

Sunday 29th March 2020

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use if you are unable to attend church. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you

Opening Prayer

As we come to worship you might like to have a time of silence and light a candle.

Then pray: Holy and Loving God I come to worship you, as I do I remember that I am a part of your church in my community and in the world, and I take comfort from the fact that I am not alone.

Come by your Holy Spirit and help me to worship you in spirit and in truth.

Amen

Hymn: StF 370 Breathe on me breath of God

1 Breathe on me, breath of God:
fill me with life anew,
that I may love as you have loved
and do as you would do.

2 Breathe on me, breath of God,
until my heart is pure,
until my will is one with yours
to do and to endure.

3 Breathe on me, breath of God;
fulfil my heart's desire,
until this earthly part of me
glows with your heavenly fire.

4 Breathe on me, breath of God;
so shall I never die,
but live with you the perfect life
of your eternity.

Jubilate Hymns version of Breathe on me, breath of God
Edwin Hatch (1835 - 1889) © Jubilate Hymns Ltd
SM

Let us pray together

Holy and Loving God, all life comes from you,
and in you all things hold together.

As we remember this, we pause to give you
thanks and Praise.

As we remember this, we are reminded that
you hold the end from the beginning, and that
nothing is too large or too small for you.

As we remember this, remind us that as all
things are held, so we are held by you, in love.

Help us in our anxious thoughts.

Help us in our day to day lives.

Help us in this time of deep uncertainty.

We acknowledge that at times we are selfish,
at times we do not seek you first.

But we know that you are always faithful,
merciful, gracious, and forgiving.

(Silence)

We receive your mercy and forgiveness
faithfulness and grace.

In the name of Christ.

Amen

Today's Reading from the Old Testament

Ezekiel 37: 1-14

Ezekiel 37: 1-14

The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all round them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, 'Mortal, can these bones live?' I answered, 'O Lord GOD, you know.' Then he said to me, 'Prophesy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD.'

So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, 'Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.' I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

Then he said to me, 'Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely." Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD.'

Today's Gospel Reading:

John 11: 1-45

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' But when Jesus heard it, he said, 'This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?' Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.' After saying this, he told them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.' The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.' Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow-disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know

that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.' And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?'

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead for four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upwards and said, 'Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.' When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' The

dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'

Time to Reflect

Today's readings are full of hope, reminding us that the resurrection is real, and new life is possible.

Take time to read the gospel passage slowly and prayerfully again.

Is there a word or a passage that stands out to you?

Pause to spend time with that word/ passage.

What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?

If Jesus were stood before you what would you like to ask him?

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

Let's pray

Holy and Loving God we pray for your world, for the leaders who are making difficult decisions as every day brings new changes and challenges.

Lord of all, Lord for all

Hear our prayer

We pray for our nation, that decisions might be made with wisdom and care for the benefit of all.

Lord of all, Lord for all

Hear our prayer

We pray for our town/ city/ village. For all who live here that your peace might reign and that your perfect love might settle our fears.

Lord of all, Lord for all

Hear our prayer

We pray for frontline workers, Drs, nurses,
carers, shop workers, refuse collectors, postal
workers.

Lord of all, Lord for all

Hear our prayer

We pray for our loved ones, those we know
who may be ill, those who are struggling,
those who are confused and conflicted... (you
might like to name names here)

Lord of all, Lord for all

Hear our prayer

And finally we pray for ourselves, you know
what is on our hearts and minds, and so we
offer that to you (again you might like to
name your own prayers and concerns)

Lord of all, Lord for all

Hear our prayer

AMEN

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: One more step ...

1. One more step along the world I go,
one more step along the world I go;
from the old things to the new
keep me traveling along with you:

Refrain:

And it's from the old I travel to the new;
keep me traveling along with you.

2. Round the corner of the world I turn,
more and more about the world I learn;
all the new things that I see
you'll be looking at along with me:

Refrain:

3. As I travel through the bad and good,
keep me traveling the way I should;
where I see no way to go
you'll be telling me the way, I know:

Refrain:

4. Give me courage when the world is
rough,
keep me loving though the world is
tough;
leap and sing in all I do,
keep me traveling along with you:

Refrain:

5. You are older than the world can be,
you are younger than the life in me;
ever old and ever new,
keep me traveling along with you:

Refrain:

A prayer of blessing

May you know the deep peace of the God
who knows and perfectly loves you.

May take the yoke of Jesus upon you,
knowing that he bears your load with you.

May you know the indwelling Spirit bringing
you wisdom and peace.

Amen