worship
Elders	Prayer
Children	New congregations
Families	Community work

Invite people to choose a card and pray for that area of focus.

Have a card out with this prayer:

Lord Jesus, shine your light across the Church of Scotland.

Bring courage where there is fear,

hope where there is discouragement,

imagination where there is uncertainty,

and new life where things have become tired.

Amen.

All age activity: Have a basin of water and some small stones available, and this note:

Drop a stone and take time to reflect on the ripples.

Pray for a church that has a rippling effect on the places that it works and serves.



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Light

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Prayer Station 3

Light in Scotland's communities

Use a large map of Scotland or have photographs or simple labels representing different communities, perhaps ones different to your local area: Cities, Islands, Rural communities, Coastal communities, Housing estates, Universities, Schools, Care homes, Prisons, Hospitals

Have a card that says:

Jesus, shine your light here.

Have a note that says:

Pray for communities experiencing:

- poverty
- loneliness
- addiction
- homelessness
- mental distress
- domestic abuse
- unemployment
- isolation
- racism
- family breakdown
- fear and uncertainty

And another note that says:

But also pray positively for:

- community
- friendship
- creativity
- generosity
- young people
- volunteers
- local organisations
- new initiatives
- people working for justice

All age activity: have some colouring available on the table - you can buy or print sheets with Bible verses.

Have a note that says:

Pray for the changes you want to see in places across Scotland and the world as you colour your design.



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Prayer Station 4

Light in our community

Have a map of your own local area or simply write the names of streets, schools, care homes, businesses and community organisations around your church.

Have a note that says:

Pray for the light of Christ to shine in:

- Our streets
- Our schools
- Our families
- Our older people
- Our young people
- Our businesses
- Our community organisations
- With those who are lonely
- With those who are struggling
- With those who don't yet know Jesus

Have battery powered tea lights available. Have a note that says:

As you pray, add your light to the area you are praying for.

Let us fill the table - and our community - full of light.

All age activity: Have postcards available to write prayers on, a box to post these in, and plan to take these prayers to use in upcoming worship services. Have a note that says:

Write or draw your prayer on a postcard and post it in the provided box.

We will use these prayers in the weekly services over the next weeks and months.



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Light

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Prayer Station 5

A Church for the next generation

Put children's toys or something symbolic of children around a candle or battery powered fairy lights.

Have a note that says:

Pray for:

- children growing up in Scotland
- schools and teachers
- youth workers
- children's ministry
- young people who feel they don't belong
- young people struggling with pressure and expectations
- families
- churches to listen to young people
- young people to discover faith

All age activity: Have some Lego bricks out, and a lego base board to build upon. Have a note that says:

Add bricks to the base board as you pray for one or more of these things.

Pray that together with God we can build His kingdom.

Have question cards with the following, and stickers/post it notes available:

What do you hope the Church will be like for children?

What would help young people know they belong?

What would you like to ask God to give to young people?

Write your answers on stickers/post it notes and stick them around the lights.



Prayer Station 6

Where is God already shining?

Have a board headed:

Look for the light.

Have post it notes/or small pieces of paper that you can pin or blu tac to the board available. Have some torches on the table.

Have a note that says:

Write or draw examples of where you see God at work in Scotland.

Have a prompting note that says:

Where have you seen kindness?

Where have you seen generosity?

Where have you seen churches making a difference?

Where have you seen young people flourishing?

Where have you seen people working together?

Where have you seen hope?

Use the torch to read the examples and to give thanks to God as you do.

Pray: Thank you, God, for the places where your light is already shining.

All age activity: Have glow sticks available. Have some already formed in a chain as an example.

As you pray, pick up and snap a glow stick.

Use the connector to make a circle.

Add your glow stick to the chain.

As you do that, pray thanks to God for all the ways He's bringing light already.



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Light

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Prayer Station 7

Be the light

Have a card with John 1:5 on it:

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Place one large candle in the middle. Around it have lots of small candles. Have a note that says:

Light a candle and pray:

Lord Jesus, let your light shine through me.

Where is God asking me to carry the light this week?

It could be:

- my home
- my workplace
- my school
- my street
- my church
- to someone who is lonely
- to someone who is struggling
- to someone who doesn't know Jesus

You could take away your candle to remind you to continue to pray:

Jesus, shine your light in your Church, through your Church, and beyond your Church.