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EASTER 6B

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A short act of worship for use in peoples homes while churches are closed.

A Free resource part funded by



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Call to Worship

Here we are God, come amongst us.
Here we are Lord, listening for your word to us.
Here we are Jesus, seeking to follow you.
Here we are Spirit, needing inspiration.

We have come, come Lord Jesus.

Amen.¹

Hymn:

664 STF – Lord you call us to your service - [YouTube](#)

Opening Prayers

A prayer of thanksgiving.

Lord, we thank you for your presence with us.

You move through all humans in strange and mysterious ways.

We thank you for your wondrous works using us.

May you continue to amaze us, may we see you with fresh eyes of wonder each day.

Amen.

A prayer of confession.

Forgive us Lord, for the times when we have not loved others and ourselves as you love us.

Forgive us Lord, for the times when we have not seen the way you are trying to guide us.

Forgive us Lord, for the times we have doubted you when we have forgotten that the spirit is the truth.

[Pause].

Lord, we know and are assured that you forgive all sins may we know that assurance this day and always.

Amen.²

Let us now say the Lord's Prayer

¹ Call to Worship written by Tim Baker

² Opening prayers written by Michael Pryke

Readings: Acts 10:44-48 – [Click for reading](#)

1 John 5:1-6 – [Click for reading](#)

John 15:9-17 – [Click for reading](#)

Initial reflections on the readings

[You can explore the full reflection by subscribing to The Vine resources as a circuit – contact thevine@twelvebaskets.co.uk to sign up today.]

Have you had the experience, during this time of Coronavirus, lockdown restrictions and changing rules and guidance about how we interact – of being shocked by how ‘things used to be’. We expect, of course, that we are not now so far from a return to life without social distancing, with a lot less mask wearing, and where public gatherings return to ‘normal’. That brings with it much uncertainty and much planning of course – as well as much relief as we look forward to being able to return to some of the things and the people we have missed most...

One symptom of this time of ‘return’, as places being to reopen again – and we hope to make-good the transition out of lockdown, is our need to ‘re-learn’. We hope that we can find ways to change the world and not go back to all the bad habits of pre-Covid...but we also acknowledge we are going to have to learn-again all the skills we have unlearned this year. Skills like navigating around large, busy cities. Skills like being in meetings where you don’t have a ‘mute’ button. Skills like when it’s appropriate – or inappropriate – to offer a hug, a handshake, a kiss...

It seems to me that today’s gospel reading is a kind of re-learning for the early church, and perhaps it can be one for us today. In education, there is an important principle of repetition – or of building a series of repetitions - in each child’s curriculum. So that they keep coming up against the same concepts, and learn a little bit more about them each time.

What are the things you need to re-learn about your engagement with society as Covid-restrictions change?

What are the things you need to re-learn about your discipleship journey?

How are you living out Jesus’ command: ‘love each other’?

[Helen’s story – from this week’s Vine Video – helps to share how she is seeing God in those everyday places. You might like to play it now, or encourage people to watch it in the week to help us reflect on that that looks like for us].³

What are you being called to?

In the reflection today, we were invited to think about who in our lives, our history, or even the world’s history we would like to learn from and be inspired by this week. Who would we like to ‘stay with us’ (as Peter does in the Acts reading) for a few days?

³ Reflection written by Tim Baker

[You might like to discuss this question in small groups, or give people time to make a list of ideal visitors and write down why. If meeting online, you could ask people to share their answers in the chat.]

We were also reminded about the centrality of love in the Christian gospel, and the life of ordinary Christians like you and I. How can you apply love in your context? What 'loving' thing can you do (or unloving thing you can stop doing?) this week to help keep that simple instruction: Love each other?

Let's just hold a few moments of quiet and think about what that means for each one of us...

[Pause]

Gracious God, use me, use us, use each one of us, to build communities, churches and a whole world of love. Help us to re-learn how to love each other, in Jesus' name.
Amen.

Prayers of intercession

Lord, may we shout for joy.

May we be reminded that we have the greatest joy in the world to shout about, may we burst into jubilant song that praises your name. Let every noise on earth and heaven be in praise of you.

God, as we sing to you, you also sing to us.

May we hear your song woven through the fabric of life. Bless us as we sing your song this week and we pray that more will hear it.

[Pause].

Merciful God, you teach us to love as you first loved us and so we pray for those who are unloved this day.

We pray for those who are unloved by society, the homeless, the dispossessed, the refugee.

Lord you love them all and so show us how we can love them too, teach us to reach out a hand of friendship to them so that they may know they are loved by you all the days of their lives.

Amen.⁴

Hymn:

169 – Come thou long expected Jesus - [YouTube](#)

⁴ Prayers of intercession written by Michael Pryke

Blessing

As we take our leave of this time of worship,
We commit again to a life of worship,
Reflected in our actions, our thoughts, our relationships, our ambitions.

We will worship you, God of justice, this and every day.

Amen.⁵

⁵ Additional prayers by Tim Baker