



Sunday 17th May 2020 Easter 6 Revds Nico Hilmy-Jones & Jenny Pathmarajah

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use as you are unable to attend church. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Call to Worship

The Lord is here,
and we will praise him.
The Lord is here,
and we will worship him.
The lord is here,
and we will trust him.
The Lord is here,
and we will honour him.
The Lord is here,
and he has called us to give him
all the glory. Amen.

Hymn STF 83

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GyRIVbdsi4c>

**Praise, my soul,
the King of Heaven;**
To His feet thy tribute bring.
Ransomed, healed,
restored, forgiven,
Who like thee
his praise should sing?
Praise Him! Praise Him!
Praise the everlasting King!

Praise Him

for his grace and favour
to his people in distress;
praise him still the same as ever,
slow to chide, and swift to bless.
Praise Him! Praise Him!
Glorious in His faithfulness.

Father-like

he tends and spares us;
well our feeble frame he knows;
in his hands he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes.
Praise Him! Praise Him!
Widely as his mercy flows.

Angels in the height, adore him,
ye behold him face to face;
sun and moon,
bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space.
Praise Him! Praise Him!!
Praise with us the God of grace!

*Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847)
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Praise, My Soul,

Opening Prayer

We thank you, Lord, for the value you place on our worship; for the importance you give to our songs of praise; for the joy you have in our fellowship with each other.

We thank you, Lord, for the value you place on our service; for the way you honour our feeble attempts to care for others and those moments when we try to love our neighbour as ourselves; for the way you give meaning to our concern for the hungry and starving and the value you see in our seeking to witness to your great name as we pray for peace and justice for all.

We thank you, Lord, for the value you place upon ourselves; for the song of love that sings in your heart for all the human race and for the price you were willing to pay to restore each of us as a child of your grace; for the cross of Christ which declares at full volume your love which starts in the heart of the Father and reaches everyone, everywhere.

We thank you and praise you that the value you see in all your creatures, from the greatest to the least, never diminishes but glows with the fire of the Holy Spirit, bringing hope to all the world and glory to the name of Christ our Lord.

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. And 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.

John 14:15-21

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

Message

I read a story about a man who was confronted with a powerful painting of an old burned-out mountain shack. All that remained was the chimney and nothing else. In front of this destroyed shack stood an old man with a small boy who was clutching this old man's hand and was crying. Beneath the picture were the words which the artist felt the old man was saying to this boy. They were simple yet profound words and it said: *"Hush child, God is still here"*. Now the man kept thinking about this painting and at first it symbolized despair to him but then he realized the words were showing him that instead of despair those words *'Hush child, God is still here'* was a reminder that even in despair there is hope. Sometimes we need reminders that there is hope in this world, especially now, in the midst of an uncertain precarious world as we deal with the coronavirus pandemic. During this time, it is good to be reminded that we are not alone and that God is still here and still among us. Now in the few verses before the ones we read this morning, Jesus has told them that their teacher, their mentor, their friend will be going away. And, at first the Disciples are unsure and even afraid, but Jesus is trying to prepare them for the

time when he will no longer physically be with them, and he tells them in verses 12-14: ***I am going to be with God, but you are going to be left to do even greater works than I have done, empowered by your belief in me."***

And so, we read in verses 15-17, from the passage from John's Gospel this morning, that the Disciples will be sent an Advocate, the Holy Spirit, and this Spirit will teach them, remind them, abide in them, be with them. These verses are about empowerment and what a wonderful message for us to hear as we deal with our worries and concerns of a uncertain world. What this passage is teaching us is that in the difficult periods of life, God walks with us and the Holy Spirit is continually at work in us and around us, convincing us of that truth, and remaking us as children of God, in the image of Christ. When Jesus says those comforting words *"I will not leave you orphaned"*, I felt as though they were words I needed to hear right now and perhaps some of you also need to hear these words from Jesus, right now. Words that are essentially saying: ***"Do not be afraid, I am with you and you are not alone is all this"***, and that's why Jesus' promise is so significant and so meaningful

for me and for you to know at this time. However, God is not always loud, and obvious and maybe we sometimes forget that God is still here and so we need to remember to open our eyes and hearts to feel and see God in those subtle quiet unobtrusive places, and to have trust that God has not abandoned us. This promise is not saying that you won't go through pain and even despair in your walk of faith, but this promise tells us that even during those trials in our lives, God is still here, still with us and walks with us, always, in the joyful times and the difficult times.

What I know in my own heart is that when I let go of my many imperfections, my fears, my anxieties, I frequently become empowered, through the Holy Spirit, to move beyond them. When we trust in God even with all the uncertainty within each tomorrow, the Holy Spirit comes in and empowers us with a powerful love and suddenly those fears and worries are replaced with a sense of peace and we are no longer afraid. Sometimes our shaken confidence can be restored because of the unseen power that dwells in our gathered community of faith, even when we are separate as we are now, in different homes or different places, because we are still

connected together by the power of that love, as sisters and brothers in Christ.

Our challenge today is to let the Holy Spirit guide us. To let the Holy Spirit inspire us. To let go of all that would defeat us and allow this wonderful, powerful Spirit to show us the way. Jesus says: ***“Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.”*** When we allow the Holy Spirit to work within us wonderful things can happen. It is risky to open our hearts and let the Holy Spirit in. It is not easy, and it is challenging to be led, without reservation by the Spirit of Christ but..... when we allow the Holy Spirit to lead us and call us, even as we wrestle in prayer over the mission He has for us in life, or as we struggle with what is happening in our world, right now, when we let the Holy Spirit move with us, we become Spirit-led, light filled, messengers of God and we become alive in Christ. You can't remain the same once you have seen the world as God sees it, and once you have seen your life as God sees it, and once you have encountered the Holy Spirit. When we are filled and shaped by love, we develop the character of Jesus and the Holy Spirit becomes intertwined with our souls, so

that in a mysterious way, we are in Christ, who is in the Father. This is not something we do, it is not something we work for, it is something we have. This is the essence of the Christian life. This is life lived in the Spirit. ***We submit to God's spirit to the point that it is not coming from us, it is going through us. How beautiful is that?***

This spirit comes quietly, it comes in slowly, but it comes to us with enough power so that we might do the job God has called each of us to do. There is a power, a force and for many an untapped force, in each of our lives, and that is the Holy Spirit. Many times it is not dramatic, it does not cause us to do dramatic things, but it is there to give us the power to live the kind of lives and to be the kind of people that God intended us to be. So be assured that the Holy Spirit is here, right now and amongst each one of us just waiting to be invited into your heart and to make you into new beautiful children of light.

I am going to share with you now a short clip on one of my recent walks with my two dogs and just a few thoughts I had at the time I filmed the clip.

Hymn STF 370

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M5keJHZdWYM>

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
fill me with life anew,
that I may love
what thou dost love,
and do what thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
until my heart is pure,
until with thee I will one will,
to do and to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
till I am wholly thine,
until this earthly part of me
glows with thy fire divine.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life
of thine eternity.

Edwin Hatch (1835-89)

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Rev. Nico on Gorey Beach, Jersey
with her Greyhounds

Prayers of Intercession

We pray for those for whom today is a day of darkness and pain, for those who have received bad news and those for whom the bottom has dropped out of their world.

May Christ

hold them gently in his hands.

The Lord hears our prayer.

Thanks be to God.

We pray for those involved in... for those injured and maimed, for those seriously ill in hospital and for those whom life will never be the same again.

May Christ

hold them gently in his hands.

The Lord hears our prayer.

Thanks be to God.

We pray for those who will be affected by... long after it ceases to be an item of news for others, for the families and friends of those killed or injured, for the members of the rescue services and hospital staff affected by all they have seen and heard.

May Christ

hold them gently in his hands.

The Lord hears our prayer.

Thanks be to God.

We pray for those facing years of hardship and anxiety, for those who have lost everything in flood, earthquake or storm, for those who have nothing left and nowhere to go, for those who are afraid and filled with despair.

May Christ

hold them gently in his hands.

The Lord hears our prayer.

Thanks be to God.

We pray for those involved in serious accidents on roads, in the air or at sea, for those awaiting news of loved ones who are missing and for those who will never know what really happened.

May Christ

hold them gently in his hands.

The Lord hears our prayer.

Thanks be to God.

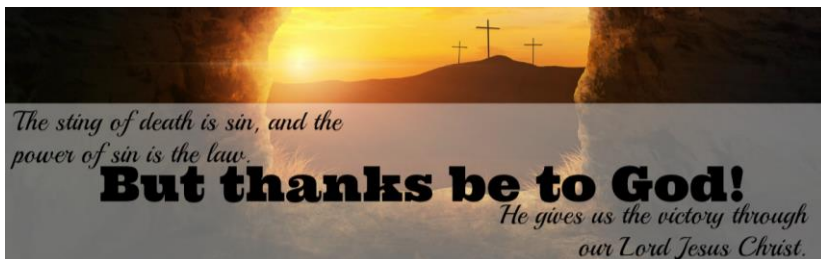
We pray for those who have lost everything because of civil war or terrorists attack, for those who are without home and family, for those left as wandering, unwanted refugees.

May Christ

hold them gently in his hands.

The Lord hears our prayer.

Thanks be to God.



We pray for those whose peaceful lives and untroubled existence have been shaken by knowledge of serious illness; for those who have received bad news about their own or their family's health and future.

May Christ hold them gently in his hands.
The Lord hears our prayer.

Thanks be to God.

We pray for ourselves and the concerns that trouble our own hearts and minds and lives, for all we know we must face in the coming weeks and months, and for wisdom to know what to say and what to do, for strength to stand firm and for faith to trust the one who alone is trustworthy.

May Christ hold them gently in his hands.
The Lord hears our prayer.

Thanks be to God.

We leave our prayers in the gentle hands of Christ and trust him to reach out in love. **Amen.**

Hymn STF 628

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uxviwvjyg1w>

Faithful One, so unchanging,

Ageless One,

You're my rock of peace.

Lord of all I depend on you,

I call out to you again and again.

I call out to you again and again.

You are my rock
in times of trouble

You lift me up when I fall down.

All through the storm

your love is the anchor,

my hope is in you alone.

Faithful One, so unchanging,

Ageless One,

You're my rock of peace.

Lord of all I depend on you,

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I call out to you again and again.

You are my rock
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You lift me up when I fall down.

All through the storm

your love is the anchor,

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Brian Doerksen (born 1965)

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FAITHFUL ONE

Blessing and Benediction

Lord when we are afraid,
 be there for us;
 when we are sad,
 be there for us;
 when we lose our way,
 be there for us;
 when we are full of joy,
 be there for us;
 when we long to worship you,
 be there for us;
 when we take our final breath,
 be there for us,
 always. Amen.



Join us for a post service Coffee & Chat, by dialing

02203 481 5240

Meeting ID: 878 0011 0669 #

Participant ID: #

Password: 336542