

# Sunday Worship at Home

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2020

“Jesus promises to be present with those, who gather in his name”

*with some associated music ~ to/along with, which you are invited to listen/sing*

## Preparation

Take a moment to be still as we gather in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ♦ Light a candle to help you in your stillness and perhaps to remember those, who are no longer with us. ♦ Feel God’s presence as you bring yourself closer to him. ♦ Remember all those, who will be worshipping and praying in their own homes and at churches elsewhere in the world; and know, that we are together in fellowship and spirit.

## Declaration of Faith Response

*One thing I have asked of the Lord, **this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life; to behold the beauty of the Lord and to seek Him in His temple.***

*Who is it that we seek? **We seek the Lord our God; with all our heart, with all our Soul, with all Mind and with all our Strength.***

**Amen Christ have mercy.**

*To whom shall we go? **We have the words of eternal life, and we have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God. Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory.***

## Hymn/Poem ~ “Just as I am”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UmBe95vz7Es>

Just as I am, without one plea  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bid’st me come to Thee,  
**O Lamb of God, I come**

Just as I am, though tossed about  
With many a conflict, many a doubt,  
Fightings and fears within, without,  
**O Lamb of God, I come**

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;  
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,  
Yea, all I need in Thee to find,  
**O Lamb of God, I come**

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,  
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,  
Because Thy promise I believe,  
**O Lamb of God, I come**

Just as I am, Thy love unknown  
Has broken every barrier down;  
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,  
**O Lamb of God, I come**

Just as I am, of that free love  
The breadth, length, depth and height to prove,  
Here for a season, then above,  
**O Lamb of God, I come**

*Words: Charlotte Elliott (1789-1871)*

## A Prayer for the Day

Almighty God, you search us and know us:  
may we rely on you in strength and rest on you in  
weakness, now and in all our days;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

**God of love, passionate and strong, tender  
and careful: watch over us and hold us all the  
days of our life; through Jesus Christ our  
Lord. Amen**

**God of truth, help us to keep your law of  
love and to walk in ways of wisdom, that we  
may find true life in Jesus Christ your Son.  
Amen**

## Saying Sorry ~ using Psalm 51 w1-12

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your  
unfailing love; according to your great compassion  
blot out my transgressions. <sup>2</sup>Wash away all my  
iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. <sup>3</sup>For I know  
my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.  
<sup>4</sup>Against you, you only, have I sinned and done  
what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your  
verdict and justified when you judge. <sup>5</sup>Surely I was  
sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother  
conceived me. <sup>6</sup>Yet you desired faithfulness even  
in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret  
place. <sup>7</sup>Cleanse me with hyssop, and I shall be  
clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.  
<sup>8</sup>Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you  
have crushed rejoice. <sup>9</sup>Hide your face from my  
sins and blot out all my iniquity. <sup>10</sup>Create in me a  
pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit  
within me. <sup>11</sup>Do not cast me from your presence  
or take your Holy Spirit from me. <sup>12</sup>Restore to  
me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing  
spirit, to sustain me.

**We know that when we confess our sins, You are faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and make us clean again. Thank you for your great love, grace and mercy for each and every one of us. Amen**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Bible Reading ~ Romans 13 vv8-14**

*Love fulfils the law*

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. The commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not covet,' and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command:

'Love your neighbour as yourself.'

Love does no harm to a neighbour.

Therefore love is the fulfilment of the law.

*The day is near*

And do this, understanding the present time: the hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.

**Thanks be to God**

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Bible Reading ~ Matthew 18 vv15-20**

*Dealing with sin in the church*

'If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that "every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses." If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

'Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

'Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.

**Thanks be to God**

### **Short Reflection by Trevor Day**

With our lock-down time over the last five or six months, many of us have become much more adept at using on-line social media facilities ... I won't name one, otherwise I'll have to name them all and that'll take ages; I'm sure ... Anyway; those familiar with such platforms, will know how easy it can be to start off by sharing an idea or thought in pursuit of a good and positive conversation, only for the final outcome to be that the whole thing descends into a time of shaming and humiliating others ... or it may be yourself on the receiving end! You start with your political "discussion"; or perhaps a church-related matter; and as soon as an alternative view is shared, everyone else seems to want to get in on the act and the result is ridicule and exclusion. "Well ... you know what you lot are like!" "What do you mean you lot?" etc etc etc ♦ Our first response can so often be "pushing away". In today's reading from Matthew's Gospel, Jesus is quite clear, that our first response, when someone does something to wrong us, is not to push them away, but instead, to draw them closer, to reason with them, to engage with them, to have a conversation. ♦ If that doesn't work, then one proceeds to the next step of engagement by bringing others into the conversation. ♦ Throughout; one's default position should be one of charitable engagement. We see this in Our Lord telling us to have that conversation initially alone. ♦ The aim is not to humiliate and shame the person in front of others, but rather to delve beyond offending remarks and actions, and to enquire more deeply into motives and reasons behind a person's actions ... to seek the truth of the matter. ♦ It involves going that extra mile and not immediately giving in to premature judgement.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks [well known to Radio 4 listeners] retold of an 19th century Hassidic rabbi; Rabbi Yitzhak, who saw a fellow Jew smoking a cigarette on the sabbath, ... something which was forbidden. ♦ The rabbi asked the Jew, whether he had forgotten what day it was. The response was, "No," ... he knew what day it was. ♦ The rabbi then asked, if he'd forgotten that smoking was forbidden on the sabbath. The response was again, "No," ... he knew it was forbidden. ♦ The rabbi then asked, that surely his mind was elsewhere, when he lit the cigarette, but he received the reply that he knew exactly what he was doing.

Rabbi Yitzhak, ... it is said ... 'turned his eyes upwards to heaven and said, "Sovereign of the universe, who is like Your people Israel? I give this man every chance, and still he cannot tell a lie!"

Rabbi Yitzhak; concerned by the waywardness of one of his own, ... a fellow Jew, ... could find something good in his neighbour, ... some common ground to keep him close in fellowship; even though his behaviour presumably offended and upset him. ♦ The directives of Christ run counter to natural and assumed trends in society, where the offended is not the one, who should make the first move, but rather the offender. "I am entitled to an apology, ... I was wronged by, ... the onus is on them to make the first move, not me".

But this was not Jesus's way. We need to imitate Him ... we need to show love rather than enmity, when initial steps are taken, which offend us.

We need to remember, that throughout history it was humanity that turned its back on God and more so, when they crucified His Son Jesus Christ. God didn't turn his back on us ... he showed forgiveness. That needs to be our first response.

Those words from the letter to the Romans say it very succinctly:

**'Love your neighbour as yourself.'**

**Love does no harm to a neighbour.**

**Therefore; love is the fulfilment of the law.**

We ask your blessing on all of us as we prepare to go out into the World to share your love for all people. **Amen**

**Anthem ~ "If ye love me" [Philip Wilby]**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMAC-OwyigY>

*If ye love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, That He may abide with you forever; E'en the Spirit of truth. And ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless.*

## Time to Pray

*Take time to pray in the way, in which you feel most comfortable. I've started to use two minutes silence [it's longer than you might imagine] as a time to just listen to God through the power of the Holy Spirit.*

God within and beyond us all, teach us the silence of humility, the silence of wisdom, the silence of love, the silence of faith, the silence that enables reflection and speaks without words.

Teach us, God, to silence our own hearts and minds, that we may listen for the movement of your Spirit within us, and treasure your presence in the depths of our being.

*Silence*

Holy God, as you have heard every silent prayer and wordless petition, hear now these prayers for others.

*Time to pray for others [known or unknown to yourself] then draw your prayers together in the words of the Lord's Prayer ...*

## 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 for ever. Amen**

## A closing blessing prayer

**May God be  
a bright flame before us  
a guiding star above us  
a smooth path below us  
a kindly shepherd behind us  
this day, tomorrow and for ever. Amen**



## Optional listening ...

**Just as I am** ~ Eden's Bridge

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=exwjuCfVdoM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=exwjuCfVdoM)

*Just as I am, without one plea  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come ... ..*



# Suggestions for Prayer today & during the week

## Lectio Divina

Using the Bible Reading from today's service, we can use the ancient way of praying called Lectio Divina (which means divine reading).

It is a simple way of slowing down enough to really hear God. The following instructions are just one way of praying using this method.



1. Be quiet for a few seconds, take a couple of deep breaths. Decide to focus on God for the next few minutes, perhaps close your eyes.
2. Read today's Bible passage to yourself – either aloud or silently.
3. Read it again, slowly.
4. Start listening out for a word or phrase that jumps out to you, something that grabs your attention.
5. Read it one more time, this time decide on one word or phrase.
6. Think about the word/phrase you chose. What does it make you think of? What pictures pop into your head? What does it make you feel?
7. Turn the word into some kind of prayer – does it make you want to say thank you, please, sorry or something else? Say your prayer to God.
8. Just sit quietly for another few seconds.

*(taken from engageworship.org)*



## Prayer Jars

It can be difficult at times to decide on what to pray for. Having something like a prayer jar may help.

You could put slips of paper into the jar over the course of a week, prayers for people or situations, prayers of thanks for answered prayers etc.

During the time of prayer today (and/or during the week), you could take them out (or a few) and spend time focusing on them, offering them up to God's love, mercy and care.

## Prayer Stones



The idea for using prayer stones is that they can represent people or situations.

Think of people you know and love. Think of people you know about through the news. Is there anyone you can think of whose lives could be transformed by knowing the overwhelming love and grace of God? Pray for them.

Pray for them every day. Pray that they might come to know God's love for themselves.

Choose stones, buttons or something colourful that can be kept somewhere as a prayer focus.

When you look at the object, remember who or what it represents and offer a prayer to God.

## Finger Labyrinth *[see below/next page]*

A Labyrinth is different from a maze. There is only one path. You cannot get lost.

As you travel inwards,

- think about your life journey up until this point.
- Think of all the highs and lows. All the turning points. All the times when you have noticed God at work.
- Notice how the path turns back on itself and you pass close by to events in the past.
- How have things in your life been connected?
- Offer all of these to God.
- When you get to the centre, rest a while in God's presence. Just be still and attentive.
- When you are ready, slowly trace your finger back out of the labyrinth.
- Imagine you are walking outwards, back into the world, knowing God's presence with you.
- Listen to what new things God may be calling you to now.

You could use the labyrinth to focus your prayers on the situation in the world at the moment. Start by praying for the wider world, bringing it to your own home when arriving in the centre, then moving back out to the whole world.



### Five Finger Method

Hold each finger in turn to pray for specific things  
Focus on each area – use the past week for looking back and the coming week for looking forward



Take a moment of silence between each prayer to listen – you may hear the sounds of nature if you are outside, or the hum of electrical appliances inside. Breathe quietly and slowly to focus on listening to what God might be saying to you.

## For Children

Use the labyrinth and five finger method for yourself. Pray for your friends, your family and for yourself.

- You could draw around your hand and write some prayers in the fingers and use them during the week.
- You might be able to draw your own labyrinth in chalk in the garden and walk around that, saying prayers as you change direction on the drawn path.
- Remember, if you are worried or sad about anything, tell a grown up.
- God loves you very much.

## Prayer Rainbow

Make a prayer rainbow using any materials you have at home or have a rainbow hunt and find objects of each colour.

Use your rainbow to pray for...

**everyone who is sick**

**carers and delivery drivers**

**all those who are special to us**

**teachers and leaders**

**everyone working for the NHS**

**people who are feeling scared or sad**

**yourself**



The Rainbow is a sign of hope, a sign of God's promise.

Pray that in this difficult time all people may come to know the love and peace of God.

