

Easter 6

St Barnabas Church, Thatcham

Service Companion

Opening Prayer

Gracious God, we come before you,
Drawn by the power of your welcoming love.
We come with our sorrows and joys.
We come with our expectations and apprehensions.
We come with what we have done.
We come as who we are.
In your life we find peace and hope.

Amen.

Readings

John 14:15-21 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

¹⁵ "If you love me, you will keep^[a] my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate,^[b] to be with you forever. ¹⁷ This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in^[c] you.

¹⁸ "I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. ¹⁹ In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹ They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them."

Talk

Song

I will offer up my life in spirit and truth
Pouring out the oil of love as my worship to You
In surrender I must give my every part
Lord, receive the sacrifice of a broken heart

Jesus, what can I give, what can I bring
To so faithful a friend, to so loving a King?
Saviour, what can be said, what can be sung
As a praise of Your name for the things You have done?
O my words could not tell, not even in part
Of the debt of love that is owed by this thankful heart

You deserve my every breath for You've paid the great cost
Giving up Your life to death, even death on a cross
You took all my shame away, there defeated my sin
Opened up the gates of heaven and have beckoned me in

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Prayers

It was Christian Aid week last week so I'm really grateful to them for the framework of these prayers found on their website:

Jesus promised the Spirit who will always be alongside us and within us – the one who will never desert us in our hour of need.

For so many, this is that hour – receive, then, the Spirit of this age...

The spirit of love that never fails

Even in the darkest moments, love gives hope.

Love compels us to fight against coronavirus alongside our sisters and brothers living in poverty.

Love compels us to stand together in prayer with our neighbours near and far.

Love compels us to give and act as one.

Now, it is clear that our futures are bound together more tightly than ever before.

As we pray in our individual homes – around the nation and around the world – we are united as one family.

So, let us pause and find a moment of peace, as we lift up our hearts together in prayer.

For the health workers tending the seriously ill
for the scientists working on a vaccination
for the researchers analysing data and identifying trends
for the media outlets working to communicate reality
for the supermarket workers, hygiene and sanitation providers
for the good news stories of recoveries and effective planning
for the recognition that isolation doesn't need to mean loneliness
for the notes through letterboxes offering help and support
for the internet and telephones and technology that connects
for the awakened appreciation of what is truly important
for the good news of hope this week that we can gently work towards the easing of lockdown measures - **Thanks be to God.**

For those who are unwell and concerned for loved ones
for those who were already very anxious
for those immune suppressed or compromised
for those vulnerable because of underlying conditions
for those in the 'most at risk to coronavirus' categories
for those watching their entire income stream dry up
for those who have no choice but to go out to work
for those who are afraid to be at home
for those who are more lonely than they've ever been
for those who are bereaved and grieving.
God be their healer, comfort and protection,
be their strength, shield and provision
be their security, safety and close companion
be the certainty that we never need to face hardships alone

And raise up your Church Lord
to be your well-washed hands and faithful feet
to be present to the pain
to respond with love in action
if even from a safe distance.

Even though we are scattered may we show the power and presence of your love in our church, our community and our world by living faithfully and following the example of Jesus and may we be confident of the guidance of the Spirit within us.
Amen.

We finish by saying the words of the Lord's prayer together.

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 and for ever.
Amen.

The Blessing

The peace of God,
which passes all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

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