**Morning Praise @ Home 1 May 2022**

**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 Psalm 30 Acts 9: 1 – 6

**Reflection from Ruth**

The story of Saul’s encounter with the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus is remarkable for many reasons. Luke explicitly states that Saul’s intense dislike for members of the Way drove him to seek the high priest’s permission to pursue and extradite them.

Saul might have had theological differences with members of the Way, but it was his inability to see past those differences and relate to their humanity that engendered his hatred for them. In confronting Saul, the voice from heaven challenges him to see them through new eyes as people worthy of respect.

Saul was certain of how he wanted to see Christ and insisted that others see him the same way. Luke tells us that Saul lost his sight for three days and regained it after his encounter with Ananias. An interesting detail in the story is that Saul’s scales fell off allowing him to see again. Saul does not merely see again; rather his loss of sight and regaining it has the metaphorical significance of ceasing to see members of the Way as he had become accustomed to—as enemies—and learning to see them as people deserving of acceptance despite any theological and ideological differences.

Saul’s epiphany raises questions of how we treat, or ought to treat, those with whom we might have theological differences. It suggests that we treat them with respect not because we share a common theological or ideological space but simply because they deserve respect. This is not to suggest that any view, however extreme it might be, should be condoned, but to highlight that treating the theological other with respect entails “unseeing” them as enemies, letting our scales fall off and seeing them as fellow humans with whom we can be in conversation even as we disagree.

**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 Philip**

As we start the new month of May we thank you Father for the beauty of the seasons, especially for the countryside in spring. We thank you for the flowers, the blossom, the dawn chorus and the return of migrant birds from warmer climes. Help us Lord to take the time to pause and take it all in. To let it refresh our minds and souls.

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

We continue to think of the people of Ukraine. There seems to be so much unnecessary suffering. Lord we ask for your continuing support and comfort to all those affected by conflict. We ask for a quick resolution to this situation, that people may look to rebuild their lives and their country without fear of further aggression or invasion.

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

We pray for this country Lord. We thank you for the relative safety we enjoy, for the freedom of speech and the right to protest. We pray for our Queen, for our parliament and all those involved in administering the affairs of state.

We pray for all those involved in our healthcare systems and in the care of the aged.

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.**

Be with us Lord in the coming week. Help us to see your light, just as Saul did on the road to Damascus. Fill us with your light Lord and help us to better serve you, remembering that all our actions to others are seen by you.

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

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