

A Service of Morning Prayer for Sunday March 29, 2020
Adapted from *Common Worship*, Church of England



WELCOME

GATHERING

Bishop: +In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen.**

Bishop: O Lord, open our lips

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

OPENING PRAYER

Bishop: Blessed are you, Lord God of our salvation, to you be praise and glory for ever. As a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief your only Son was lifted up that he might draw the whole world to himself. May we walk this day in the way of the cross and always be ready to share its weight, declaring your love for all the world. Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All: **Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

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

Keep a time of silence

Bishop: 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.

All: **Amen.**

LITURGY OF THE WORD

PSALM 86

- 1 Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me, **◆**
for I am poor and in misery.
- 2 Preserve my soul, for I am faithful; **◆**
save your servant, for I put my trust in you.
- 3 Be merciful to me, O Lord, for you are my God; **◆**
I call upon you all the day long.
- 4 Gladden the soul of your servant, **◆**
for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
- 5 For you, Lord, are good and forgiving, **◆**
abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you.
- 6 Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer **◆**
and listen to the voice of my supplication.

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Psalm 86 continues...

- 7 In the day of my distress I will call upon you, ◆
for you will answer me.
8. Among the gods there is none like you, O Lord, ◆
nor any works like yours.
9. All nations you have made shall come and worship you, O Lord, ◆
and shall glorify your name.
10. For you are great and do wonderful things; ◆
you alone are God.
11. Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth; ◆
knit my heart to you, that I may fear your name.
12. I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart, ◆
and glorify your name for evermore;
13. For great is your steadfast love towards me, ◆
for you have delivered my soul from the depths of the grave.
14. O God, the proud rise up against me
and a ruthless horde seek after my life; ◆
they have not set you before their eyes.
15. But you, Lord, are gracious and full of compassion, ◆
slow to anger and full of kindness and truth.
16. Turn to me and have mercy upon me; ◆
**give your strength to your servant
and save the child of your handmaid.**
17. Show me a token of your favour,
that those who hate me may see it and be ashamed; ◆
because you, O Lord, have helped and comforted me.

All **Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

A short silence meditating on the psalm is kept.

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A READING: Ezekiel 37:1-14

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord."

So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord."

One: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

A short silence meditating on the reading is kept.

THE GOSPEL: John 11:1-45

One: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

One: Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Saint John.

All: **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ**

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' But when Jesus heard it, he said, 'This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?' Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.' After saying this, he told them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.' The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.' Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow-disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'

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The Gospel continues...

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.' And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?'

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead for four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upwards and said, 'Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.' When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.' Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

One: The Gospel of Christ

All: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

THE HOMILY: Bishop Susan Bell

Music is played during a time of reflection

INTERCESSIONS

One: Let us pray....

One: Holy God, in whom we live and move and have our being, we make our prayer to you, saying,
Lord in your mercy,

All: **hear our prayer.**

One: Loving God, whose peace passes all our understanding; as we face the present pandemic,
and experience anxiety and fear, may we hear your voice, bringing calm to the storms of our time.

**The Anglican Diocese of Niagara
Called to Life – Compelled to Love**

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The intercessions continue...

One: Strengthen those who work to limit the spread of infection, and those who seek to care for the sick, and keep us mindful of the most vulnerable. May we shape our living to protect one another, and may our changing habits, practices and sacrifices, be for the greater love of our community and all your people.

Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

One: God, who is with us, who has touched the earth in Jesus and binds us together by the Spirit, gather your church in this time, not physically, but by your Spirit. Enliven our faith, embolden our prayers, and set our sights upon Jesus Christ, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, that we may in our living and loving, live your Gospel in new and creative ways.

Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

One: God who heals, who comforts and who restores, bring to all those who are sick the certain knowledge and comfort of your presence. Relieve their pain, rest their bodies, protect their minds from despair and strengthen their spirits, that they may be led to wholeness in you.

Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

One: God the giver of gifts, we thank you especially for those who have the gift of healing. For those who have trained and work hard and who give of themselves for the well being of others. We pray for scientists, for doctors and nurses, respiratory therapists, and all hospital staff working so diligently to protect us and treat us at this time. Grant them your protection, strengthen the hands that care, .

Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

One: God in Trinity, in perfect community, thank you for all who work to keep our community well at this time. And we pray for your blessing upon those who cannot stay home safely, for those who supply our grocery stores, for those who stock shelves and serve customers, for those who respond to emergencies.

Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

One: God of all compassion and love, who dwells in the silence and speaks in a whisper, we pray for those who are alone at this time and struggle to hear your voice. For those without family and friends close by; for those who feel isolated or forgotten; for those who miss human touch and company; for those who do not have the distractions and support in times of anxiety. Grant them the sure and certain hope of your presence, the deep peace of your spirit, and bring around them people who can offer connection and community in this difficult time.

Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

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The intercessions continue...

One: God of Abundance, in this time of economic uncertainty and fear, when many have been made jobless, when many fear for the future when our instinct is to withdraw and hold tight to what we have, help our society to understand the strength and generosity of love; how there is enough for all, and help us to share generously of all your good gifts to us.

Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

One: Loving God, your Son Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus his friend, give comfort to all who weep this day, who mourn and grieve. Soothe the broken hearts. And help us to trust in the promise of your cross, that death is overcome.

Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

Bishop: Trusting in the compassion of God, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Closing remarks and announcements.

THE BLESSING