



Family Worship at Home **Remembering We Are A Family!**



This Sunday is, of course, the first Sunday of the month, and therefore the day for our First Sunday Family Worship. The Service below is the service we used in church, with adaptations for us being at home! I will be with you in the Spirit of the Lord as we praise and worship this week. This week we have to offer thanksgiving to God for answered prayers – Heather and her Mum Pam are both home from hospital after battling the virus, and we are all so very grateful. We must continue to pray – and what better Psalm to use as a prayer than the one set for today, Psalm 23! Our Lord is, indeed, our shepherd through the current times, and forever.
Missing you all so much and sending you peace and love – Carol x

Take a moment's silence to prepare for worship – maybe to light a candle.....

Greeting

This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Praise our God, all that serve him.
Let us rejoice and give him glory.

Prayer of Preparation

Loving God, we set aside this time to worship you.
Help us to pray to you in faith,
to sing your praise with gratitude,
and to read and absorb your word with eagerness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Call to Confession

Lord God, our maker and our redeemer,
this is your world and we are your people:
Come among us and save us, as we confess....

For times we have wilfully misused your gifts of creation;
Lord be merciful. Forgive us our sin.

For times we have seen the suffering of others
and failed to strive for justice;
Lord be merciful. Forgive us our sin.

For the times we have heard the Good News of Christ,
but failed to share it with others.
Lord be merciful. Forgive us our sin.

For the times we have not loved you with our whole heart
and our neighbours as ourselves.
Lord be merciful. Forgive us our sin.



Absolution

May the God of love and power
forgive us and free us from our sins,
heal and strengthen us by the Holy Spirit,
and raise us to new life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen.

Praise Response

The love of God has been poured into our hearts
through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.
We dwell in God and God in us.
Give thanks, and call upon the name of the Lord,
make known God's marvellous deeds among the peoples.
Sing praises to God alone,
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty,
who was and is and is to come. Hallelujah!

Special Prayer for the Day

Risen Christ, faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep:
Teach us to hear your voice and follow your command,
that all your people may be gathered into eternity as one flock,
to the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

Bible Readings:

Acts 2:42 – 47 The Gospel of John 10:1-10 (Psalm 23 is also set for today)

Reflection

The words that come to me today are: "The truth begins to dawn!" We have been on 'lockdown' now for six weeks and I wonder if, like me, you are beginning to realise that the normal we knew before this pandemic may not return for some time. I am certain the first disciples of Jesus were in a similar position at this sort of time scale after the crucifixion and resurrection. I wonder if they too were coming to that realisation that the world will never be the same again. But, of course, why would they want it to be the same as it was before, they had waited a long time for the prophesied world transformation.

Those same thoughts could be ours – 'why would we want the world to be as it was before this pandemic?' There is so much in this world that needs to be rescued. Some of the damage to the environment has been halted, people are looking out for each other, we are appreciating the work roles that actually are 'key' to human life, survival and comfort. And, on the flip side those inequalities that existed before this have been accentuated even more – homelessness, hunger, inequalities etc. The truth is beginning to dawn – and can no longer be ignored.

And, for us as the church of the living God...? We can do not more than the same as those early believers: 'Devote ourselves to the apostles' teaching, to VIRTUAL fellowship and the sharing of meals (maybe simply sharing a meal with the Lord – why not set a place for him!), and to prayer.' I believe a deep sense of awe will come over us all when we begin to see the ways in which the Lord is moving in this extraordinary time.

We can't sneak over the wall of the sheepfold, we need to go through the gate – friends, we know the 'gate' through *whom* we enter! Once in the fold we receive the rich and satisfying life that Jesus came to give us (*John 10:10*). We don't have to wait for that life in some other dimension, but can enter into it even in the midst of a pandemic, because our Good Shepherd leads us into it if we listen to his voice and follow – as we prayed in the collect – 'Teach us to hear your voice and follow your command' *Please Lord!*

Even in the midst of these uncertain and unprecedented days the truth (*Jesus – John 14:6*) continues to dawn on us, as we continue to receive the apostles' teaching through the Bible, share fellowship in whatever ways we can and pray. And...sometimes it helps to do something physical as a symbol of our thanksgiving and prayer, so I'm suggesting PPP – Painted Prayer Pebbles! See instructions at the end of this service.

The Greeting of Peace

Blessed be Christ, the Prince of Peace.
He breaks down the walls that divide us
and binds us together in love.
May the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ
be with us all in our homes and in our community.

Take a moment to pray peace on us all.

Pray as the Spirit leads you

The Lord's Prayer

**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.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever.
Amen.**

Blessing

May God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who is the source of all goodness and growth,
pour abundant blessing on all things created,
and on you the children of the living God.
The blessing God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
be with you and remain with you, and those you love, now and always.
Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord,
in the name of Christ.
Amen.



A free phone line of hymns,
reflections and prayers

Painted Pebble Pebbles

Following the success of the Easter Gardens outside many of our homes, this week I am suggesting **'Painted Prayer Pebbles'**

We can make a Cairn which is a human made mound of stones built as a memorial or a land mark, or for a variety of other reasons throughout history.

How about painting a pebble as a prayer of thanksgiving, any other prayers, or even in memory of the many who have died recently.

We can invite our neighbours to add to our Painted Prayer Pebbles.

Maybe each street could have a community one! I will have one outside the Rectory - please feel free to add to it.

