

## **Bedhampton Morning Worship Online Service**

**29th March 2020**

### **Gathering**

O Lord, open our lips

**and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us; let us pray with one heart and mind.

*We pause for reflection as we offer the day to God.*

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and for ever.

**Amen.**

### **Psalm**

Psalm 130 New International Version - UK (NIVUK)

1 Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord; 2 Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy. 3 If you, Lord, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand? 4 But with you there is forgiveness, so that we can, with reverence, serve you. 5 I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope. 6 I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning. 7 Israel, put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption. 8 He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins.

### **Sung Worship**

Bless The Lord.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/17IGerIU4dQx1KqJvnFAdFP5Nm7wmp7gP>

## **Saying Sorry to God**

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ to save us from our sins, to be our advocate in heaven, and to bring us to eternal life. A pause may be left for silent reflection.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

Most merciful God,

**Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. In your mercy forgive what we have been,**

**help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be; that we may do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God.**

**Amen.**

## **We Receive God's Forgiveness**

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon us, pardon and deliver us from all our sins, confirm and strengthen us in all goodness, and keep us in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **This Time Tomorrow**

Occasionally we have a section in our service we call This Time Tomorrow, where we look at how our faith impacts our everyday life. A few days ago I was exchanging emails with Catherine Langhorn who is one of our family and attends St Thomas'. I asked her the question, how is your faith making a difference in this unusual time? She was kind enough to say I could share her response. This was Catherine's response.

“My faith is giving me a calmness when all around seems chaos. I feel I am on a journey which started a couple of years ago and has gathered speed over the last few weeks since joining Alpha. The discussions have helped me to see my faith more clearly. One discussion comes to mind, we may know what the coronavirus is, who is affected, where it is spreading, but we don’t know why. We must put our trust in the Lord.

I worry about those less fortunate, the elderly, sick, who may pass away without their loved ones close by. How can that be fair? If I try and answer, all I see is despair, so I am trusting in Jesus again to give comfort and support.

Before St Thomas’; closed, I found peace just sitting quietly in a pew, picked up the Bible or just looked at the window. It’s hard to explain, but something is there. On my daily walks, when possible, I will sit on the bench and visualise the time we can all be together in worship again.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your strength and with all your mind and love your neighbour as yourself. This seems particularly important now. We are all facing huge challenges, I hope and pray the Holy Spirit will guide us through.”

I wonder how you are responding right now. Do feel free to send me an email or message with your thoughts on what difference knowing Jesus is making at this time.

### **Bible Reading**

John 11:1-45 New International Version - UK (NIVUK)

11 Now a man named Lazarus was ill. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 (This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay ill, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair.) 3 So the sisters sent word to Jesus, ‘Lord, the one you love is ill.’ 4 When he heard this, Jesus said, ‘This illness will not end in death. No, it is for God’s glory so that God’s Son may be glorified

through it.' 5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. 6 So when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed where he was two more days, 7 and then he said to his disciples, 'Let us go back to Judea.' 8 'But Rabbi,' they said, 'a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?' 9 Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in the day-time will not stumble, for they see by this world's light. 10 It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light.' 11 After he had said this, he went on to tell them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.' 12 His disciples replied, 'Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.' 13 Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. 14 So then he told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead, 15 and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' 16 Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.' 17 On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. 18 Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, 19 and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. 20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. 21 'Lord,' Martha said to Jesus, 'if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.' 23 Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' 24 Martha answered, 'I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.' 25 Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; 26 and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?' 27 'Yes, Lord,' she replied, 'I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.' 28 After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. 'The Teacher is here,' she said, 'and is asking for you.' 29 When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. 30 Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. 31 When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to

mourn there. 32 When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' 33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. 34 'Where have you laid him?' he asked. 'Come and see, Lord,' they replied. 35 Jesus wept. 36 Then the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' 37 But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?' 38 Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. 39 'Take away the stone,' he said. 'But, Lord,' said Martha, the sister of the dead man, 'by this time there is a bad odour, for he has been there four days.' 40 Then Jesus said, 'Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?' 41 So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, 'Father, I thank you that you have heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.' 43 When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' 44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, 'Take off the grave clothes and let him go.' 45 Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

## **Reflection**

Boring.

What I wonder is the first word that comes to your mind when I mention the word Bible? Let me be honest with you before I chose to be an apprentice to Jesus and follow him, I would have said boring. But then again, I would have said that without ever having read the Bible. Don't get me wrong and let us be real, there are parts of the library of books we call the Bible that are harder to read than others, but boring it is not.

Take our reading from the biography of Jesus called John. In this one reading we have all the makings of a blockbuster film.

There is a Philadelphia style drama of family illness and death. Then

there is a Band of Brothers commitment to one another with Thomas saying:

***'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'***

This commitment is followed by a Lord of the Rings esque journey, avoiding the enemy across harsh terrain through hills and desert. They arrive at their destination, but they arrive too late. Lazarus has died. Emotions are high as Jesus sees the pain of those around him and the emotions culminate in that most famous of verses when we read. **Jesus Wept.**

In the finale as we are about to give up hope, when we the audience are in our darkest of moments, the light overcomes the darkness. Jesus looks to our Father God and says:

***'Father, I thank you that you have heard me.'***

In the final scene Lazarus is raised from the dead and the people rejoice as the music reaches a crescendo and the credits roll.

Boring? Not so much.

I love the practical response that Jesus has in a time of need. Here is a family in need and the response from Jesus is practical. I can help and so I will help. There will be inconvenience and discomfort for me but I will help. Jesus has a practical human response to someone's needs.

Then he has a prayerful response. He and the disciples arrive and Lazarus is dead. The response Jesus has is faithful and prayerful. He cries out to Father God, that our Father might help those in desperate need.

Jesus' response is double P, both practical and prayerful. What an example to us in this time of need in our world. We need a Double P response to the coronavirus and those in need around us at this time.

Naturally we need to have a practical response. As Christians, disciples of Jesus we don't need to check our brain at the church door. No we use our God given talents and skills in a practical response. Where it is sensible to do so, and where we do not put others at risk we reach out to

the vulnerable in a practical way. We phone to see how they are doing. Some of us may even be able to arrange for food . We have a Jesus like practical response.

However that is not all we have to offer. We can also have a prayerful response. Hold on a moment you might say, Jesus was God of course his prayers worked. But as we sum up in our creeds each week, yes Jesus was fully God but he was also fully human whilst he walked this Earth. He cried out to the Spirit of God, it was the spirit of God that raised Lazarus from the dead. It was Jesus' prayerful response that called on his Spirit, and we have access to the same Holy Spirit.

Jesus said elsewhere

*John 14:12-14 New International Version - UK (NIVUK)*

***12 Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. 13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.***

We have a Jesus like prayerful response.

So my friends as we isolate ourselves for a little longer let us consider what our double P response is this week. Let us look to walk with Jesus in our practical and prayerful response. That is the Jesus response and is far from being boring.

## **Prayers**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iMGJOAGKFXBv9Vy9aTa6XBlwtH2adk93>

## **Sung Worship**

Thine Be The Glory.

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1vqEOQtXQCSW00pQAWekOtet8jNPjcQt4>

## **Final Prayer**

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=170\\_phhmk420osvTdW01ZVv7opFAJ-Mpt](https://drive.google.com/open?id=170_phhmk420osvTdW01ZVv7opFAJ-Mpt)

## **Blessing**

All our problems

**we send to the cross of Christ.**

All our difficulties

**we send to the cross of Christ.**

All the devil's works

**we send to the cross of Christ.**

All our hopes

**we set on the risen Christ;**

and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

**Amen**