

SUNDAY WORSHIP AT HOME 26TH April 2020

We worship in our homes, but we are not alone.

Opening Prayer

Christ, light and life of the world. Christ the source of all that is and all that will be. Christ in all and with all. I worship you today. AMEN

Thank you that you walk each road with us, uniting us as a community of faith wherever we are to the glory of your name. Amen.

Hymn -

**Christ is alive! Let Christians sing
The cross stands empty to the sky
Let streets and homes with praises ring
Love, drowned in death, shall never die**

**Christ is alive! No longer bound
to distant years in Palestine,
but saving, healing, here and now,
and touching every place and time.**

**In every insult, rift and war,
where colour, scorn or wealth divide,
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,
and lives, where even hope has died.**

**Women and men, in age and youth,
can feel the Spirit, hear the call,
and find the way, the life, the truth,
revealed in Jesus, freed for all.**

**Christ is alive and comes to bring
good news to this and every age,
till earth and sky and ocean ring
with joy, with justice, love, and praise.**

Brian Wren (b. 1936)

Lord, Let me join my prayers with others today

Loving God, thank you for the times I have seen you journeying with me. For the times I've seen others walking with you.

I'm sorry for when I've not recognised your presence.

For when I've not given you glory for your works.

Forgiving God, thank you for the assurance that you will continue to journey with me.

Living God, in my journey this week help me to see glimpses of your good news so that my heart burns within me. Amen.

OFFERING - Lord, we put aside our offering for your work, ready for when we bring it all together. AMEN

Today's Gospel Reading: Luke 24:13-35

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Time to Reflect

Two friends are walking down a road together in a place of deep despair and sadness. They can barely get their heads around what has happened because they 'had hoped' for something so different. A stranger begins to walk alongside them and, to their complete amazement, the events that have so rocked their world seem to have passed him by. How can he not have heard what has been going on? It seems impossible that anyone could be walking that road and not know what they have been through.

We're living through troubling times and will have hoped for something so different. I wonder if, like me, there are times you have walked the road of despair over the last weeks. I definitely think that if any of us met someone who knew nothing about what's happening, we'd have a few questions too!

Yet in that place of despair, even when they do not know it, Christ journeys with these disciples. He opens up the scripture in a way that clearly gives them energy despite their hurt and pain. Then, in that simple, every day act of breaking bread, they recognise the presence of Christ among them.

As you've travelled through these weeks, have you been surprised by Christ? Have you experienced a bread-breaking moment?

I have been surprised by the many ways people have found to carry on being 'church' when all the familiar has been stripped away. Christ has been present in acts of hospitality and prayer, in phone calls, letter. In smiles and greetings from at least 2 metres away. Our hearts are still being warmed through worship, we just need to remind ourselves that this is of Christ.

A HYMN - to sing or read

When the music fades, All is stripped away
And I simply come, longing just to bring
Something that's of worth that will bless your heart
I'll bring you more than a song, for a song in itself
Is not what you have required.
You search much deeper within
Through the way things appear
You're looking into my heart

I'm coming back to the heart of worship
And it's all about you,
It's all about you, Jesus
I'm sorry, Lord, for the thing I've made it
When it's all about you,
It's all about you, Jesus

A time of prayer

Faithful God, you are present in all aspects of life even when people don't see it. We call on you today to send your Spirit to bring comfort and peace to all who find their path ahead difficult.

We pray for your church and all those seeking ways to be church in these times

We pray for the world and all those seeking to offer leadership in the midst of uncertainty,

We pray for all those who suffer at this time in body, mind or spirit.

We pray for all who are bereaved whether through the loss of loved ones or the loss of human contact.

Merciful God, accept these our prayers today in and through the name of the living Christ.

May all recognize your living presence in the week ahead and trust in you for all that is to come.

The Lord's Prayer Our Father

TELL OUT, MY SOUL, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;
Tender to me the promise of His word;
In God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of His name!
Make known His might, the deeds His arm has done;
His mercy sure, from age to age the same;
His holy name—the Lord, the mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of His might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by;
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
The hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of His word!
Firm is His promise, and His mercy sure:
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
To children's children and forever more!

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A prayer of blessing – from a traditional Celtic prayer

May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
The sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon your fields,
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the presence of Christ
Wherever you are on the road.