



Worship at Home—19 April 2020

Dear Friends of Currie Kirk. Please get in touch with the Kirk Office (451 5141) if you need anything. We have friends willing to listen, shop, walk a dog, fix a garden. Website: <https://www.curriekirk.org/> or <https://www.facebook.com/CurrieKirk/>

Opening Prayer by Saint Theresa of Avila

May today, there be peace within.

May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.

May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.

May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you.

May you be confident knowing you are a child of God.

Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.

It is there for each and every one of us.



Photo by [Martin Damboldt](#) from [Pexels](#)

It is with great sadness that we have to intimate the deaths of :

Mrs Mollie Galloway, Corslet Road
Dr Catherine Mackie, Lanark Road West

Please pray for the families

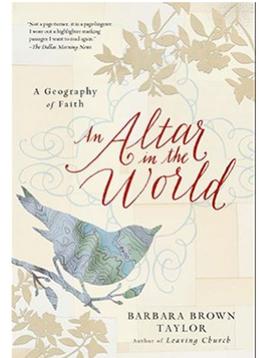


Meditation First Sunday after Easter 2020

“Peace Be With You”

As I write this I am privileged to sit in a sunny warmed garden secluded from the wind. I am so appreciative of the bird song. It seems as if more birds have started singing . . . or maybe I just didn't hear them before because the deadening sound of the traffic drowned them out.

But in the Lockdown I have also had a little more time to read a book that sat on my shelf for a while . . . maybe you know it already. It is an uplifting book by Barbara Brown Taylor called, *An Altar in the World*. Barbara Brown Taylor brings God's presence into situations in beautiful, human, and laughable ways.



In one chapter she describes living through a winter storm which cut off all power on the farm where she lives with her husband. For days, she and her husband Ed, had to work hard to thaw frozen ice to provide water and food for their animals, let alone themselves. They had no heat source, other than a log fire. She even stapled duvets over the windows to try to keep warm. They had no light in the evenings, and yet in her physical lockdown, God was present . . . present in her body, in her house, her aching bones and building the fire and her practice of carrying water and breaking down ice.

I can't do her book justice here. She reminds me that sometimes during crazy times and uncertain circumstances like an ice storm or a lock down due to a virus, we can be more aware of God's real presence than when we are rushing to and fro, trying to achieve everything and keeping up with all we feel we have to do.

So, we are in a lock down, but we are not starving, enslaved, or imprisoned. This isn't that sort of lockdown. We are not even freezing or having to melt water to feed ourselves or nourish loved ones. But we need to remember and cannot forget, that some people are spending themselves and risking life to bring water and to get breath into people who may or may not survive this.

So let's face our own lockdown positively and with great prayer. For many of us, we are neither alone, nor lost. And the crisis has brought forth so much goodness, not least the 99 year old Captain Tom Moore doing laps in his garden, raising over £15 million for the National Health Service upon which we place so many demands.



So it might seem a little ironic or perhaps prophetic that our bible story for the week after Easter Sunday involves a lockdown situation. The Scripture is John *Chapter 20 :19-22*. I can read it now to you.

“On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit”.”

Jesus' disciples were in their own lockdown. Uncertain and afraid they feared the worst and locked themselves into a room. Behind these locked doors they thought that Jesus was dead for certain. They were afraid, that they might be associated with him and suffer a similar fate. And so, fearful of persecution, they hid. Perhaps they sought safety in numbers. Maybe a kind person had offered them refuge. When we are stuck thinking behind doors, we can become more aware of our uncertainties, doubts or fears. Maybe you are experiencing some of that now with this Pandemic.

The Disciples, may have been trying to pray about what to do next. And then, in the midst of their confusion and perplexity, He was there, standing in their midst. In these verses in John's Gospel, things change profoundly. Jesus did not just unlock a door to their room, he unlocked their hearts and minds. In an intimate space Jesus reassured his beloved friends. In an interaction, bookended by his words, "Peace Be With You", Jesus breathed into them and said, "Receive the Gift of the Holy Spirit". Just as God breathed into Adam in the Creation Story, His breath, His life-energy gave them new life.

These days, more than ever we are made aware of the importance of breath. This seems to be the most cruel aspect of this rampant virus; that it can deprive human beings of breath. The most important piece of armour in the Intensive Care Unit right now is a ventilator because it can do our breathing for us when our body is too weak to do it on its own.

So the image of Jesus breathing on them is a physical one as well as a spiritual one. We are reminded that he came in flesh and blood, as well as Spirit. It is noteworthy that throughout scripture, the words for Spirit, for Breath and Wind are usually the same.

The Old Testament Hebrew word *ruach* means 'wind' or 'breath', and also translates as essence. Similarly in New Testament Greek, *pneuma* not only means breath, but the vital spirit, or creative force of a person. We may not be able to see wind, but we see its impact on the trees. So too, we see the effect of the Risen Christ on these defeated disciples.



Alan Reid points out that Spirit nouns like "breath", "wind", "flame", or Spirit verbs like "pouring", "anointing", "filling" are helpful images because they help us describe the presence of God whose movement remains mysterious. These poetic images are still only a human attempt at describing Presence of God. However we try to explain the presence of God's spirit, one thing is for sure, it is an experience which changes things. This is the power that can somehow change evil into goodness, resentment into reconciliation, despair into hope, doubt into joy, anxiety to peace, fear into love. This is the energy which changed fearful followers into brave apostles, eager to carry on Christ's mission because he was both with and in them.

Wherever you are, whatever your circumstance, and throughout this crazy time of lockdown for some of us or front-line service for others, I pray you remember that there is no situation too dark, no locked door too closed, no hospital ward or living room, no hour of day or night when Jesus cannot come and offer us the blessing of his peace.

John 14:27: Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Therefore, let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Celtic Prayer by David Adam

God of peace,
relax the tensions of my body. . .
Still the anxieties of my mind. . .
Calm the storms of my heart. . .
Give me courage to wait. . .
Let peace flow in me,
through me, from me
the deep deep peace of God

Pastoral Prayer

Glorious God,
We thank you that you give us life
You are the one to whom we owe each breath,
You are the reason for our hope

Risen Christ
We thank you for your truth, that we can trust
That in You, is the life that conquers death
You are the source of our peace

Glorious spirit
We thank you for faith to believe that which we have not seen
We thank you for your sustaining strength
You are our guide, our helper and advocate

Glorious God with thankful hearts we offer prayers for others to be nourished and encouraged by your presence.

We pray for the young, who are affected by these strange times.
We trust them to your nurturing and we pray for parents, carers and teachers involved in their lives,
helping them learn and grow.
Help us to empower them to flourish and have faith.
Breathe into their lives and homes the deep peace of Christ

We pray for your people in places where there is division, injustice, violence or war.
We pray for justice and liberation in their lands.
Breathe into their lives and homes deep peace of Christ

We pray for those who are suffering in body mind or spirit.
For those facing bereavement and for those who have died
We pray for their families, friends and all who care for them
Breathe into their lives, wherever they are, the deep peace of Christ.

We entrust our spoken and unspoken needs and the needs of all those we care about to your love,
trusting in Your sure and certain promises and throughout Lord God, may we know the deep peace of
Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Amen

FINAL BLESSING from the Iona Community

Watch now, Dear Lord,
with those who wake or watch or weep
and give your angels charge over them

Tend your sick ones, O Lord Christ,
rest your weary ones
bless your dying ones, soothe your suffering ones
pity your afflicted ones and shield your joyous ones
for all your Love's sake

And now may the God of hope
fill us with all joy and peace in believing that we may abound in hope
in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen