

OPENING PRAYERS AND HOLY COMMUNION ARE AVAILABLE AS A VIDEO HERE

PART 1 – OPENING PRAYERS

WELCOME

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

SENTENCE

By grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.
Ephesians 2.8-9

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Let us pray.
Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Lord God, you created this world, and made us in your own image. Forgive us when we turn away from you.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord God, through your Son you overcame evil and death. Rescue us from slavery to sin.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord God, by your Spirit, you restore us to fellowship with you and with one another. Breathe your love and freedom into our lives.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Almighty God have mercy on you,
forgive you your sins,
and keep you in life eternal. Amen.

THE GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,

we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God, the strength of all who believe in you,
increase our faith and trust
in your Son Jesus Christ,
that in him we may live victoriously.
In His name we pray. Amen.

PLEASE PAUSE THE VIDEO

PART 2 — AN ALL AGE VIDEO PART 11 OF *WHERE IS GOD?* FOCUSING ON FINDING GOD EVEN WHEN WE ARE SAD AND DOWNLOADABLE MATERIAL FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN [HERE](#)

PART 3 — LOOK UP AND READ THROUGH THE READINGS, LISTEN TO THE [SERMON PODCAST](#) (READ ALONG IF YOU WISH) BY OUR FAMILY MINISTER, SAM WHITE, AND PRAY THE INTERCESSIONS, TODAY BY PAM TAYLOR.

READINGS

Philippians 1: 21-30

Psalm 145:1-8

Matthew 20:1-16

SERMON BY SAM WHITE, FAMILY MINISTER

Available to listen online and/or download – access via Pentecost 2020 link and notice also a reasonable library of past sermons for you to listen to as you exercise or meditate...

Philippians 1: 21-30

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain.

On April 3, 1968, Dr Martin Luther King Jr flew to Memphis to address a crowd at Mason Temple. He almost didn't get there, because his plane was delayed by a bomb threat. He alluded to that threat in his speech that evening, saying:

“Well, I don't know what will happen now.
We've got some difficult days ahead.
But it doesn't matter with me now.
Because I've been to the mountaintop.
And I don't mind.
Like anybody, I would like to live a long life.
Longevity has its place.
But I'm not concerned about that now.
I just want to do God's will.
And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain.
And I've looked over.
And I've seen the promised land.
I may not get there with you.
But I want you to know tonight,
that we, as a people will get to the promised land.
And I'm happy, tonight.
I'm not worried about anything.
I'm not fearing any man.
Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.”

The next day, April 4, King was felled by an assassin's bullet.

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain.

The apostle Paul wrote those words in a letter to the church in Philippi, north-eastern Greece, in about 60-62AD, probably during the time that Paul was imprisoned in Rome and was appealing to the Roman emperor, Nero.

Paul had helped establish the church in Philippi some 10 years earlier, it was actually a Roman colony and the first church on European soil (remember that Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles.)

The church in Philippi was materially supporting Paul and Timothy, the church were providing monies to cover their living expenses whilst Paul awaited trial in Rome, and Paul wanted to reassure them that his time there was not going to waste. Paul was busy proclaiming the gospel even whilst in chains, even because of his chains...the guards were becoming Christians!

Paul was living with the very real possibility that he would be put to death – martyred for his faith. Something that Christians throughout history have wrestled with but something that, thanks be to God, is more of an abstract concept for us here today.

The whole passage is written as an encouragement to the Philippians. Paul's options are both good. Whilst he still lives, Paul is able to minister to the church and to bring others to faith in God

through Christ Jesus. If he dies, then he goes to be with his God and that will be even better. Like many martyrs, Paul believed that if he was put to death because of his faith then that act would in fact help bring more people to faith – dying really would be gain, not just for him, but for many.

However, he is reasonably sure that he will continue to live and might even be able to visit Philippi again. Whilst he lives, he will continue to urge them all to live their lives in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether he comes to see them or is absent and hears about them, he will know that they are “standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel.” If Paul is acquitted and freed then he will be able to continue his missionary journeys and bring even more people to faith.

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain.

A Baptist minister by training, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. sought to raise the public consciousness of racism, to end racial discrimination and segregation in the United States. While his goal was racial equality, Dr King plotted out a series of smaller objectives that involved local grassroots campaigns for equal rights for African Americans. He worked to enable local communities to advocate for themselves, often under the direction of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference which still works to promote racial equality today. The very fact that this organisation still has a reason to exist tells us much about the nature of humanity. We need to be told and re-told in every generation. The call that “Black Lives Matter” only needs to be made because a part of humanity has forgotten, or never learnt, this truth.

In each generation we read and hear the stories of God’s world, our place within it and how we are called to love God and to love each other. The beauty of the gospel is how it can draw each of us, individually, into a relationship with God through the redeeming works of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

As Paul points out, it is a privilege not only to believe in Christ but also to suffer for him. Whilst our suffering for Christ may seem somewhat abstract here in Australia (other than some disdain from a secular or non-believing community around us) we certainly aren’t being imprisoned or killed for our faith. So, what then should we be doing?

Dr Martin Luther King Jr suggested that “The ultimate tragedy is not the oppression and the cruelty by the bad people, but the silence over that by the good people.” Our faith should be a call to action, a reminder that we are not to walk by on the other side when we see someone suffering, we are called to intercede on behalf of those in need – through our actions, our words and our prayers.

The apostle Paul spoke earlier in his letter of his hope for the church in Philippi and it’s a hope that still holds true even here, today for us:

And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

(Philippians 1:9-11)

Amen.

INTERCESSIONS BY PAM TAYLOR

Almighty God, we praise you for the diversity of your creation of all things. Help us to do our utmost by ensuring the preservation of our precious environment and natural resources. With Winter now past, we appreciate both the warmth and colour Spring is currently exposing in our wonderful gardens and parks - so necessary and delightful during these troublesome times. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Righteous Lord, we pray for prosperity in the world where many are without food or shelter. Free us from greed and indifference that we may share in the resources of the earth, living in harmony in your created world.

With Monday 21 September being designated the International Day of Peace, we pray that the Holy Spirit may empower us to be agents of peace and reconciliation within our friends, families, communities and workplaces.

We earnestly pray for an end of violence and hatred so evident throughout the world. May the wars and fighting cease- war that desecrates our earth, depletes our resources and kills many innocent lives. We also acknowledge the significance of the catastrophic terrorist attack upon the United States of America on 11 September 19 years ago. May such an evil atrocity remain a thing of the past. We pray for those mourning the loss of many loved ones.

With America again experiencing wildfires raging across the West, we remember those now without homes and the loss of family too.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Faithful God, we pray for the Church throughout the world. We remember all who minister to us, working to spread the mission of building upon our Christian faith. With current restrictions upon us due to the pandemic, we give thanks for alternative forms of worship through on-line and Internet options.

Here, in Mount Eliza, may Rev. Jennie, Sam and Libby continue with enthusiasm thus ensuring that our Church is indeed alive. We are thankful for their dedication.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, we pray for the people of the world. We ask that your strength of spirit be upon us during these uncertain and troubling times. With people reaching out for reassurance in this tough world, help and challenge us to listen and encourage others with care, concern and compassion.

We give heartfelt thanks to the members of the scientific and medical world currently working to hopefully find a vaccine to fight such an insidious virus so prevalent across the globe.

We pray for families everywhere who have lost loved ones and now cope without partners, parents and grandparents due to this pandemic.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Gracious Lord, we pray for the people who are neglected, unloved and lonely due to the strict isolation at present. May they find comfort in your love; and we give thanks for those willing and able to encourage, heal and restore those struggling to cope, so that hopefully their health and well-being will be restored once again.

We remember also those who have lost jobs and are currently struggling to make ends meet. We commend the social workers and other agencies working to aid individuals and families with the basic needs of clothes, food and shelter.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Loving Lord, we pray for those in need following recent surgery or other illness currently before them. May they place their trust in your healing hands and care. We also remember those who

have recently lost loved ones – in particular the family and friends of Keith Donald Jeffs whose anniversary falls on 20 September. May they know the consolation of your love.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

With the current number of viral infections slowly lowering, we see a glimmer of hope that there is light at the end of the tunnel. Oh God, may peace reign, your Spirit move and your love inspire us. You are our light of hope. Praise to you always. Amen.

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord who taught us to pray:

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.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.

PLEASE RESUME THE VIDEO FOR HOLY COMMUNION

GREETING OF PEACE

We are the body of Christ.
His Spirit is with us.
The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.
Accept and use our offerings for your glory
and for the service of your kingdom.
Blessed be God for ever.

HOLY COMMUNION

The Lord be with you,
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts;
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right to praise you, faithful God, always and everywhere, for with your only begotten Son and life-giving Spirit, you are the one true God from everlasting to everlasting.
At the dawn of time you wrought from nothing
a universe of beauty and splendour, bringing light from darkness and order from chaos.
You formed us, male and female, in your image,
and endowed us with creative power.
We turned away from you but you did not abandon us.
You called us by name and searched us out,
making a covenant of mercy, giving the law, and teaching justice by the prophets.
And so we praise you, joining with your faithful people of every time and place, singing the eternal song:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

When the fullness of time was come, you sent your Son to be born of Mary. Bright image of your glory, he learnt obedience to you in all things, even to death on a cross, breaking the power of evil, freeing us from sin, and putting death to flight.
You raised him from death, exalting him to glory, and the new day dawned.
On the night he was betrayed your Son Jesus Christ shared food with his friends, his companions on the way.
While at table he took bread, blessed, and broke it,
and giving it to them, said: 'Take, eat; this is my body.'
He took a cup of wine, and, giving thanks, he gave it to them, and said, 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Do this in remembrance of me.'

Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

Therefore, living God, as we obey his command,
we remember his life of obedience to you, his suffering and death, his resurrection and exaltation,
and his promise to be with us for ever.

With this bread and this cup we celebrate his saving death until he comes.

Accept, we pray, our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and send your Holy Spirit upon us and
our celebration that all who eat and drink at this table

may be strengthened by Christ's body and blood to serve you in the world.

As one body and one holy people, may we proclaim the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ our
Lord, through whom, with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory is yours,
eternal God, now and for ever. Amen.

THE BREAKING AND SHARING OF THE BREAD AND WINE

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

We who are many are one body,
for we all share in the one bread.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Gracious God,
we thank you that in this sacrament
you assure us of your goodness and love.
Accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving
and help us to grow in love and obedience
that we may serve you in the world
and finally be brought to that table
where all your saints feast with you for ever.

Father,
we offer ourselves to you
as a living sacrifice
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory.

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.

DISMISSAL

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