

In Our Call to Worship this morning, we pray –

May the gentle whisper of the God of Grace speak to us through our worship,
through the reading and understanding of scripture, and be the message of our lives.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

Let us come in praise and worship

HYMN - (StF) 354 Jesus is the Name we honour;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUqxpRlxdh8>

1 Jesus is the name we honour;
Jesus is the name we praise.
Majestic Name above all other names,
the highest heaven and earth proclaim
that Jesus is our God.
*We will glorify,
we will lift Him high,
we will give Him honour and praise.
We will glorify,
we will lift Him high,
we will give Him honour and praise.*

2 Jesus is the name we worship;
Jesus is the name we trust.
He is the King above all other kings,
let all creation stand and sing
that Jesus is our God.
Refrain

3 Jesus is the Father's splendour;
Jesus is the Father's joy.
He will return to reign in majesty,
and every eye at last shall see
that Jesus is our God.
Refrain

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Prayers of Praise and Confession.

Gracious God, we come to you now, drawn by the power of your love.

We come just as we are, and in your love we find peace and hope and acceptance.

We praise and thank you for your love shown to us in Jesus – your love that goes on
caring and guiding; protecting and forgiving; despite the many times we fail you.

Loving God, we worship you.

Gracious God, forgive us for the times when we have failed to live up to your calling over this past week –
for the lost opportunities and wasted moments; the angry words and unkind comments; the thoughtless
deeds and careless actions;

Forgive us for all the ways we have hurt you ; in the love we have failed to show; in the care we have
failed to express, in the forgiveness we have failed to offer

Lord in your mercy, forgive us.

Merciful God, cleanse and renew us through your grace. Cultivate what is good in us.

Restore us through your love and recreate us by your power.

Enable us to learn to love others with the love you have so faithfully shown to us.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. In the name of Christ we pray. **Amen.**

Our Gospel reading for today is from John, chapter 14, and in this chapter Jesus has three things to say to his disciples, as he prepares to leave them.

At the beginning, Jesus comforts them with the words "Do not let your hearts be troubled" He then goes on to explain, in v6, that he is the only way to the Father - "I am the way, and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me" And thirdly, we have our reading for this morning from v 15-21.

John 14:15-21 New Living Translation (NLT)

<https://youtu.be/WIkW4hXg7uM>

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

15 "If you love me, obey^[a] my commandments. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate,^[b] who will never leave you. 17 He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.^[c] 18 No, I will not abandon you as orphans—I will come to you.

19 Soon the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Since I live, you also will live. 20 When I am raised to life again, you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. 21 Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them."

SERMON JOHN 14.15-21 : Year A Easter 6 : 17/05/2020

<https://youtu.be/sXnRJOjWBLs>

INTRODUCTION

When I need to change a tap it makes sense to understand one or two things before I begin the work. There are choices to make!

For example:-

- What kind of tap is need?**
- What do I need to do before removing the faulty one?**
- Is there a right procedure to fit the new tap?**
- Do I possess the right tools for the work?**

When we are reading a particular passage of the Bible it is helpful to know where it fits in with what goes before and what comes afterwards.

The whole of chapter 14 of John's gospel shows Jesus preparing the disciples for the time when he would leave them, and for what would come afterwards. It shows the depth of **love** He has for them. How it will continue after His death and resurrection through his promise to be with them always and the promise of the gift of the **Holy Spirit**.

DEVELOPMENT 1 : Love

The word **love** appears in verses 15 and 21. In both verses they are linked with the word **obey!**

In verse 15 Jesus says, If you love meIf you love me...

Do you remember those words to Peter in John 21v15 -- Simon son of John do you love me ..?

The question is repeated three times! Yes Lord You know that I love you said Peter. Jesus says, Feed my lambs -- Take care of my sheep -- Feed my sheep.

A calling Peter goes on to fulfil as he became head of the church in Jerusalem.

The proof of love is seen in how well we keep Jesus' commandments in what he asks us to do!
Are we obedient to our calling?

(PAUSE)

Do you love me is such a tender question.

A couple sitting on a bench were talking quietly to each other when the husband asks, Margaret, "Do you love me"? She responds with, "Do I what?". After 25 years she had done the things a wife is supposed to do, fulfilling all the obligations of marriage - end of discussion.

"Do I love him" she muses, partly to herself, partly to him - -years of hope, of suffering and fighting, of sharing a home and children. if that's not love then what is? He asks, "Do you love me like a young lover" She says, "I suppose I do" He responds, "I suppose I love you too." -- "After 25 years it's nice to know".

Sitting on the bench, they hold hands and sing together! -- Love is recovered -- they still have similar tasks to do, a life to lead together -- But love changes everything.

(Adapted from, Love Beyond Reason) John Ortberg

The story illustrates the love and devotion experienced by this married couple.

Their obedience to their vows became more than just words in the marriage service, on their lips -- it grew into a life of service to each-other.

The Greek word for love in our Bible reading today is 'agape' It means more than emotional feelings born out of familiarity or attraction.

Rather, it is doing the right thing towards other people. It is faithfulness, commitment, the giving of self without expecting anything in return.

As Jesus says in verse 15, 'obey my commandments'.

The proof of agape love is how well we keep Jesus' commandments.

In our lives Jesus calls us -- "follow me".

In our text today Jesus says to his disciples, "Do you love me". I wonder, if there may have been a silence in the conversation -- haven't we followed Jesus all these years. He knows we love him!

"Do you love Me", is a question Jesus is asking us today! We take a moments silence.....

DEVELOPMENT 2 - The Promise of the Holy Spirit.

As we continue in the reading from John 14, Jesus asks the Father to give the Holy Spirit to the disciples, who will lead them into the truth. The Holy Spirit is with them but later will be in them.

I find it wonderful that Jesus knows His heavenly Father so well that He is certain, the request will be granted.

The promise was made by God back in the Old Testament book of Joel. God called the Israelites to repent and turn their lives around which then reads in 2:28 :-

28 I will pour out my Spirit upon all people.

Jesus is certain that in a few weeks time this promise will be fulfilled.

We look back to Easter remembering the death and resurrection of Jesus and forwards to Pentecost when the promise happened just at the right time when the church was born.

(PAUSE)

After the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the believers at Pentecost (Acts 2 . 1-13) Peter began his preaching by quoting the promise from the book of Joel.

Following on from that, the people asked, 'what shall we do?'

38 Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away^[h]—all who have been called by the Lord our God." (Acts 2.38/39)

Today we are in that line of promise!

Hear the words of Jesus again in John 14.16-17a, I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. 17 He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth.

The word Advocate is translated from the Greek word, 'Paraklete' which is a difficult word to translate into English. It means one who comes alongside, but may be translated, Counsellor, Helper, Comforter, Intercessor, The Spirit of Truth. ---

(Words for the Holy Spirit)

In Luke 11:13b Jesus says a similar thing, "how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him."

This time the emphasis is on our responsibility to ask our heavenly Father for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

CONCLUSION

In our lives there is a process, a procedure a journey, working out.

Similar to replacing a tap -- there are choices for us to make. There are always choices to make!

As our love for Jesus grows he is saying to us the 'Holy Spirit' is with you and in you.

Do you love Jesus, are you following him today?

Are you asking for more of the Holy Spirit?

My prayer is, Help us Holy God, in these troubled times, to follow Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Song Holy Spirit living breath of God.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8nbMfLQd2P4>

1) Holy Spirit, living breath of God,
Breathe new life into my willing soul.
Let the presence of the risen Lord,
Come renew my heart and make me whole.
Cause Your Word to come alive in me;
Give me faith for what I cannot see,
Give me passion for Your purity;
Holy Spirit, breathe new life in me.

2) Holy Spirit, come abide within,
May Your joy be seen in all I do.
Love enough to cover every sin,
In each thought and deed and attitude.
Kindness to the greatest and the least,
Gentleness that sows the path of peace.
Turn my strivings into works of grace;
Breath of God show Christ in all I do.

3) Holy Spirit, from creation's birth,
Giving life to all that God has made,
Show Your power once again on earth,
Cause Your church to hunger for your ways.
Let the fragrance of our prayers arise;
Lead us on the road of sacrifice,
That in unity the face of Christ
May be clear for all the world to see.

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Ephesians 3:20-21 NIV
Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, [21] to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen..

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION.

Loving Father God, forgive us where we have hindered your work and not kept our lives in step with your Holy Spirit. Move us forward now as we seek to acknowledge His Presence with us and seek his guidance for these coming days.

There is so much that is happening right now that overwhelms us - it's all too big for us to handle, but you are our God and our Father and nothing is too big for you. And so we come to you in these moments, and ask for your blessings, your solutions, your provision for all who need our prayers at this time:
We continue to hold to you all who are giving of themselves to others in caring for the sick, the dying, and the frightened To all who are serving us in providing the essential services we each need, day by day..... Strengthen, support and protect each one, that they may know your love and feel your power expressed in so many ways of appreciation towards them.
We pray for children, lacking the learning and social contacts that are so important for their well-being and development.....For those whose livelihoods are threatened and the fears they face.....for those forgotten and neglected amidst all that is going on right now.....Father bring comfort and practical help in ways that you know are fair and just. And for all the hurts and sadness and despair that are unknown to us, but known to you. Have mercy to bless and support and comfort each need.

We ask for guidance and discernment for our Government, to make the right decisions at the right times, for the help and benefit of all. Give insight and inspiration to scientists and medical experts, that they may be led forward by you to discover new and powerful ways of combating this virus.

Thank you for all the good and positive and helpful things that we see - blessings poured out in so many wonderful ways. Praise you Lord, for the wonder of your love.

Loving Father God, in your wisdom, hold us all in your love, for we all need your comfort, your grace, and your blessings.

We come to you now in the powerful name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

HYMN - 338 There is a Redeemer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldRcFz7rK7w>

1 There is a Redeemer,
Jesus, God's own Son,
precious Lamb of God, Messiah,
holy One.

*Thank You, O my Father,
for giving us Your Son,
and leaving Your Spirit
till the work on earth is done.*

2 Jesus my Redeemer,
name above all names,
precious Lamb of God, Messiah,
O for sinners slain: *Chorus*

3 When I stand in glory
I will see His face,
and there I'll serve my King for ever
in that holy place.

Chorus

Melody Green (fl.1982), verse 3 by Keith Green (1953-1982) © 1982 Ears To Hear Music/Birdwing Music/EMI Christian Music Publishing 6 5 8 5 Irregular and refrain

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BLESSING: Go in peace
to rejoice in God's love and to reflect his glory,
Thanks be to God Amen.