

Seventh Sunday of Easter + 24th May 2020

A simple liturgy for use during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Light a candle. Sit for a few moments to gather your thoughts. Breathe deeply and slowly.

Gathering in God's Presence

God of mountain peak and valley floor,
who knows our joys,
our sorrows,
our highs and lows,
who picks us up as we stumble
and sets us on the road again.

You are father of the fatherless,
friend to the outcast,
restorer of the broken,
liberator of the captive,
rescuer of the fallen,
lover of creation.

You are the one whose name we praise,
whose truth we proclaim,
whose life we live;
you are our God and we thank you.

Be the blessing we receive
and the blessing we give
as we join in worship to praise your name.
Amen.



Prayer of Brokenness

Almighty God,
we confess that we let our fears get the better of us.
At times we feel frozen, stuck right where we are,
not only physically, but mentally and spiritually.
We end up focused on the wrong things,
looking back instead of looking forward.
Remind us that we are not alone.
Remind us that You are always present with us.
Remind us that Your perfect love casts out fear.
Restore us, O God,
so we may know Your steadfast love endures forever.
Amen.

Readings: 1 Peter 4.12-14, 5.6-11 John 17.1-11

The writer of 1 Peter was concerned about finding meaning in suffering - in that God doesn't cause it, but that when we suffer for the faith, we are not alone. The Holy Spirit rests on us. Be humble, and God will exalt you. The writer warns against the devil, that the temptation is to think one suffers alone, but all believers are in this together with similar suffering.

However, Christ will restore, support, and strengthen those who endure. This message has fresh resonance for us as we journey through our Covid-19 world.

In Jesus' final prayer to God in John 17.1-11, he calls upon God to glorify him, so that he might glorify God with his suffering and death and resurrection. Jesus prays for the disciples, who have believed in him and believed that God sent him. Jesus declares that they belong to God, and asks for God's protection as he is no longer in the world with them. Jesus' final desire is that they may be one, as he is one with God.

In our Covid-19 world many Christians, although physically separated from one another are rediscovering a sense of 'common purpose' and engaging with each other a whole lot more than they would have when just meeting for worship on Sunday Morning. Daily WhatsApp chat's, Skype and Zoom Meetings are building a greater sense of unity and community for many in our church family. Even those unencumbered with technology are receiving regular phone calls so that none are forgotten.

Prayers of intercession

According to his promise, Jesus is both with us now and interceding for us.
So we can pray with confidence and courage.

Pray for those who have painful goodbyes to say to someone they love...

May they be comforted and consoled by the Holy Spirit,
and may their faith be strengthened by God's promise of reunion.

Pray for those who feel that God is far from them....

May they walk into the light of God's presence with joy and thanksgiving.

Pray for communities and nations who are experiencing hard times,
especially during the Coronavirus Pandemic.....

May God to be in the midst of upheaval, granting wisdom and compassion to leaders,
and faith and power to the people.

We thank you, heavenly Father, for the example of your Son who,
before facing death, prayed with confidence and compassion.

Hear our prayers, Lord, humbly offered.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Prayer of Blessing

May the Father

protect us and those we love.

May the Son

guide us throughout our life.

May the Holy Spirit

comfort us in times of pain and separation.

Amen.



Lord, let your face shine on us