**Morning Praise @ Home 25th 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 14: 23 – 29

### Reflection *JESUS PROMISES GOD’S PEACE AND PRESENCE*

Our Bible reading from John 14:23-29 was another part of Jesus’ goodbye message to his disciples. This took place at the Last Supper. Jesus told his disciples that he will be crucified. Naturally, the disciples were desolate and confused. They had spent the last three years learning from him. They wondered how they would cope after he was gone.

When someone we deeply love leaves us, it’s natural for us to not want to see them go, but if we **really** love them, we **have** to let them go. Jesus was preparing to die and eventually return to his Father, but the disciples did not want him to leave. He urged them to rejoice because he was leaving. His departure would allow the disciples and all believers to do great things, including growing God’s Kingdom.

Jesus was more concerned for the disciples than he was for himself. He reassured them that they would not be alone. He promised them peace and hope - the same peace and hope he offers to all believers. Even though he offered instructions to the disciples during his earthly ministry, he knew that they did not understand what he had taught them. They did remember his words and teachings after the resurrection and ascension. When Jesus was with his disciples, they could listen to his teachings and ask him questions. When he was gone, the Holy Spirit assumed that role. For the rest of their lives and as Matthew, Mark, Luke and John wrote the Gospels, the Spirit reminded them of all the things Jesus did and said. The Holy Spirit stood with them and guided them, just like he stands with us and guides us today.

There are times when we feel alone and we don’t know what will happen to us. Practically

We could be stranded in a strange town with a broken down car. Our circumstances may shift rapidly and we are left uncertain how the future will pan out. How do we take care of ourselves in such moments?

For us as Christians, the answer is that such times are opportunities to find God’s help. God wants us to trust in him. When we do, we will receive help from both the Holy Spirit and God’s peace.

When Jesus told his disciples that he would be leaving, they were afraid. They could not imagine their future without him. Jesus confronted their fears with four truths, and these truths allow all believers to overcome fear:

1.      We may feel inadequate, but the Holy Spirit will make us competent and courageous. He will teach us and remind us of what Jesus has already taught us.

2.     We may be fearful, but the peace of Jesus Christ is ours for the taking.

3.      Circumstances may be difficult, but God’s help is assured. Our future might be difficult and our experiences might not always be pleasant, but we can endure with hope because God walks with us.

4.     Circumstances may be difficult, but courage is found in following God’s ways. God is our ally, especially when we face tough times. When we trust him, we begin a process of growth in which we experience the truth of Christ’s words personally through obedience. When we obey God, our fears are seen differently.

Christ’s peace is the kind of peace we feel inside even when the world around us is falling apart. Christ’s peace is peace of mind, peace in our conscience, peace with our fellow believers, peace with our bosses and co-workers, peace with our environment and peace with our world. Jesus gives us this peace freely, without expecting anything in return **except** for the hope that when we are changed by this peace, we might pass it on to others.

Jesus tells his disciples and us not to be troubled. That’s not trite. Trusting him does not mean that all of life’s circumstances will change for the better, but that his followers will have peace as they endure trials and difficulties. When we receive the peace of Christ, we can take our problems to the cross. Christ’s peace gives us peace in the core of our being.

The Holy Spirit will give us God’s wisdom, counsel, knowledge and power. He will make us more dependent on God and less dependent on personal strength and circumstances. Jesus wants us to focus on God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. They are sovereign over us, our circumstances, our possessions and other people. When we exercise faith and trust Jesus dynamically God can work in our lives in new ways.

The Holy Spirit keeps our relationship with God vibrant. Love for Christ is demonstrated by keeping his commandments. Obedience flowing from love is very different from obedience performed out of obligation. Jesus promises his presence as people join him in his work. And as we do so we can rest in his peace.

### 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**

Father God, Jesus said to his disciples “*Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid*.”  We pray for all people around the world who are living in fear and are troubled.  For people living with the ravages of war, for people who are in need of food, clean water and shelter and for people who are being persecuted.  We pray that all organisations who offer help and support that they may be successful in their efforts.  In a moment of silence please bring before God a place or situation on your heart this morning.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Creator God, we pray for governments and world leaders, for captains of industry and workers; for inventors and technicians, for entertainers and audiences. For those who set the targets at work, in education and training and in the pews. For all who are powerful, that they may be guided by the Spirit of Truth that your way may be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations.  We continue to pray for an end to the war between Russia and Ukraine and for peace in the Holy Land.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Father God, we pray for our family and colleagues, for friends, neighbours and strangers; For those with whom we break bread at home, at work, in the community, and in our church; For all who grow, harvest and prepare the food we eat and for those who cook it and serve it; For all who share with the less fortunate through foodbanks and charities.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Loving God, we pray for all people who are struggling, whether with illness and pain, or depression, or worries of all different kinds.  Grant them your peace, healing, strength or comfort.  Heal and strengthen weak bodies, calm confused minds and reassure the lonely with your presence.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

We pray for any we know who are poorly. Be with them Lord and give them comfort and healing. Be with those who are suffering mental pain and stress. Comfort and heal them Lord.

Let us pause as we bring our private prayers to you Lord for any we know who are in need of your healing and care.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

This coming Thursday will be Ascension Day. Heavenly Father, help us to understand the meaning of the Ascension and to accept it, in all its wonder along with the glorious fact of your life on earth.  May our vision of it become fuller and sharper every day; so that we may share the blessings of your first disciples.

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**