



## A Service of Common Worship

*Light a candle or simply have a quiet moment to prepare....*

### Greeting

The Lord be with us.  
And, also with all of creation.  
Amen.

### Prayer of Preparation

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.



### Confession

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ  
to save us from our sins to be our advocate in heaven,  
and to bring us to eternal life.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith,  
firmly resolved to keep God's commandments  
and to live in love and peace with all.

Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart.  
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.  
In your mercy forgive what we have been,  
help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be;  
that we may do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God.  
Amen.

### Absolution

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent,  
have mercy upon us, pardon and deliver us from all our sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep us in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

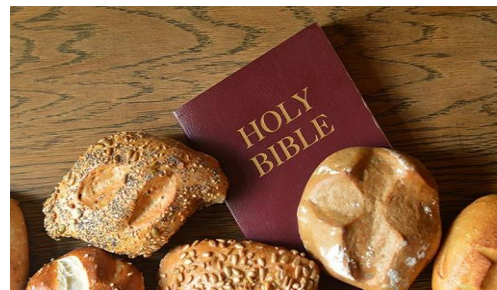
Hymn [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9\\_0jiO5ZRM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9_0jiO5ZRM)

## The Collect

### Bible Readings

*For Collect and Readings please see separate sheets*

### Reflection



I've read a book this week, which I actually couldn't put down – it's called 'The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry – *How to stay emotionally healthy and spiritually alive in the chaos of the modern world.*' It was written by John Mark Comer, a pastor of a large church in America, last year. Of course, the author couldn't have known that this year we would be forced to eliminate hurry! We have known for some time that the modern world moves at a chaotically fast pace, and this is so often responsible for ill-health in body, mind or spirit.

We need to plan for everything now – we can't even pop to the supermarket because we may have to queue outside for a while. I really can't help wondering if this is the way God wants things for us under normal circumstances. We can get over burdened by the fast pace, work can be overwhelming and those retired can be separated from families for longer than they'd like to because of the many commitments of life. Even children can become weary with the amount of pressure on them!

Jesus says : "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and the burden I give you is light."

Some people struggle with the very concept of a yoke – and being actually given a burden! However, in the time of Jesus hearers would have understood this yoke as the specific teaching of a Rabbi or teacher with a following. It would be the teaching or message that the teacher lived by. Rabbi's invited people to learn to keep the scriptures (Old Testament). This was called taking the 'yoke of Torah' or the 'yoke of the kingdom of heaven.'

Jesus as Rabbi taught with authority, we know he was given all authority from God his Father, and he had the authority to teach new interpretations of scripture. Jesus would have a new "yoke" and his disciples would then take *his* yoke (his teachings and instructions) upon themselves. Jesus is saying that his personal and particular 'message' is easy and light.

Coupled with this Gospel message today are the words of Paul on sin. We are reminded that we are '*only human*' and that sin is still very much a part of what we struggle with. Jesus encountered the sin of indifference and rejection in the people who criticized others, no matter what they did. (*Matthew verses 16 to 18*) Sin remains with us, and so we must put on the yoke of Jesus' message – and receive the 'burden' of his teachings, which are light. When we love we find peace, when we forgive we are unburdened, when we share the Gospel message we bring light to the world. Jesus gives us a new lifestyle!

We are people who love Gods law of love and our desire is to follow and stay within that law, but so often we find ourselves somehow outside of it not doing those things which we know God wants us to do, but also not doing the things that we want to do. Even though the Spirit of Jesus is alive within us and our desire is to do that which God calls us to do, sometimes we have to acknowledge and remember that sin is at work in the world as well. We need to turn again and again to Jesus and allow him to take that burden of sin from us and free us.

Some of you will remember the words of Jesus from the Book of Common Prayer service. Before the Communion the priest says: 'Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all who truly turn to him. "Come to me all that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you."'

We are living in a time when we need to hear comforting words from Jesus – and take heed of his call to: Come – into his presence, be reminded of his message, and wear that message like a garment on our souls. Our souls will find rest and refreshment, at a time when we have been forced to go slower, to stop the hurry; and have been given an opportunity for a new interpretation of life. But we don't have to invent one, we just need to follow the one Jesus sets before us. And, in this we will find rest for our souls.

### The Creed

We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us with power from on high.

We believe in one God;  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
Amen.



### The Peace

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

*Offer the gift of peace to friends, family, community and world...*

Prayers of Intercession: *please pray for....*

Wise decisions to be made for the easing of the lockdown and the re-opening of churches and businesses.

For a love and care of all creation – creatures and the environment.

The local community – including the local school, businesses and homes.

Those who suffer in body, mind or spirit.

The communion of saints and all those who grieve.

### 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 keep us in all your days.  
May Christ shield us in all your ways.  
May the Spirit bring us healing and peace.  
And the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit  
be with us and those we love now and always.  
Amen.

## Dismissal

We go into the world to walk in God's light,  
to rejoice in God's love and to reflect God's glory.  
In the name of Christ Jesus our Saviour.  
Amen.



## Quotes for Life

“Storms make trees take  
deeper roots”

Dolly Parton

“The love for all living  
creatures is the most  
noble attribute of man”

Charles Darwin



Virtual Tour of Rochester Cathedral

<https://www.rochestercathedral.org/virtual-tour>