

Informal Morning Service
Tuesday 12 May 2020

Great is the Lord and worthy of all praise.
Amen!

Praise and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honour, power and might, be to our God for ever and ever Amen.

Together we pray:
Lord, direct our thoughts, teach us to pray, lift up our hearts to worship you in Spirit and in truth, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Confession

Jesus says, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand. So let us turn away from sin and turn to him, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Almighty God, long-suffering and of great goodness: we confess to you with our whole hearts our neglect and forgetfulness of your commandments, our wrong doing, thinking, and speaking; the hurts we have done to others, and the good we have left undone. O God, forgive us, for we have sinned against you; and raise us to newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Absolution

May the Lord enrich us with his grace, and nourish us with his blessing; may the Lord defend us in trouble and keep us from all evil; may the Lord accept our prayers and forgive us all our sins, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

Collect

Gracious Father, by the obedience of Jesus you brought salvation to our wayward world: draw us into harmony with your will, that we may and all things restored in him, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Reading

John 14:27-31 NIV

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

“You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. I will not say much more to you, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold over me, but he comes so that the world may learn that I love the Father and do exactly what my Father has commanded me. “Come now; let us leave.

Pause for Thought

This bible story reminds me of a story I found on the internet.

A plane landed after a long flight. The flight attendant told the passengers that there was enough time for everyone to get off the plane and come back in 50 minutes.

Everybody got off the plane except one person. The pilot noticed him and he could tell that the man was blind because his guide dog lay underneath the seat next to him. The pilot said to the blind man, "we will be here for almost an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?"

The blind man replied, "No thanks, but maybe my dog would like to stretch his legs."

Picture this: All the people by the plane came to a complete stand still when they looked up and saw the pilot walk off the plane with a guide dog! The pilot was even wearing sunglasses.

Fear took control. People scattered and then queued at the airline desk trying to change planes! Fear is a normal human response. It can be a common part of most people lives – perhaps more so in some people than others – but still everyone has to deal with fear at some time. There are many things that can cause unexpected fear to grip us.

Many are in fear today over Coronavirus, with many things in lockdown or shut or have been cancelled. There is still fear of war in the Middle East, there is the continued fear of Brexit and I'm sure you can think of lots of other things we should be afraid of.

Where there is fear, there is no peace. Fear brings with it anxiety, worry, apprehension, dread, restlessness, panic and tension – none of which lead us to feeling calm, peaceful, relaxed and stress-free.

Our reading happens on the night of the Last Supper. Jesus had just spoken of his impending death. He told the disciples that one of them will betray him. Peter boldly claims that he would rather die than deny Jesus, but Jesus knows that before the cock crows, he will say three times that he does not know Jesus. Jesus talks about going where they cannot follow, and they are confused about this. They have followed Jesus for the past 3 years. They have watched him heal the sick, they have seen him bring comfort to the afflicted and laughter to the faces of children. Not a day has past where Jesus has not been with them. And now they are faced with the thought of life without him. Where is he going that they can't continue to follow him in the future?

Jesus knows that what will happen – his arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, his trial and tortuous death the next day. The disciples are afraid, uncertain, and confused. And so, Jesus continues to tell them about the peace that he brings.

The peace Jesus gives is an unconditional, it is not the same peace that the world gives to us - for the world, peace is often very conditional, fragile, temporary, and, is frequently reduced to mean only the absence of war and strife.

Worldly peace always has some kind of strings attached, some kind of conditions, and only last as long as conditions are kept.

Jesus brings a peace where there are no strings attached; this peace will last forever. This Peace, means salvation, forgiveness and reconciliation between God and humanity. The sin that stands between God and us has been done away by the death of Jesus and his resurrection. The peace Jesus brings unites us with God – Jesus restores the friendship between God and us.

Peace is also the Holy Spirit in our lives as friend, comforter, counsellor, teacher and healer. Peace is knowing that no matter what troubles may come our way, God has promised to never forget us and to always be our helper and strength. Through Jesus, God reclaim us as his own. We are his special and most loved children.

God Peace affects our live and has an influence on how we treat the people we live and work with in our day to day relationships and activities and this peace also has a positive effect on our health and well-being.

(Psalm 27:1,2) tells us “(God) is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? (God) is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid?”

(Psalm 46:1,2). “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble”

Be assured that God keeps his promises; that he is with us, even in the worst possible situation imaginable on this earth.

There will be times when we are filled with anxiety. We live in anxious times of lockdown. We may even feel that God has deserted us. It is at these times we need the Holy Spirit to help us – to forgive us for our weakness, to enable us to trust that God never forgets about us. We need to take time to wait patiently, trusting in the God who knows all our needs and is willing to help us.

And don't forget to pray. Ask God to help us in our troubles and the fears they bring. Pray for faith, for boldness and courage when we are afraid. Pray that we can hear the voice of the Holy Spirit who points us to the love, hope and compassion of God.

Remember Jesus promises, “Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you; but not as the world gives. Don't let your heart be troubled, do let it be afraid.”

We stand and declare our faith in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures; he was buried; he was raised to life on the third day in accordance with the scriptures; afterwards he appeared to his followers, and to all the apostles: this we have received, and this we believe. Amen.

Please sit or kneel to pray

Lord God, make your ways known upon the earth: **your saving power among the peoples.**

Renew your church in holiness: **and help us to serve you with joy.**

Guide the leaders of this and every nation: **that justice may prevail throughout the world.**

Let not the needy be forgotten: **nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

Make us instruments of your peace: **and let your glory be over all the earth.**

A moment of silent prayer

Lord, we ask you to accept all our prayers and answer them for your glory. **Amen.**

Eternal God, our beginning, and our end, be our starting point and accompany us in this day's journey. Scatter our darkness and open our eyes to praise you for your creation and to see the work you set before us today. Take us and use us to bring to others the new life you give in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

And now may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, be amongst us and remain with us always Amen

Go In Peace to love and serve the Lord
In the name of Christ. Amen.