

Mountview Uniting Worship at Home

An Introduction



Hello Everyone

I hope you and your family are all travelling well.
You may have heard that I will be preparing weekly worship resources for you.
This week you will receive the following two documents:

A weekly Worship Sheet that includes:

1. Introit and Call to Worship
2. Prayers of Adoration, Invocation and Confession
3. The Readings
4. A Sermon
5. The Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer
6. A Blessing
7. Extra Resources, including: other prayerful items; music suggestion; for children and young people

The regular weekly notice-sheet

Next week you will also receive **Communion at Home** in both booklet and A4 format for the First Sunday of the month which is Palm Sunday. Please print out whichever format suits you. I'd love to receive feedback and please share the booklets with friends in need. I will be printing some out and mailing them. I have also ordered some Palm Crosses and will find a way to have them distributed to you.

Blessings
Rev Tina

Mountview Uniting Worship at Home
29 March 2020



If you have a candle, light it. It symbolizes Christ's presence with you

Introit – Be Still for the Presence of the Lord

(To be said prayerfully)

Be still,
 for the presence of the Lord,
 the Holy One, is here;
 come bow before Him now
 with reverence and fear:
 in Him no sin is found -
 we stand on holy ground.

Be still,
 for the presence of the Lord,
 the Holy One, is here.

David J Evans

Call to Worship

“Be Still and Know I Am God.” Ps 46:10

Prayers of Adoration, Invocation and Confession

Lord our God

*We are in need of your grace and love
 The times are challenging for all people
 We know you are always with us
 Your steadfast love is with us
 You are faithful and we trust in your care for us
 We give you thanks and praise*

Jesus our Lord

*You have promised us
 If we believe in you, we will have eternal life
 Now and always
 You are our shepherd
 You carry us over your shoulders
 You care for us and watch over us
 We give you thanks and Praise*

Holy Spirit, dwelling within us

*Guiding and comforting us
 Teaching and leading
 As God's love is poured into our hearts
 You teach us how to love
 Come Holy Spirit
 Open our hearts to God's Words
 Strengthen us for the journey*

*And if we haven't loved the Lord with all our being
 If we have hurt another, either intentionally or unintentionally forgive us Lord
 as we come before you now in this moment of silence.*

Our God is a forgiving and merciful God
 Hear then Jesus Christ's words of grace
 "Your sins are forgiven."
Thanks be to God

Readings - Lectio Divina

I invite you to ponder on the readings by reading the words slowly the first time then reading them again allowing the meaning to deepen into feeling, and being drawn to certain sentences or words and allowing them to hold your attention, until your mind becomes silent and you prayerfully experience the truth of the promise of which the text speaks.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd therefore can I lack nothing.
 He makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.
 He shall refresh my soul and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;
 for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me;
 you have anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full.
 Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
 and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

The Gospel of John 11: 1-45

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."

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb 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 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 upward 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.

The Sermon
"I am the Resurrection and the Life"
John 11:1-45



In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, amen.

One of my greatest fears is being buried alive and waking up in a coffin. I know its illogical, but I have a great imagination and have had lots of near misses; trampled by horses, falling off mountains 5000m up, bikes, trees, storms, an octopus, snakes and more. I figure I will go home to God when it's my time. But, I'm not sure what to do about this fear of being buried alive. Perhaps tell my kids to make sure I'm dead, wait ten days, then bury me with a fully charged mobile phone. I hope there's reception down there. My fears began when I heard the story about a Chinese lady in her eighties. Her family thought she was dead. Seven days later she woke up during the burial rituals and got up and made dinner. I figure that would be my luck, having had so many close calls.

Strangely though, today's gospel isn't about death. It's about life.

Mary, Martha and Lazarus are friends of Jesus and he loves them. Mary sends a message to Jesus saying:
"Lord, the one you love is ill."

Most people would rush to their friend's bedside. Although I don't know what I would do if my friend had Coronavirus. Would I rush to their bedside? I'd feel torn. Wanting to protect my family and obey the law and wanting to go and comfort my friend. Jesus responds in a strange way. He says his friend's illness doesn't lead to death but is for God's glory. Perhaps when John wrote his gospel, he was looking back on what happened to Lazarus and on Jesus death on the cross where he was glorified. His disciples must have wondered why he waited two days to go to his friend and Mary and Martha must have waited and waited, hoping he would come.

Suddenly after two days, he says let's go. His disciples react with fear, for people tried to stone Jesus at Bethany. Jesus isn't concerned about people not understanding. He says: *"Lazarus is asleep."* The disciples see that as a way out where they don't have to go.

Jesus insists on going. Thomas, the one who didn't believe Jesus had been raised by God and who insisted on seeing Jesus and putting his fingers into Jesus wounds, is fearful.

He says: *"Let us go and die with you."*

By the time they get to Bethany Lazarus had been dead for four days.

Martha hears about Jesus arrival and goes out to meet him. She rebukes him: *"Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died."* She knows Jesus as the miracle worker, yet she acknowledges God will do whatever Jesus asks.

Jesus promises her that her brother will rise again but she doesn't understand and thinks he means the final resurrection at the end times, which people believed was the time all people rose out of their graves and went to heaven.

Jesus shares with Martha a profound truth: *"I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die will live and everyone who believes in me will never die."*

He asks her: Do you believe? And she says: *"Yes, Lord I believe you are the Messiah, the Son of God."*

Martha returns home and tells Mary the teacher is calling her and Mary sets off to find Jesus and is followed by a group of people who were grieving with her, the very ones who tried to stone Jesus.

Mary kneels at Jesus feet. Perhaps this symbolised her worshipping him as the Lord, God with us. She rebukes him, saying the same thing her sister said: *"Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died."* Yet Mary more than Martha, knows of Jesus true identity.

Jesus is deeply moved and disturbed and asks to be taken to the tomb of Lazarus. The crowd invite him: *"To come and see."* What a strange invitation. The very same invitation given to those wanting to become Jesus disciples.

When they arrive at the tomb Jesus begins to weep. The crowds say: *"See how he loved him."* Their hearts seem fickle. Stone him one minute, feel sympathy for him the next. Perhaps love and grief has brought them all together. Yet they rebuke him too, for not coming and working a miracle to heal Lazarus. After all he healed the blind man.

Jesus, deeply grieved, asks for the stone to the tomb to be rolled back. Martha, always practical warns that the body will smell. Jesus reminds her that he had promised if she believed she would see the glory of God.

Jesus with absolute trust and faith, looks up to heaven to God and thanks God for hearing him. He cries out with a loud voice: *"Lazarus come out!"*

We are told the dead man comes out, still wrapped in cloths and Jesus asks the people to unbind him. They were Jewish and were able to touch him, for he wasn't dead and unclean. Lazarus was alive. God had raised him from the dead.

After this many people believed in Jesus and because of Lazarus, also believed. This led to the religious leaders being afraid of so many people believing in Jesus, afraid that the Romans would come and destroy them, so they began to plot to kill both of them.



The story of Lazarus is a powerful story of hope. Most of us have encountered death and our belief in Jesus can reassure us that we live in eternal life, now and forever.

We know God's love for us is greater than death. The good news is because of our faith in Jesus, we can live our lives where this hope sustains us.

I once met a holy man called Brother Angelo on a flight from Rome to Jerusalem. He was from the Little Family of the Resurrection. Their monastery was on the Mount of Olives and it was a closed order. Yet, there he was sitting beside me wearing a long white robe, he had a long beard, was very tall with long legs and arms and hands and he spoke with me and shared his wisdom with me. He said this life is preparation for the next life. What he said made me think about what I need to do, to prepare for the next life. I believe Jesus commandment to love God with all our being and others as ourselves, is the best preparation for the next life.

We can look to how Jesus lived his life. We can look to him as an example. We saw from today's gospel Jesus had complete trust in God and believed God heard his prayers and listened to him.

There is more to today's gospel. It comes at a time when we are journeying towards the cross. God raising Lazarus from the dead points towards the resurrection of Jesus.

It is a taste of things to come. It is meant to sustain us through the challenging Lenten and Easter Journey, especially the passion where Jesus suffered, because Jesus story of suffering touches upon all our stories of suffering. We make connections between his story and our own stories.

Today's gospel is meant to offer us hope and light in the challenging times we now face. It helps us keep in mind that new life and resurrection comes at the end of the journey.

*The Lord be with you.
Rev Tina*

Prayers of the People

I'm encouraging those rostered on for Prayers of the People to continue preparing the prayers so they can be sent out with our worship resources. Please spend time praying for your loved ones, members of our congregation and people throughout the world affected by Coronavirus. Please pray for a vaccine to become available. Rev Tina.

Loving God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we bring to you our prayers for others. We want to care for all of your people in all parts of the world, Lord, and we pray particularly today for the people of the countries of The Balkans: including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Slovenia

We give thanks for:

- the rich legacies that this area has long embodied
- those who kept both the people and their faith alive during years of repression
- those pursuing peace and reconciliation between the different ethnic and religious groups
- the resurgence of the ecumenical witness of churches in recent years.

We pray for:

- a continual healing of historic memories and pains that have been mutually inflicted
- those who continue to experience marginalization and injustice, especially the Roma
- religion to be a means of healing rather than of further separation and exploitation
- the nurturing and sustaining of pluralistic societies in the Balkans

Dear Lord, as the coronavirus threatens lives globally, we ask your guidance and support of those having to make tough decisions about combatting the disease. We pray for the safety of those working and exposed on the front line. And, as the people of the world are forced into understanding what things are really important, show us how to rise to the best that humanity can be, O Lord.

In our **ecumenical** prayer cycle we remember today your people worshipping and serving in the **St Philips Catholic Parish, North Blackburn**. May both priest and people know that you are with them as they work to show your way and your compassion to others in their surrounding area. Be with those who take special responsibility in the organisation and outreach of this congregation, we pray.

Within our own **Presbytery** we pray today for the Uniting congregations of **Bayswater, Ferntree Gully, and Scoresby**. We thank you, O God, for the difference these congregations are making in their communities and ask that you will bless their people and their work for you. As they worship apart may they know your presence and be strengthened through that knowledge.

We remember in prayer, too, the Uniting Agewell team and residents at the **Tanderra Community in Camberwell**. In these days of social contact restrictions due to the coronavirus, guide them in finding ways to facilitate contact with loved ones.

Here at **Mountview** we seek your blessing on our people, on our worship and our work together. Help us to maintain and grow the essential community that we have as a congregation in the face of current social distancing restrictions. Technology now offers us many more ways to communicate. Make us innovative and open to change, we pray, even if this means moving beyond our comfort zones.

Be with **Tina** as she works amongst us bringing fresh insights from your word and inspiration to live out your way every day.

We pray especially today for..... *(Name those for whom we want to offer prayer)*

We bring these prayers in our Saviour's name, praying in the words he taught us:

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 forever. Amen.

John Gerrard

Blessing

*Let nothing disturb you and nothing frighten you
All things are passing, and God never changes
Patient endurance attains all things from God
Nothing is wanting. God alone is sufficient. Amen*

Mountview Extra Resources

For 29 March 2020



*God help us to live slowly, to move simply, to look softly,
to allow emptiness, to let the heart create for us. **Leunig***

Be Silent

*Be silent, be still, alone, empty, before your God.
Say nothing, ask nothing, be silent, be still.
Let your God look upon you. That is all.
God knows, understands. Loves you with an enormous love.
God only wants to look upon you with love.
Quiet. Still. Be. Let your God love you. **Edwina Gately***

Psalm of the Week – Psalm 23

*We need a shepherd at the moment to help us lay down in green peaceful pastures.
Quiet peaceful places where we find still waters within us, the presence of the Holy Spirit.
We need to feel guided and comforted when we pray.
These are dark unknown times with lots of what ifs.
We seem to be walking through dark valleys yet Jesus the light of the world,
is right there beside us and within our hearts.
Even when those inner enemies, fear and anxiety, bother us
you Lord set a meal before us of hope, faith, trust and inner joy.
Our hearts overflow with gladness for what we have and
we are filled with hope for the future. **Rev Tina***



“I am the resurrection and the life”

Music Resources

For music, I've heard 'Songs of Praise' is worth watching. ABC TV 11:29 AM Sundays, or on iView at anytime

Children and Young People

Let us include our children and grandchildren as we pray. Encourage young children to write letters to God and draw pictures of Jesus or God and join the bear trail movement. Children throughout the world are putting their teddy bears in their front windows and are encouraged to go for a walk each day and spot other bears in their neighbours' windows.

It's inspired by the popular children's book: We're Going on a Bear Hunt.

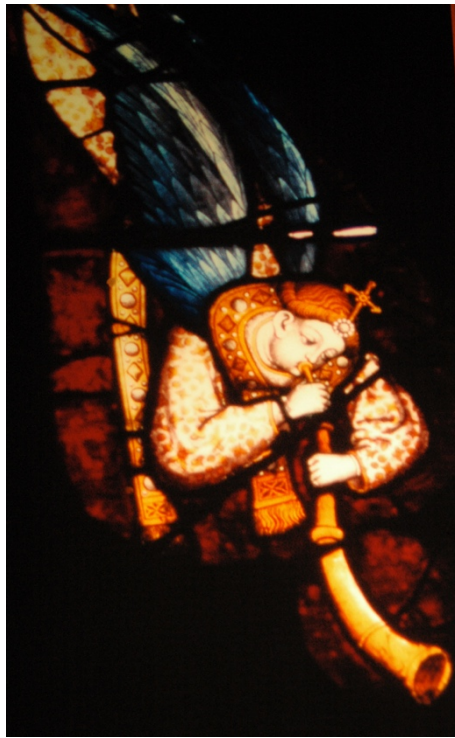
Encourage young adults to lead prayer. They are our future Christian leaders.

Lord's Prayer

Christians throughout the world have been invited to say the Lord's Prayer every day.

Please join them.

Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done,
 on earth as it is 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 forever. Amen



Psalm 46

Be still and know I am God

Final collation by Mountview Multimedia team.

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