**Sunday 10th May April 2020** WORSHIP AT HOME: **Easter 5 John 14v1-14**

Welcome to our act of Worship

Call to worship

“But now thus says the Lord …  
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
 I have called you by name, you are mine.  
2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned ….3 For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.”

*Isaiah 43v1-3*

A Gathering Prayer

Dear Lord, as we gather in your name,  
listen to us and bring us peace;  
be our refuge, that we may be given strength;  
let your face shine upon us, that we may know and share your love. **Amen.**

HYMN: Angel voices ever singing...

HP484, MP34, RS405, STF39

(Some of the hymn books widely used in the Wiltshire United Area)

*Prayers of Praise*

Almighty Father, we turn to you,

For you alone are our God, the fount of everlasting wisdom, the light of our lives, the soul of our souls, with whom people of every age have found love and life and friendship.

Our minds cannot hold you, our words cannot express you, for your light and love are beyond our understanding.

And yet you have been our guide and companion over every mountain and through every dark valley of our experience.

Today we offer you our worship and lift our hearts to you in praise and adoration, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Prayer of Confession*

God of embracing inclusion and love

forgive us,  
when as individuals, as a church and as a community, we have not been welcoming;  
when we have closed our doors to those  
who are different from us, those whose needs frighten or challenge us.  
Give us the grace to know how to meet all people in your name,  
and to serve all with your love and strength.  
We pray in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

HYMN Let us build a church where love can dwell

HP-, MP-, RS , STF409

**GOSPEL John 14v1-14,** with special emphasis on

1‘Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. 2In my Father’s house there are many rooms.

This is the Gospel of Christ.

**Praise to Christ our Lord. Alleluia!**

Reflection

“Is there any room for me,” said the lady to the security guard outside my local supermarket. If you have been shopping since lockdown you will relate! Social distancing means that only a certain number of people are allowed in at any time, otherwise you have to queue. Inside is akin to snakes and ladders, in that only one person is allowed per zoned area and aisles are one way!

No social distancing restrictions in today’s Gospel, the all-embracing words of Jesus: *“In my Father’s house, there are many rooms.”*  Words spoken during the night of the Last Supper. Feet have been washed. Judas has left the table. Just hours later Jesus will be dead “in death no friendly tomb but what a stranger gave.”(1) Yet he paints an amazing picture of God’s hospitality which has given solace for centuries.

*“In my Father’s house, there are many rooms.”* Recall Christ’s birth, “They laid him in a manger because there was no room in the inn.” The Christ who said in his ministry, “Foxes have holes, birds nests, but the Son of Man, nowhere to lay his head.”(2)

*“In my Father’s house, there are many rooms.”* To the criminal beside him the crucified Christ says, “Today you will be with me in paradise.”(3)

*“In my Father’s house, there are many rooms.” In* this lockdown, in the fear, the unknown, the unfamiliar, Jesus speaks reassurance, comfort and above all love. Too often we restrict these words to heaven, forgetting that earth is part of God’s creation! Last time I went to St Paul’s London the glazed entrance doors captivated me, etched into them, *This is none other than the gate of heaven."(4)* Think of those places, or occasions where you have experienced God whether in nature, music, poetry, emotion, healing, love, beauty, church or a myriad of other ways – when you do, you encounter one of the rooms of God’s house.

*“In my Father’s house, there are many rooms.”* Jesus makes this promise to the disciples that although he is going away, he will not forget or abandon them. That promise still holds true, for it reaches out, beyond the disciples to embrace all of us especially in the midst of Covid-19 pandemic!

*‘Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. 2In my Father’s house there are many rooms.’*

References

1.My song is love unknown, verse 6 STF 277

2. Luke 2v7 and Matthew 8v20

3 Luke 23v43

4. Genesis 28v17

Prayer of Response

**Lord Jesus,  
when I feel alone – be my companion;  
when I see doors closed – grant me strength;**

**when I am afraid – give me peace;  
when I see others struggling – may I be a companion;  
when I am tempted to exclude others –  
grant me your embracing heart.  
Enable me to bless and love others as you have blessed and continue to love me. Amen.**

HYMN How sweet the name of Jesus sounds.

HP257, MP251, RS277, STF322

Little people may prefer: Jesus is the way

*(Tune: Row, row, row your boat,*

*words by Emily Hoe-Crook)*Jesus, Jesus, Jesus is,  
Jesus is the way,  
Never feel alone again,  
He is here to stay.  
Jesus, Jesus, Jesus is,  
Jesus is the life,  
Jesus shows us how to live,  
Jesus is alive.

Our Prayers

Lord Jesus, we pray for those who are troubled,   
those worried about this time of lockdown, those anxious about their health, those afraid because of employment or monetary worries, those who don’t feel safe.  
**May they find in you peace.**

We pray for those who are struggling at this time.  
those who are missing friends and loved ones;

those who are feeling imprisoned by the lockdown.  
**May they find in you strength.**

We pray for all suffering because of Covid 19 and those caring for them;

those who are recovering,  
those who are dying and their loved ones,

those who are grieving.  
**May they find in you hope.**

*A prayer for Holy Rest, Saint John Henry Newman*

Support us O Lord, all the day long, until the shadows lengthen the evening comes, the busy world hushed, the fever of life over, and our work done. Then in your mercy grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last. **Amen.**

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

HYMN Love divine*…*

HP267, MP499, RS663, STF503

Blessing

May God bless you, guide you and direct you.  
May God bless you, give you strength and the assurance of his love.  
May God bless you and fill your life with his presence –  
today and always. **Amen.**

Rev David Coppard Superintendent @ Wiltshire United Area

Bank Chaplain @ Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton

***Our churches may not be open, but the Church is alive.***

“There is no moment of my life,

no place where I may go,

No action which God not see, no thought God does not know.” STF 482 Based on Psalm 139v7-12

*This is service is offered to any and all, with love and prayers.*

***If you should feel afraid, or anxious, or troubled***

*Say slowly, and out loud, Jesus’ words: ‘Set your troubled hearts at rest. Trust in God always; trust also in me' (John 14.1, NEB translation). Name the things that are troubling you one by one, and after each one say again Jesus' words.*

A Reflection for the coming week

In God’s house there are many rooms:  
a room to be still and to listen;  
a room to dance and sing and rejoice;  
a room to teach and to reflect on Scripture;  
a room to remember the needs of others;  
a room for conversation and hospitality,  
to welcome visitors and to make friendships;  
a room where troubles and fears and tears can be shared;  
a room that is big enough for everyone  
to bring their dreams and to share their gifts.  
In God’s house there are many rooms.

**GOSPEL John 14 Jesus the Way to the Father**

**14‘Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. 2In my Father’s house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. 4And you know the way to the place where I am going.’ 5Thomas said to him, ‘Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?’ 6Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.’**

**8 Philip said to him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.’ 9Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, “Show us the Father”? 10Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. 11Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. 12Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. 13I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.**

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**Angel voices ever singing**  
round thy throne of light,  
angel-harps for ever ringing,  
rest not day nor night;  
thousands only live to bless thee  
and confess thee  
Lord of might.  
  
Thou who art beyond the farthest  
mortal eye can scan,  
can it be that thou regardest  
songs of sinful man?  
can we know that thou art near us,  
and wilt hear us?  
yea, we can.  
  
Yea, we know that thou rejoicest  
o'er each work of thine;  
thou didst ears and hands and voices  
for thy praise design;  
craftsman's art and music's measure  
for thy pleasure  
all combine.  
  
In thy house, great God, we offer  
of thine own to thee;  
and for thine acceptance proffer  
all unworthily  
hearts and minds and hands and voices  
in our choicest  
psalmody.  
  
Honour, glory, might, and merit  
thine shall ever be,  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
blessed Trinity.  
Of the best that thou hast given  
earth and heaven  
render thee.

**Let us build a house**  
where love can dwell  
And all can safely live,  
A place where  
saints and children tell  
How hearts learn to forgive.

*All are welcome, all are welcome,  
 All are welcome in this place.*

Built of hopes and dreams and visions,  
Rock of faith and vault of grace;  
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions;  
  
Let us build a house where prophets speak,  
And words are strong and true,  
Where all God's children dare to seek  
To dream God's reign anew.  
  
Here the cross shall stand as witness  
And a symbol of God's grace;  
Here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:  
  
Let us build a house where love is found  
In water, wine and wheat:  
A banquet hall on holy ground,  
Where peace and justice meet.  
  
Here the love of God, through Jesus,  
Is revealed in time and space;  
As we share in Christ the feast that frees us:

1. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds  
   In a believer’s ear!  
   It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,  
   And drives away his fear.
2. It makes the wounded spirit whole  
   And calms the troubled breast;  
   ’Tis manna to the hungry soul,  
   And to the weary, rest.
3. Dear Name! the Rock on which I build,  
   My Shield and Hiding Place,  
   My never-failing Treas’ry filled  
   With boundless stores of grace!
4. Jesus! my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,  
   My Prophet, Priest, and King;  
   My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,  
   Accept the praise I bring.
5. Weak is the effort of my heart,  
   And cold my warmest thought;  
   But when I see Thee as Thou art,  
   I’ll praise Thee as I ought.
6. Till then I would Thy love proclaim  
   With every fleeting breath,  
   And may the music of Thy name  
   Refresh my soul in death.

**Love divine, all loves excelling,**Joy of heav'n to earth come down:  
fix in us thy humble dwelling,  
all thy faithful mercies crown:  
Jesu, thou art all compassion,  
pure, unbounded love thou art;  
visit us with thy salvation,  
enter ev'ry trembling heart.

Come, Almighty to deliver,  
let us all thy life receive;  
suddenly return, and never,  
nevermore thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing,  
serve thee as thy hosts above,  
pray and praise thee without ceasing,  
glory in thy perfect love.

Finish, then, thy new creation;  
pure and spotless let us be:  
let us see thy great salvation  
perfectly restored in thee;  
changed from glory into glory,  
'til in heav'n we take our place,  
'til we cast our crowns before thee,  
lost in wonder, love, and praise.