

This short act of worship has been produced for our churches to worship together at home. We hope you may spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, we come into your presence with thanksgiving, to praise your holy name. We lift your name on high and proclaim your greatness. We give thanks to the Lord for He is good and His love endures for ever.

Hymn: 36 There's a quiet understanding

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqJ-JY3-nfU>

There's a quiet understanding
when we're gathered in the Spirit,
it's a promise that he gives us,
when we gather in his name.
There's a love we feel in Jesus,
there's a manna that he feeds us,
it's a promise that he gives us,
when we gather in his name.

And we know when we're together,
sharing love and understanding,
that our brothers and our sisters
feel the oneness that he brings.
Thank you, thank you, thank you, Jesus,
for the way you love and feed us,
for the many ways you lead us;
thank you, thank you, Lord;
thank you, thank you, Lord.

Tedd Smith (b. 1927)

Let us pray together

Father God, creator of the world and universe, look down upon us as we gather in your name. Although we may be worshipping in different places we pray that we shall be strengthened through your Word and the unity we have in Jesus Christ. We are not alone in our worship and add our praises to all who meet in the name of Jesus today. Creation speaks of your love and we are blessed with many gifts. Sadly, we have abused those gifts and have not always acted in

ways that are pleasing to you. Have mercy upon us O' Lord, and show us how we can make your world a better place in which to live. May your blessing be with us today and every day; for we ask this in Jesus' name.

Today's Reading from the Old Testament Psalm 106 v 1-5

Today's New Testament Reading: Philippians 4 v1-9 "Rejoice in the Lord always....."

Time to Reflect

The reading from Philippians reminds me of a chorus that was often sung as a 'round' – "Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice"(577 in Mission Praise) However, we may ask "how can we rejoice in the Lord always?" Life is not always a bed of roses and we often face hardship and struggles. The Covid-19 crisis has been a real challenge for many people and rejoicing may have been the last thing on people's minds.

But what is it that makes us rejoice? People will have different answers but many will mention material things, and recent restrictions on shopping, going to the gym, hairdressers or going on holiday; have been a real bind for some.

Throughout the Bible, we are reminded that there is more to life than material blessings. Cynics may say "fine talk when you live in the affluent West" but during my visits to some of the poorest areas of Africa and Asia, I found that those who had little in material terms were still able to rejoice. They valued family and community and were thankful for the little they had.

Covid-19 has challenged us all and made us think about what is really important in life. It has brought us closer to family and friends and

reminded us to be thankful, and look for blessings that are beyond the material world. Paul says that when we come before the Lord with thanksgiving we shall find His peace. There will be many today who do not have peace in their lives and we pray that one day, they will find the peace of the Lord that passes all understanding.

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

God of love and compassion; we lay our broken world at your feet. Our world continues to be torn apart by war, fear and hate and people are oppressed by those who seek power for themselves with little thought for the needs of others.

We think for our towns and communities, many of which are fragmented and divided. Diversity can bring richness and strength to our communities, but can be used to promote fear and hatred. Show us how old pains and wounds can be used to bring new life and hope.

We think of those whose lives have been broken, through sorrow and grief, illness, and fractured relationships. Life may seem to have lost its purpose. May the gift of your healing grace bring a new sense of purpose and love.

On this Homeless and Prison Sunday we think of those who have found themselves homeless and destitute not knowing where to turn. We remember those who have committed crimes, and are in prison or just been released. As we recognise the need for justice may we act with compassion and mercy, remembering how God deals with us.

We draw our prayers of intercession to a close by saying aloud or in our mind these words:

Almighty God, give us hearts of compassion so that we can bless those whom we meet. Help us to bring peace and comfort to those who are in distress. May your Spirit give us life and strength and show us how we can share God's love, joy and peace and be true servants of Christ. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: Listen to <https://youtu.be/RYMjqc5I9G4> or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

A prayer of blessing

May your grace, love and peace, inspire and strengthen us now, and in the days to come. In Jesus' name we ask this. Amen.

Original Materials by John Roughley

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