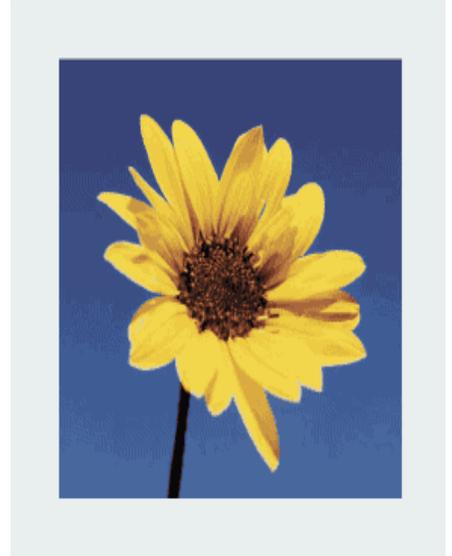


Simple Prayer, Simple Praise

Worship for Sunday May 10th

Opening Prayer

To You, O God, we lift up our souls.
To You we offer our praise and prayer,
our worship and thanksgiving,
even our very lives.
Make Your ways known to us.
Show us the path on which we should walk.
Lead us in Your truth and teach us.
For You alone are the God who saves,
the God in whom we trust;
and the One on whom we wait. Amen.



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A Reading from the Gospel of John 14:1-14

Jesus said, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.” Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

Meditation “In my Father’s house are many...”

This is one of those passages that, no matter how it’s translated—many dwelling places, many rooms—I always hear in the poetry of the King James Version: “In my Father’s house, there are many mansions.”

The music of that phrase, “many mansions,” sounds especially appealing now. At any time, the lowliest room in the heavenly courts must be a mansion compared to human construction. And these days, as we confine ourselves in small spaces for the sake of loving our neighbors, even an earthly house with many rooms may seem like a vision of heaven.

Perhaps the most poignant aspect of reading this Gospel passage now is that we often read it at funeral masses. For the time being, we can't do that. Friends and families are unable to grieve together in the same consecrated places. Comfort that might come from a handshake, or a hug, or being able to lean on wood and stone worn smooth by generations of other mourners, eludes us.

What we still have is this word of comfort from the Word made flesh.

Jesus has gone ahead to prepare a place for those who follow the Way. We know this from the witness of those first disciples. And we may experience glimpses of it in our own discipleship.

Whenever our confinement for love's sake draws us unto a deeper spiritual life—when the lack of outside distractions leads us to remember our baptism, or pray for people we might never have thought about before, or marvel at how many rooms there are for companionship in Christ—we have a foretaste of eternal life.

Following Jesus, we can take comfort in knowing that our Savior has gone before us, through isolation and suffering and death itself, to prepare a place for us.

(Mother Elizabeth Hadaway, Priest-in-Charge, St. Peter's, Westfield)

Prayers

God, help us better love one another. We pray for the many ministries that reflect your love throughout the world. And we pray for ourselves, that you would expand our hearts and turn our gaze outward. Give us the knowledge and the wisdom to be good friends, to know how to come alongside those in our lives who need encouragement or someone to walk alongside them. Give us kindness, especially to those closest to us, who often bear the brunt of our quote-unquote honesty. And give us courage to fight sin, to set aside our own selfish desires, and to do the difficult thing of living out love in a world that often doesn't encourage it.

O God, your Son remained with his disciples after his resurrection, teaching them to love all people as neighbors. As his disciples in this age, we offer our prayers on behalf of the universe in which we are privileged to live and our neighbors with whom we share it.

We pray all these things in the name of Jesus, who lived, died, and rose again in true self-sacrifice and true love so that we could have true joy and true freedom. Amen.

Take a moment to pray for your needs, lift up your worries and offer them to God. Remember the people that you are concerned for, pray for all those that are in distress, those that are struggling. Pray for those that are helping amid this crisis. Offer up your hopes for the resurrection in your life and the lives of those around you. Say a prayer of praise knowing that the Lord has risen. Raise all of this up in prayer through the words our Savior taught us:

**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, and the power, and the glory
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Finally, O Lord, we ask that you would bless us with vision for the future and reverence for the past. Guide us each day as we minister to one another and to world for which you gave yourself. Help us each day to bear witness to your name and to do that which you would have us do. We ask it through Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen**

The Grace

Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen (Ephesians 3:20,21)

Call a neighbor, a friend, and a family member this week and let them know you are praying for them. Consider sharing this message with them.



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Join online worship with Bishop Rowe Sunday at 10 am
<https://episcopalpartnership.org/>

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Prepared for the Dioceses of NWPA and WNY by the Rev. Stephen Lane and the Rev. Claudia Scheda.
Prayers adapted from Revised Common Lectionary Prayers and
<https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu> and
Jeff Chu <http://byjeffchu.com> and <https://re-worship.blogspot.com>