

Fifth Sunday of
EASTER

The Camel-Allen Churches

Morning Prayer at Home

Sunday 10th May 2020

PREPARATION

We come from scattered lives
and scattered places
to meet with God.
Let us recognize his presence with us.

**We sit silently for a moment as we each bring ourselves into
God's presence**

As God's people we have gathered
Let us worship him together

Alleluia Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed, Alleluia

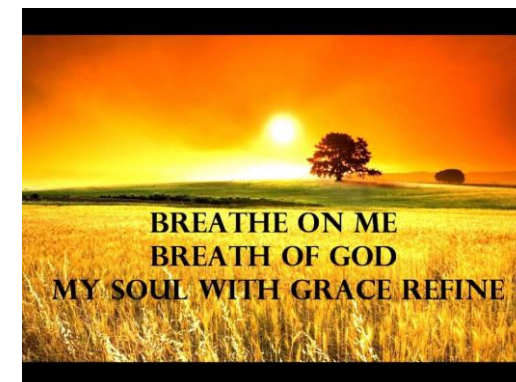
Praise the God and Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ:
**he has given us new life and hope
by raising Jesus from the dead.**

Alleluia Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed, Alleluia

Be with us, Spirit of God;
Nothing can separate us from your love.
Breathe on us, breath of God;
Fill us with your saving power.
Speak in us, wisdom of God;
Bring strength, healing and peace.

Silence is kept

The Lord is here.
His spirit is with us.



FIRST HYMN

We sing or say:

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life a-new,
That as you love, so may I love,
And do what you would do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure:
Until my will is one with yours
To do and to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fulfil my heart's desire,
Until this earthly part of me
Glow with your heav'nly fire.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with you the perfect life
Of your eternity.



Jesus said, "*Before you offer your gift, go and be reconciled*".

As sisters and brothers in God's family,
We come together to ask our Father for forgiveness.

Lord, Jesus Christ,
We confess we have failed you, as did your first disciples.
We ask for your mercy and your help.

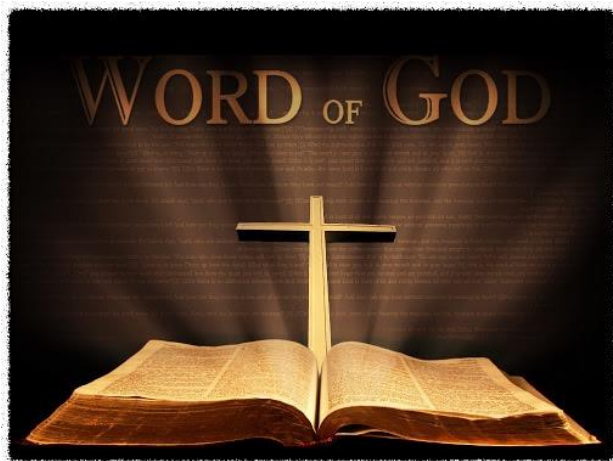
Our selfishness betrays you:
Lord, forgive us.
Christ have mercy.

We fail to share the pain of your suffering:
Lord, forgive us.
Christ have mercy.

We run away from those who abuse you:
Lord, forgive us.
Christ have mercy.

We are afraid of being known to belong to you:
Lord, forgive us.
Christ have mercy.

May the Father of all mercies
Cleanse us from our sins,
And restore us in his image
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Acts 7.55-end; 1 Peter 2.2-10

In this time of the pandemic, we are all, to some extent, fearful for ourselves or our loved ones. This morning's Psalm reminds us that, whatever the future may hold, God is our rock, our fortress and our refuge.

PSALM 31: 1-5, 16

We say together:

**In you, O Lord, I seek refuge;
Do not let me ever be put to shame;
In your righteousness deliver me.**

**Incline your ear to me;
Rescue me speedily.
Be a rock of refuge for me,
A strong fortress to save me.**

**You are indeed my rock and my fortress;
For your name's sake lead me and guide me,**

**Take me out of the net that is hidden from me,
For you are my refuge.**

**Into your hand I commit my spirit;
You have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.**

**Let your face shine upon your servant;
Save me in your steadfast love.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
And to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning is now:
And shall be for ever.
Amen.**

John 14: 1-14

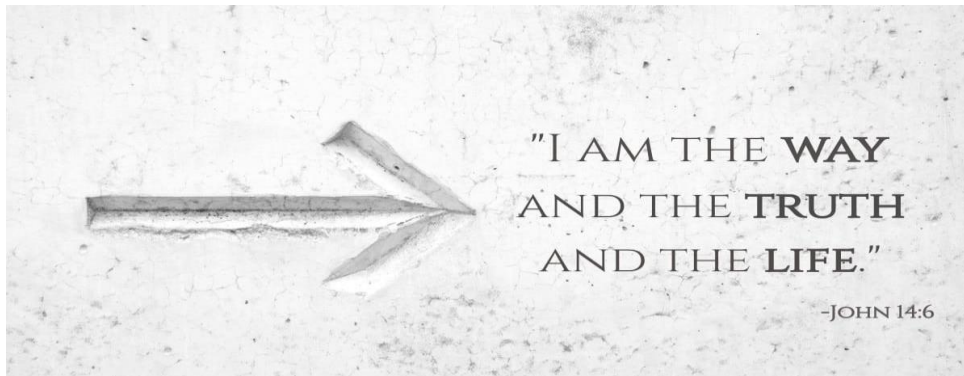
SECOND HYMN

In you, my God, may my soul find its peace;
You are my refuge, my rock and my strength,
Calming my fears with the touch of your love.
Here in your presence my troubles will cease.

In you, my God, may my soul find its joy;
You are the radiance, the song of my heart,
Drying my tears with the warmth of your love.
Here in your presence my troubles will cease.

In you, my God, may my soul find its rest;
You are the meaning, the purpose of life,
Drawing me near to the fire of your Love,
Safe in your presence my yearning will cease.

THE GOSPEL



"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In 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? And 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. And you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus 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? Do 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. Believe 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. Very 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. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it".

REFLECTION

Our passage begins with Jesus telling his disciples not to let their hearts be troubled. It is a relevant and important message to us today because, in the pandemic and lockdown, many of us, perhaps, do have troubled hearts. Just as, in the Psalm, we looked to God as our refuge, our rock in times of trouble, here God in Christ, in the person of the human Jesus, assures us that he has gone ahead to prepare a place for us with God.

If we are fully to grasp why Jesus was addressing his disciples in this way, we need to go back to chapter 13. The scene is the upper room after the Last Supper has been finished. Judas has already left on his way to betray Jesus.

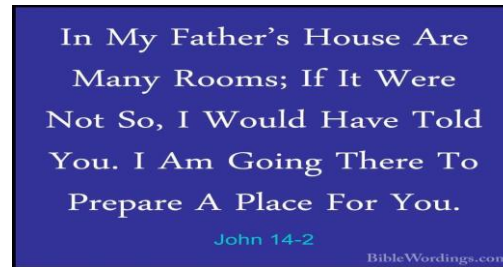
Jesus has told the disciples that he will be with them only a little longer and that, "*Where I am going, you cannot come*". Peter wants to know where Jesus is going and why he cannot follow now, claiming that he would lay down his life for Jesus. In response, Jesus tells Peter that he will deny Jesus three times before the cock crows.

For Jesus to say this to the leader of the disciples, must have fallen like a bombshell, not only on Peter, but on all disciples present. And it is while the disciples are standing in stunned silence that Jesus tells them not to let their hearts be troubled. Yes, he is going back to the Father, but they are not to worry because "*In my Father's house there are many dwelling places*".

The imagery which Jesus uses here is of the large Oriental family homestead, where there would not only be room for the father of the

family and his wife to live, but there would also be dwellings for the sons and their wives, and their children. Jesus is, therefore, telling the disciples, and us, that God's house has ample room for everybody, not just to live, but to become part of the family.

The Greek word which is translated as "dwelling places" is derived from the verb to "abide", the same word used to describe that, after his death and resurrection, Jesus continues to "abide" ~ to live ~ with us. Later, John reports Jesus saying to the disciples, "Abide in me, and I shall abide in you".



Abiding in Christ is what marks us out as Christians. Jesus is the Way and the Truth and the Life and he assures us that "Where I am, there you may be also". He gives us the promise of an unfading fellowship with him, even beyond death.

We have a dwelling place with Jesus now, in life, as we will have after death. The Old Testament Psalmist recognized God as our rock and our refuge. We are doubly assured of the truth of this because now Jesus abides with us, in life and in death, if only, as he asks, we will abide in him.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We sing or say:

tune: Hyfrydol (eg I will tell the wondrous story) or any 87 87 or 87 87D tune.



**We believe in God the Father,
God Almighty, by whose plan
Earth and heaven sprang to being,
All created things began.
We believe in Christ the Saviour,
Son of God in human frame,
Virgin-born, the child of Mary
Upon whom the Spirit came.**

**Christ, who won the cross forsaken,
Like a lamb to slaughter led,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
He descended to the dead.
We believe in Jesus risen,
Heaven's king to rule and reign,
To the Father's side ascended
Till as judge he comes again.**

**We believe in God the Spirit;
In one church, below, above:
Saints of God in one communion,
One in holiness and love.
So by faith, our sins forgiven,
Christ our Saviour, Lord and friend,
We shall rise with him in glory
To the life that knows no end.**

PRAYERS

In the faith of Christ, we pray as he has commanded us and given us his example:

As we have become your people by Grace, make us more worthy of our calling. Lead your church to follow Jesus in all things as the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Silence

Lord, meet us in the silence
And hear our prayer.

Jesus told his disciples that they would do even greater works than he, which they did as they spread his Gospel after his glorious resurrection. Give grace and power to all those who seek to do great works in the name of Christ by speaking and living that Gospel today. Open the ears of those who will not listen by your healing presence in a world where many cannot bear to hear the truth.

Silence

Lord, meet us in the silence
And hear our prayer.

Use us as living stones to build a community in your name even as we struggle to maintain social distancing in these difficult times. Keep us strong in our faith and guide us, our families, friends and neighbours in the true Way.



Silence

Lord, meet us in the silence
And hear our prayer.

Soothe the many hearts that are troubled in these difficult times and guide the feet of those who feel insecure into the Way. Grant, to all who suffer, the vision of Christ risen and glorified, and let them know that he is the Truth and the Life.

Silence

Lord, meet us in the silence
And hear our prayer.

May the Lord who has gone before to prepare a place for us, receive the souls of the faithful and grant them the perfect knowledge of his love.

We make these, our prayers, in the name of the Son, our Saviour, in whom the Father is revealed and glorified.

Amen.

The Collect for today, the Fifth Sunday of Easter:

Almighty God,
Who through your only begotten son Jesus Christ
Have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life:
Grant that, as by your grace going before us
You put into our minds good desires,
So by your continual help
We may bring them to good effect;
Through Jesus Christ our risen Lord,
Who is alive and reigns with you,
In the unity of the Holy Spirit,
One God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Gathering our prayers and praises into one,
Let us pray as our Saviour taught us:
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 for ever.
Amen.

FINAL HYMN

We sing or say:

**Jesu, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the gathering waters roll,
While the tempest still is high:
Hide me, Oh my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last.**

**Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee;
Leave, ah, leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me.
All my trust on thee is stayed,
All my help from thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of thy wing.**

**Plenteous grace with thee is found,
Grace to cleanse from ev'ry sin;
Let the healing streams abound,
Make and keep me pure within.
Thou of life the fountain art,
Freely let me take of thee,
Spring thou up within my heart,
Rise to all eternity.**

CLOSING PRAYER

God of our salvation,
You have restored us to life,
You have brought us back again into your love
By the triumphant death and resurrection of Christ.
Amen.

CONCLUSION

To a troubled world
Peace from Christ.
To a searching world
Love from Christ.
To a waiting, locked down world
Hope from Christ.

And so let us go into the world
To walk in God's light,
To rejoice in God's love
And to reflect God's glory.

And the blessing of God Almighty,
The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
Be among us and remain with us always.
Amen

Go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, Alleluia.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia.

*Compiled and written by The Revd Jeffrey Terry based on material from New Patterns for
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