**Morning Praise @ Home 11 May 2025**

**Opening prayer**

Blessed are you, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, you have blessed us with every spiritual blessing; enable us by your power to be true to our calling and live holy and blameless lives before you all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. **Amen**

**Confession** Let us admit to God the sin which always confronts us.

**Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and**

**repent.** **Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us**

**from our sin.** **Renew a right spirit within us** **and restore us to the joy of your salvation,** **through**

**Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen** cf Psalm 51

**Absolution** May the Father of all mercies cleanse us from our sins, and restore us in his image

to the praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

### Bible Readings John 10: 22 – 30

### Reflection from Ruth

Have you ever stopped to wonder what Jesus sounded like? We have an idea of what he may have looked like. Recently there have been a number of facial reconstructions using digital imaging and 3D modelling. There are thousands of painted images of Jesus created down the centuries, some more likely than others. We know Jesus was a Palestinian Jew. He was dark-skinned and spoke Aramaic. But we don’t know what he sounded like. What we do know is that people listened to Jesus, and he drew big crowds. He was a gifted preacher and teacher. He read and taught with authority. He was a great storyteller who could hold people’s attention and make them think. His voice contained within it the power of blessing. It could calm a storm, heal the sick and bring his dead friend Lazarus back to life. His voice had the power to call people to turn their lives around and follow him. In John 10 Jesus responds to the question asked by saying, ‘My sheep hear my voice. I know them and they follow me.’ He suggests that people will know who he is if they listen. Peter, one of Jesus’ disciples, recognizes in Jesus the voice of the Messiah and follows. In the reading from the book of Acts, we find Peter in Joppa where Tabitha, a much-loved and saintly woman, has died. Everyone is distraught. Peter kneels down, prays and then uses the authority of Jesus to call Tabitha back to life. By the power of the Holy Spirit God’s work in Jesus is continuing through his disciples. Listening for Jesus’ voice the church traditionally holds this day as Vocation Sunday, recognizing that Jesus is still calling. Many of us worshipping today are here because we’ve heard Jesus call us to follow him and we’ve responded to that call.

But how do we hear and how do we know it’s Jesus? People hear the call of Jesus in many ways. Some literally hear Jesus speaking to them, though in my experience that’s quite rare. More often people are aware of Jesus calling them through passages of Scripture, hymns and songs. Sometimes people are moved to respond to Jesus due to the beauty and wonder of creation. Sometimes Jesus uses other people to speak his message of love and acceptance to us.

So how do we recognise Jesus’ voice? We are all children of God, made in God’s image. Through our baptism, we are members of the body of Christ. At the very core of our being, we recognize the voice of Jesus, though we may not always be aware that it is him speaking. He knows us even when we don’t know him. We can know it’s Jesus’ voice even though we don’t know what he sounds like because we become aware of something deep within us responding to his call. We can sense that something unusual, possibly something of God, is occurring. And what is certain is that something that would stop another person being in relationship with Jesus and having wholeness and healing will not be from Jesus. So discrimination and prejudice in God’s name is not the true voice of Jesus.

Responding to Jesus’ voice:- The call of Jesus is sometimes a call to something difficult or demanding that requires courage. Something that we have to grow into, that teaches us to turn to God for help and guidance. It will be something that we sense is right. Those around us, who know us well, will agree and encourage us to do it. The call of Jesus leads to new life and healing, forgiveness, order and peace. The call of Jesus is a calling into the truth which sets us free. In John 10 Jesus says that when we follow him, we will be with him for eternity and nothing can snatch us out of his hand. It is into the hands of Jesus that the sheep – God’s people – are placed. Jesus says that the sheep he holds are safe, and because he and God the Father are one then to be safe in Jesus’ hands is to be safe in God’s hands: safe not just for now but for ever. We will continue to be called and carried, and nothing, not even death, will make Jesus let us go.

### Affirmation of faith

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

**We believe and trust in him. This is the faith of the Church.**

**This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Prayers of intercession led by Sheila**

Dear Lord

We pray for our world, asking that its leaders, at every level, hear your voice and respond. That they take action to uphold justice for all people, action to bring peace and action to provide practical help in the many parts of the world where it is needed.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

Father

We ask that our church here in Burton and the wider Church of England learn to listen for your voice. We often get so caught up in what we think your church should be like to the point that we forget to listen for your voice trying to guide us to the path which will bring about real change and positive growth.

Forgive us Lord and help us to properly seek out your will.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

Father

We pray that you speak loudly, clearly and compassionately to those who are suffering. Leave them in no doubt Lord that you love and care for them.

Use us to be the outpouring of your love, but when all is quiet and still and fear creeps in, speak to them Lord and give them comfort.

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

**The Lord’s Prayer** As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

***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 today our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen***

**Closing prayer**

God give you grace to become the people He has called you to be, that you may live and work to his praise and glory, and the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us and remain with us always. **Amen**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ. Amen**