

Introduction to Worship

16th August 2020 – Pentecost 11_A



I saw this carving in the side of a natural stone wall in Japan. It's of an elderly couple embracing. Perhaps they're married or partners or friends or siblings or parent and adult child. Perhaps they've been together for most of their lives and have weathered the ages and all the changes that come with time. Perhaps adversity and struggle has shaped their relationship, or fights and forgiveness, and it has brought them closer together, where they have come to trust and depend on one another, where they bring peace, joy and comfort to one another. Where they love one another unconditionally. Perhaps it's of a couple reunited in heaven. I invite you to look at the carving and reflect on your lifelong relationships and on what has kept you together. Give thanks to God and pray for your loved one.

Stage four of the lockdown is proving to be difficult for all of us. We're missing our loved ones and are finding issues that we can normally cope with are adding to the pressures we're experiencing under lockdown.

This is not a time to be alone. It's a time to reach out to one another and work hard to nurture our relationships. Even when I go for a walk, it takes extra effort to greet someone who is wearing a mask, but when I do, they respond and greet me. Imagine how much more of a challenge it is with friends on the other side of the country or world or even more than five kilometres away. Or family in the same household, where we need space and can't have it and are trying very hard to support and care and love one another. It's not easy and is requiring a greater effort. But, it's worth it. What would we do without our loved ones?

They make life worth living.

I hope you find this week's resources helpful. The focus is on relationships with God and others. We have some stories to share about reaching out and some resources for prayer.

May God bless you and your loved ones.



Blessings
Rev Tina

Mountview Worship @ Home

Sunday 16th August 2020

Hymn: [Tell Out My Soul – Helen Jackson](#) [2:28]

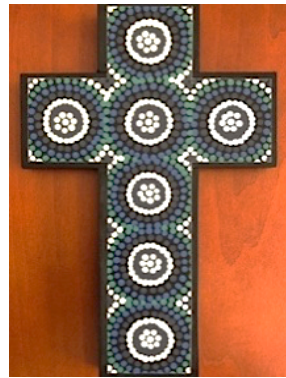
<https://youtu.be/gdeCoLdGHXo>

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Welcome To Our Service

This week the readings focus on relationships, on reaching out, healing and living together in unity.
May the worship bless you.

We acknowledge those who were here before us, the first inhabitants of this place
We honour them for their custodianship of the land on which we gather today.



Call To Worship

How very good and pleasant it is
when kindred live together in unity!

Prayers Of Adoration, Invocation And Confession

Dearest God, we know you are always with us, holding us and loving us.
We need not fear, you are always there for us and our loved ones.

We give you thanks and praise

Dearest Lord Jesus, you taught us to love one another and how
You lead us through dark times beside still waters, caring for us and bringing peace into our soul,
You carry us through difficult times.

We give you thanks and praise

Holy Spirit, you are within us bringing life, love and peace into our hearts, growing our faith, helping us to
overcome our fears, guiding us through difficult times, into the light.

We give you thanks and praise.

Holy Spirit, come, into our lives, bring healing and calm us,
Help us understand today's gospel. Prompt us to pray. Lead us to new life and beginnings.
And, Lord, if we need to forgive or be forgiven, to heal relationships, or offer redemption, give us the grace and
courage to do so. Transform our hearts O Lord. Help us make a new beginning. Help us in this moment of
silence to come before you with all that's on our hearts, seeking your grace and forgiveness.

Hear then the Lord's words of grace
"Your sins are forgiven."

Thanks be to God

Scripture Readings

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Genesis 45: 1-15

45:1 Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Send everyone away from me." So, no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers.

45:2 And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it.

45:3 Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence. 45:4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me."

And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. 45:5 And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.

45:6 For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither ploughing nor harvest. 45:7 God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. 45:8 So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. 45:9 Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay.

45:10 You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. 45:11 I will provide for you there – since there are five more years of famine to come – so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty. 45:12 And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you. 45:13 You must tell my father how greatly I am honoured in Egypt, and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here." 45:14 Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. 45:15 And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

Psalm 133

133:1 How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!

133:2 It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes.

133:3 It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion.
For there the LORD ordained his blessing, life forevermore.

Matthew 15: (10-20), 21-28

15:10 Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, "Listen and understand: 15:11 it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles." 15:12 Then the disciples approached and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?"

15:13 He answered, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. 15:14 Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit." 15:15 But Peter said to him, "Explain this parable to us." 15:16 Then he said, "Are you also still without understanding?

15:17 Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer?

15:18 But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. 15:19 For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. 15:20 These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile." 15:21 Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. 15:22 Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting,

"Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." 15:23 But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us."

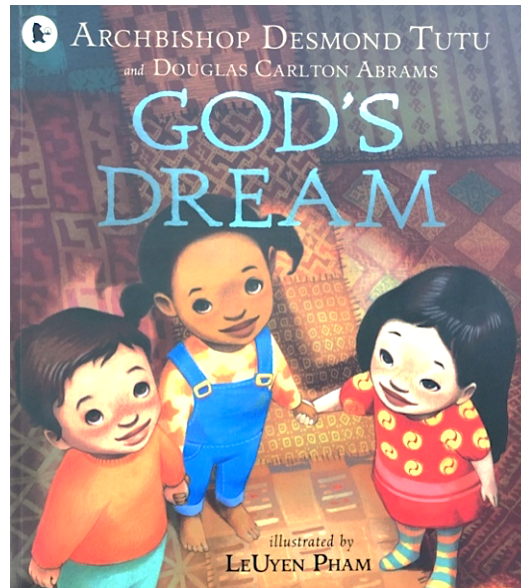
15:24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." 15:25 But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." 15:26 He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs."

15:27 She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

15:28 Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish."

And her daughter was healed instantly.

For The Young At Heart



God's Dream

This is a copy of the front cover of Desmond Tutu's children's book: *God's Dream*
It encourages people to live together in peace. This is an extract:

Do you know what God dreams of? Close your eyes and look with your heart, dear child...

God dreams about people sharing. God dreams about people caring.

God dreams that we reach out and hold one another's hands and play one another's games and laugh with one another's hearts. But God does not force us to be friends or to love one another.

Dear Child of God, it does happen that we get angry and hurt one another. Then we feel sad and very alone.

Sometimes we cry, and God cries with us.

But when we say we're sorry and forgive one another, we wipe away our tears and God's tears too.

Each of us carries a piece of God's heart within us.

And when we love one another, the pieces of God's heart are made whole.

God dreams that every one of us will see that we are all brothers and sisters – yes, even you and me – even if we have different mummies and daddies or live in faraway lands...

Even if we speak different languages or have different ways of talking to God. Even if we have different eyes or different skin... Even if you are taller and I am smaller... Even if your nose is little and mine is large...

Dear child of God, do you know how to make God's dream come true? It is really quite easy.

As easy as sharing, loving, caring. As easy as holding, playing, laughing. As easy as knowing we are one big family because we are all God's children. Will you help God's dream come true?

Let me tell you a secret... God smiles like a rainbow when you do.

Sermon – Reach Out

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

These are challenging times. A time to pray for others and seek unity. A time when many of us are going stir crazy and some of us aren't coping. There is a need to be patient with one another, especially with family. It's not easy being cooped up and allowed out for exercise, one hour a day, with only one person allowed per household allowed out to shop, all within five Kilometres from home. Each of us is doing our best to find a way of coping and a daily routine, with purpose. This time will become part of our story, but it's not the whole story. We will come through this, if we stick together and care for one another.

Our stories are powerful, where yesterday influences today and the future. Our story is part of who we are. For some, things may have come to a head today, after a series of pressures, disappointments, losses, and it may trigger an inner crisis that sends ripples out, like what happens when you drop a stone into a calm lake, ripples that influence a network of relationships. If this is happening to you, reach out for help.

You're not alone.



Many thanks to Lorianne Grant & Barney

For all of us, our stories are contained within a larger story, that of our faith journey with God and others. It is the story we live within that speaks into our story. We live within a larger story, of faiths, our nations, our history and our world's. It's a story that hasn't got a beginning or an end. Our story joins the stories of others who have struggled like us and overcome and lived on to embrace new life.

And it's not a perfect story. Today's gospel speaks of imperfections, failures, betrayal and how things can go terribly wrong in relationships. Jesus makes the point that whatever we say can hurt others, for example, words of exclusion, prejudice, harsh words, then he demonstrates how in front of his disciples. He ignores a suffering woman, because she is not Jewish. He insults her. But her feisty comeback must have surprised the disciples, for women weren't valued and didn't have a voice. Matthew's community heard this story and they were largely Jewish. Jesus isn't just their Messiah. He has come for all. Jesus affirms the woman's faith and holds her out as an example of someone with faith and her daughter is healed. She pushed through all the obstacles she faced, and her determination came from love for her daughter. Her faith was patient and understanding and she saw through people's imperfections and overcame cultural and religious barriers, overcome prejudice and power, overcame being insulted, demeaned, excluded, cast aside and ignored. Her story touches the lives of anyone who has suffered being rejected, excluded, ignored, insulted, judged, cast aside and who has been made to feel bad about themselves because they are not perfect. Her faith was great, and Jesus knew this and loved her, just like he loves all of us. All who came to him do not need to fit in, be perfect, be nice, or acceptable. It's Jesus love and acceptance of us that changes our lives and our stories. Our faith exists in all the messiness of life. All we need to do is reach out to Jesus and keep on reaching out. That's the good news of today's gospel.

A poet named Kahlil Gibran wrote about tears, saying:
Love that is cleansed by tears will remain eternally pure and beautiful.

The story about Joseph is about a man who didn't avoid the pain caused by his brothers, who broke his heart when they planned on killing him, then sold him into slavery as a young boy. They were envious of their father's love for him and thought Joseph arrogant for sharing a dream he had with them that had him ruling over them as a great leader. Through jealousy they broke their fathers' heart. Then Joseph experienced betrayal from his master's wife and imprisonment, until he gained a reputation for interpreting dreams. Pharaoh heard about his gift and asked him to interpret his dream. Joseph told him the dream spoke of seven years of good crops followed by seven years of famine. Pharaoh made him governor over all of Egypt, a powerful and important ruler who controlled who had access to grain. In the second year of the famine Joseph's father sent his brothers to buy grain, because their land was ravaged by famine.

At first Joseph tested them, as he wept and struggled with his feelings.

His tears showed he was deeply moved by seeing them again. Perhaps the tears cleansed his heart.

Ken Gire wrote a book called: *Windows of the Soul*. There's a chapter in it called: *Windows of Tears*.

He quotes Frederick Buechner: *Whenever you find tears in your eyes, especially unexpected tears, it well to pay the closest attention. They are not only telling you something about the secret of who you are, but more often God is speaking to you through them of the mystery of where you have come from and is summoning you to where, if your soul is to be saved, you should go next.*

Perhaps this is what was happening for Joseph.

For Ken Gire, he thought of all the times he'd cried over the years. The time when he saw his father cry after a member of the team he coached died, the time his father died, the time he heard the song from the *Wizard of Oz: Over the Rainbow* sung, just after WW II began, and when he was pondering on the words of A.W. Tozer who wrote: *The bible was written in tears and to tears it yields its treasures.*

Tears when he visited a hospital to see a friend, tears when he watched the *Sound of Music* where the Von Trapp family sang *Edelweiss* and tears when a friend was dying of cancer. Tears when he woke up beside his wife of many years and realized she was a joy to him and remembered the wonderful memories they shared, the laughter, joy and love. We can relate to some of these memories and may have cried tears for many reasons over our lifetime. Tears of sadness, joy and laughter, grief and loss, disappointment and deep hurt.

Tears that have cleansed our soul. Tears about grieving and forgiveness and tears when the Holy Spirit has moved our soul and tears listening to music.

For Joseph, perhaps his tears reveal his deep hurt or desire to reconcile with his brothers, or a mixture of both. He sent away everyone in his household but his brothers, so he could reveal himself to them.

He wept so loudly everyone heard, even Pharaoh. His brothers were dismayed, and he reassured them.

It seems as if he had risen above the heartbreak, they had caused him. Instead he saw God's will and purpose in what had happened to him, saying, 'God has sent me before you. God has made me a father to Pharaoh, Lord of his house, a ruler over Egypt. He has sent me here to save my family and my people. Joseph told them to tell his father about what has come of him and that his father can bring his people to Egypt to live close by in Goshen during the famine and he would make sure they were provided for. Then he embraced his brother Benjamin and they both wept, and he kissed his brothers and wept. His choice to reconcile and forgive was not an act of weakness. It took power and strength. It was an act of redemption, not only for his brothers, but for himself. It was like closure of the heartbreak he had experienced. He named his first son Manasseh, which meant God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house. However, when he saw his brothers he couldn't forget. To put aside his pain was a great step forward in his life for him.

To offer someone redemption can be a moment of deep healing. To receive a gift from someone who has hurt you deeply is a moment of redemption. I know what it's like to make the choice offer redemption to someone on their death bed after they hurt me. To realise my life has been filled with God's blessings and love and is not defined by someone else's actions helped me rise above the pain and move on to embrace new life.

I gave them a holding cross, which comforted them while they were dying, and they held it when they died.

I consider that as the work of God in my soul, bringing grace and healing. It is not an easy choice to offer redemption, but the release, peace and healing that comes from offering it, is worth it, for both people.

For Joseph and his brothers, redemption meant they were free to move on to embrace new beginnings and rebuild their relationships.

I've wept tears of joy when reunited with family. My mother-in-law wept when she came all the way to Australia and was reunited with my husband. We weep for many reasons. Sometimes we weep like Joseph when he was reunited with his brothers, with a friend we haven't seen for a long time, because of a misunderstanding. Other times we weep with people who have always loved us and cared for us where the thought of being separated brings tears or when we have been separated for a long time and finally, we are reunited.

There will be many tears when family are reunited after the present lockdown comes to an end and we are allowed to embrace one another. Pray for the families who are experiencing family breakdown at the moment, due to just too many pressures being placed on their fragile relationships. Tell your loved ones you love them.

Reach out to them and give thanks for them. Make the choice, if you can, to reconcile with someone.

Do not be too hard on yourself, if that's not possible or wise. Keep on reaching out to God and others.

It's a way forward during this time of isolation. We are not alone.



*Statues of two men reaching out to each other
symbolising peace between two nations, who were once at war*

The Lord be with you
and also with you

Rev Tina

Some Music For You

Hymn: Just As I Am – Willie Nelson [3:35]

<https://youtu.be/Kv24jRNASQM>

*Lyrics: Charlotte Elliott 1789–1871; Copyright Public Domain;
Posted to YouTube by OhLordmyGod with lyrics and attributions*

Somewhere Over The Rainbow (From The Wizard Of Oz) – Judy Garland [2:42]

<https://youtu.be/PSZxmZmBfnU>

*1939 Movie Clip;
Posted to YouTube by Movieclips with attributions*

Reach Out (I'll Be There) – The Four Tops [2:53]

<https://youtu.be/2EafIX0MWRo>

*1967 Music Video;
Posted to YouTube by Clara0815007 without attributions*

Reach Out To Jesus – Elvis Presley [3:16]

https://youtu.be/r-P3CS_2740

*Writer: Ralph Carmichael;
Posted to YouTube by Anna Horecka with attributions*

Offering Prayer

about offering up ourselves and giving thanks to God for all we have

**Lord and giver of every good thing, we bring to you our lives and gifts for your kingdom
all for transformation through your grace and love
made known in Jesus Christ our Saviour, amen**



Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Michael Plumridge has prepared the Prayers of the people for you today

God of Grace, please hear us as we pray.

Lord today we pray for the South-west African nations of Sierra Leone and Liberia. We give thanks for these countries: for their warm tropical climate and the marvellous diversity of the natural environment: from the coastal Guinean mangroves, mountains to the East, forest and savannah. We thank you for the natural resources in these countries, and we ask that the benefits of these might be distributed amongst all. We give thanks also that Christians and Muslims live in harmony in Sierra Leone. Lord we pray for the Churches in this region and we give thanks for their evangelism and social outreach, faithful witness and action in times of conflict, and for interfaith cooperation. We pray for the just governance of these countries. We pray for those affected by war and civil unrest and we ask that leaders may turn away from corrupt practices and turn their focus to peace and justice. We pray for all families who have lost members to the Pandemic. We especially remember before you that the people of Sierra Leone and Liberia have had to deal with the Ebola crisis of 2014/15. We thank you for health workers. Lord grant them strength we pray. Lord we ask that all those who live in poverty in these countries may receive the adequate resources and services. We recognise, Lord the grave political, psychological and economic harms caused by colonization.

We pray for all people the world over in this time of crisis. We pray for those out of work. We pray for people who run businesses and are unable to trade. We pray for those whose lives look nothing like they used to. We pray for those in strained relationships. We give thanks for the bright side of lockdown: for parents who have deeper relationships with their children; for those who have a new appreciation of the home environment. We continue to pray for the development of an effective vaccine.

We also pray this morning for St Philip's Catholic Church, Blackburn North. Be with them and grant them strength as they also do without weekly worship. We pray for those at Kensington Uniting Church: hold them in your love. We pray also for the students, parents and staff of Kingswood College. We pray for those having to teach or learn from home.

We pray for our Mountview Congregation and we give thanks for those working on our behalf to keep us together as a congregation. We pray for our minister Tina and give thanks for the weekly worship resources. We pray for all whose needs are greater because of this time of confinement. Be with them we pray.

We pray this and all our prayers in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray (The Lord's Prayer)

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

You'll Never Walk Alone – Morriston Orpheus Choir [3:07]

<https://youtu.be/p1sIFWpYja0>

Posted to YouTube by artfrob with limited attributions

You Raise Me Up – Morriston Orpheus Choir [4:22]

<https://youtu.be/5vtxX4G11Jg>

Posted to YouTube by recordiausain with limited attributions

Dismissal

Go out into the world in the power of the spirit and in all things at all times remember Christ is with you.
Make your life your worship to the praise and glory of God. Amen

Hymn: Shalom To You Now – Helen Jackson

<https://youtu.be/2oqiFenWxY>

Lyrics by Elise Shoemaker Eslinger, to a traditional Spanish melody.

*Lyrics: © E. S. Eslinger / United Methodist Publishing. Lyrics reprinted and music streamed by permission.
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Shalom To You Now

Prayerfully read the words. Imagine your family in Christ and send them heartfelt blessings from the Lord

**Shalom to you now,
shalom, my friends.
May God's full mercies
bless you, my friends.
In all your living and through your loving,
Christ be your shalom,
Christ be your shalom.**

I have provided extra resources to accompany you on the journey for the week ahead. Rev Tina

Extra Worship Resources

Unity Between People

133:1 How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!

Psalm 133

Stand By Me – The Kingdom Choir

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=RDbOT0_1d1f_U&feature=share&playnext=1

2020 Virtual Video;

as sung by the choir at the royal wedding, 19th May 2018;

Posted to YouTube by The Kingdom Choir with limited attributions

The Lord Bless You And Keep You – Batavia Madrigal Singers

<https://youtu.be/akT32E83zjl>

By John Rutter; 2020 Virtual Choir Video;

Posted to YouTube by Batavia Madrigal Singers with attributions

The Parliament of World Religions

In 2009 I attended the Parliament of World Religions in Melbourne. People from all over the world came together to share, dialogue, pray, perform and build relationships. I learnt that each one of us needs to have a deep understanding of our own faith, before entering into interfaith dialogue, that we can learn much from one another and we have a common theme of treating others as we expect to be treated and we all pray. These are just a few of the photos I took. Unity is so important today when we are in the midst of a crisis that is affecting the world and all its people's.

Please pray for world peace and unity.



The first photo is of the Dali Lama with Aunt Joy from Victoria and a musician who played a cello. The second photo is of Aunt Joy giving a presentation and some musicians.



This is a photo of Uncle Bob from Inland Australia. When I looked into his eyes it was like I saw the entire Milky Way. It was obvious he was well connected with his land.



The first photo is of a group of young people from four different faiths in dialogue about their faith and what it means for them. The second photo is of a Hindu priest, Buddhist monk (Theravadin) and a Christian minister having a conversation about their faith.

In Jesus' time, people lived in a multicultural and multifaith world. Some of the religions may have changed or developed since then, but we still live in a multicultural world, except that our world has become smaller and global. There is a real need for world peace and cooperation, if we are going to have a future.

For The Young At Heart – The Power Of Prayer



I have a book called *Creative ideas for Quiet Corners* by Lynn Chambers. In it are a series of suggestions to create different arrangements on tables for worship. This one is called *Praying for others* and these are the steps for creating it:

Step 1: Find some stones where each one represents the people in your life.
You may choose to put them in a bowl or basket

Step 2: Lay a piece of blue fabric on the table or kitchen bench and arrange it like waves

Step 3: Make a brown mat (with paper and paint) or use a cork placemat

Step 4: Find a ceramic bowl and fill it with water (the stones make a nice noise when you drop them into it)

Step 5: You may like to add photos of the sea, lakes, rivers or ponds or draw a small picture of them.

When you're ready, sit quietly in prayer, then take a pebble that represents you and place it on the brown mat.

Look at its texture and colour. Think about the people in your family and look at the basket of stones.

Choose a pebble that represents a family member and place it beside the pebble that represents you.

Keep doing this until you have chosen pebbles to represent your family. Think about others who are important to you and choose pebbles to represent them and place them on the mat.

Look at the pebbles on the mat and spend some time talking to God about the people the pebbles represent.

When you are finished place them back into the basket. If there are others with you, they may choose to select pebbles in the same way, then return them to the basket.

When you're ready, choose a stone from the basket to represent your prayers and hold it in your hand as you think about the people who are important to you. Think about how this pebble was made, washed, smoothed, by water, then think about God washing over and shaping the lives of the people you are praying for.

When you are ready drop the pebble in the water and quietly thank God for listening and answering your prayers. If there are others with you, they may like to do the same. Pray for others who have joined you at the pebble pool. You are welcome to finish with this prayer.

*Loving God, I bring to all the people and situations that these pebbles represent.
I pray for all those who used these pebbles in their love and care for others. Amen*

You may choose to keep a small pebble in a pocket or on the kitchen windowsill as a reminder to pray.

Hymn: Spirit Of God – Sparrow On The Rooftop [2:00]

<https://youtu.be/v4uPDddZ7yw>

*Lyrics: Richard M S Irwin; Music: Trad.; Instrumental: karaoke-version.de;
Posted to YouTube by Spatz auf dem Dach with Lyrics and attributions*

The Story Of A Pebble



One of the pebbles I used for my prayer table came from a church called Dominus Flevit (The Lord Wept). It was a piece of white quartz when I found it in a pool of water beside the church, which is built to look like a teardrop. The other picture is of the window I'm looking out of over Jerusalem. This is the place where Jesus realised Jerusalem would be destroyed one day (it was in 70 AD) and he wept for the people, for those who rejected his message.



I brought the pebble home with me. Years later when I was doing some chaplaincy training at a hospital, I got to know a patient and his wife. They had left their country, business, family, friends, to come to Australia for treatment. The husband had throat cancer and all treatment had failed. When he realised nothing was going to work and he was dying he had a meltdown. Was angry. Next day I returned with the pebble and showed it to him. I told him I held it for weeks on end when I was grieving. I asked him, would he like to borrow it and hold it for as long as it took for him to grieve and return it when he'd finished with it. Weeks later he returned it and thanked me. It was stained yellow because his liver had failed and had crystallized, and the crystals looked like tiny tear drops. Next day he went home to die. Later on, a family member told me he had made his peace with God before he died.

From Contemplative Monk



Sharing Our Stories

You are most welcome to send me a story to share in our worship resources or a poem or prayer or image.

A Story From Margaret Cosstick

Margaret remembers attending an in-service at school, when she was teaching, saying "and I've been retired since the end of 2007 ... after I'd turned 65!". However, this old lady still remembers part of this particular in-service very well. It was on health and well-being. The presenter talked about "The 3 A's". Maybe you already know about them, but just in case I'll explain (but the guy gave excellent examples and told a good story along the way). You handle a difficult situation or problem by applying the 3 A's in this order:

1. AVOID it if you can
2. ALTER it if you can
3. ACCEPT it if you can't avoid or alter.

My Mum and Dad lived in Brisbane and I used to ring them for a long chat once a week.

At this stage Dad had died, so it was only Mum. I told her about the in-service and the 3A's.

She really took them on board and when people came to visit her (as her mind was sharp, but physically she was not as strong by the end – at 94), and if they were upset about a problem, she shortened the 3A's to 2A's explaining if they couldn't alter the situation they had no choice but to accept it.

Also suggested from Margaret, a beautiful Poem:

Footprints In The Sand

One night I dreamed a dream.
As I was walking along the beach with my Lord
across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life.
For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand,
one belonging to me and one to my Lord.

After the last scene of my life flashed before me,
I looked back at the footprints in the sand.
I noticed that at many times along the path of my life,
especially at the very lowest and saddest times,
there was only one set of footprints.

This really troubled me, so I asked the Lord about it.

"Lord, you said once I decided to follow you,
you'd walk with me all the way.

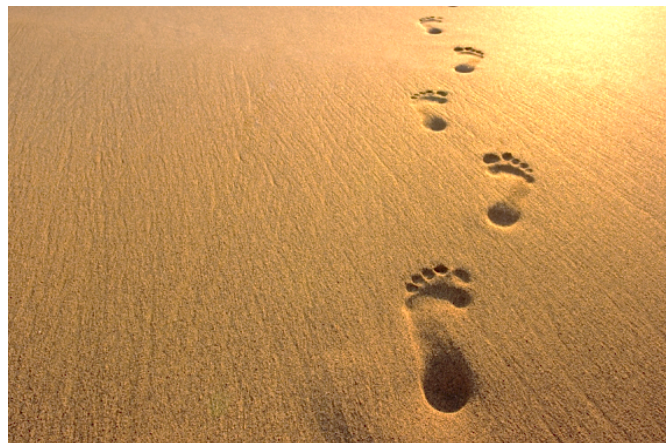
But I noticed that during the saddest and most
troublesome times of my life,
there was only one set of footprints.

I don't understand why, when I needed you the
most, you would leave me."

He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and
will never leave you

never, ever, during your trials and testing's.

When you saw only one set of footprints,
it was then that I carried you."



by Mary Stevenson

Rev Tina, for Mountview Uniting Church

<https://www.mountviewuca.org/worship.html>

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