



AT HOME SERVICE

Sunday 3rd May 2026

compiled by Vicki Penfound - Lay Assistant

Opening words: Psalm 31 v 1-2

*In you, Lord, I have taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame;
deliver me in your righteousness.
Turn your ear to me,
come quickly to my rescue;
be my rock of refuge,
a strong fortress to save me.*

Hymn: 434 Singing the Faith

1] Rock of Ages, cleft for me
Let me hide myself in Thee!
Let the water and the blood
From Thy riven side which flowed
Be of sin the double cure
Cleanse me from its guilt and power

2] Not the labours of my hands
Can fulfil the Law's demands
Could my zeal no respite know
Could my tears forever flow
All for sin could not atone
Thou must save, and Thou alone

3] Nothing in my hand I bring
Simply to the cross I cling
Naked, come to Thee for dress
Helpless, look to Thee for grace
Foul, I to the fountain fly
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!

4] Whilst I draw this fleeting breath -
When my eyelids close in death -
When I soar through tracts unknown -
See Thee on Thy judgment throne -
Rock of Ages, cleft for me
Let me hide myself in Thee.

Augustus Montague Toplady (1740-1778)

Prayer:

Almighty God,

Whose power is evident in the majesty of creation, we worship in awe and wonder.

In this season of Easter, remembering Christ's victory over the grave,

We praise you that death is defeated and in your perfect love there is no fear.

In your tender mercy you are our refuge and our hope. You hold us and strengthen us,

Your resurrection life within us.

Thank you that we are new creatures in Christ, through your great love.

May we glorify you through living in peace and love, sharing your joy with all we meet. Amen

The Lord's Prayer**Hymn: 479 Singing the Faith**

1] The King of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never.
I nothing lack if I am his,
and he is mine forever.

2] Where streams of living water flow,
my ransomed soul he leadeth;
and where the verdant pastures grow,
with food celestial feedeth.

3] Perverse and foolish, oft I strayed,
but yet in love he sought me;
and on his shoulder gently laid,
and home, rejoicing, brought me.

4] In death's dark vale I fear no ill,
with thee, dear Lord, beside me;
thy rod and staff my comfort still,
thy cross before to guide me.

5] Thou spreadst a table in my sight;
thy unction grace bestoweth;
and oh, what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!

6] And so through all the length of days,
thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
within thy house forever.

Henry Williams Baker (1821 – 1877)

Reading: John 14 v 1 – 14

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.”

Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”

Jesus answered: “Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because

I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

Reflection:

Jesus is comforting his disciples with words that have become very familiar to us. We may have mulled this passage over in our minds and taken comfort from the promise that we are welcome in “the Father’s house” and there is plenty of room.

Thomas and Philip react to what Jesus says, Thomas’ question prompting the declaration of Jesus, “I am the way and the truth and the life...”

Philip’s request prompting another declaration, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father...”

This conversation is happening in the Upper Room on Maundy Thursday before Jesus goes to Gethsemane. It is the culmination of three years of ministry, and the disciples are acutely aware that Jesus has spoken about his impending death. They are struggling to take it in and are understandably afraid. Jesus is reminding them of who he is. Their recognition of him as the Messiah, the Son of God, is right. They need to hold on to that, regardless of what is about to happen.

“I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” Jesus is saying this to reassure and comfort, not as it is sometimes aggressively used, as a threat to believers of other faiths. The context here is the split between those who denounced Jesus as a heretic and want him killed, and the followers of Jesus.

The way is both a path set out and an example to follow. The early Christians were described as “Followers of The Way”, it’s very apt. Jesus did not say “I will show you the way”, he said “I am the way”, which implies that a close relationship is what is required, not just a distant signpost to aim for.

The truth. In a world where we encounter scam emails and phone calls, people pretending to be what they are not, and deep fake videos which are sophisticated enough to fool a lot of people into believing totally false things, truth is not the easily identified quality it once was. We need to seek and discern the truth.

Jesus says “I am the truth”, there is no deception in him, no manipulation or hidden shadows. He IS the truth. Therefore it follows that deception, manipulation or ‘hidden secret knowledge’ is not of Christ. Also, that scientific truth is in harmony, not conflict with God. I am thinking of the Church’s attitude to Galileo here, but there are many other examples where people of faith feel that science is a threat to their deeply held beliefs. Surely, we should “Look to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith” rather than deny what is empirically proven? If Jesus is the truth, then the truth points to Jesus. Back to the point of the declaration, which was to comfort frightened disciples.

The life. In his death and resurrection, Jesus demonstrated power over his life. To lay it down and to take it back up. On that terrible day when Jesus was crucified, did the disciples recall Jesus saying he was the life? How ironic it must have felt. But Jesus’ declaration went beyond the limitations of our human life on earth. He had been talking about us being with the Father, he was talking about eternal life. But not only that, life in all its fullness, abundant life which is for now as well as in eternity. What is it to live, to truly be alive? Is it just about our bodies, with a heart that beats, lungs taking in air and a brain which makes everything work and where we think our thoughts? Or is it the inner spiritual life which is the place where we truly experience “life”? Jesus is the life, and Paul expresses this in his letter to the Galatians: *“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Gal 2 v 20)*

Eugene Peterson, the theologian said it like this: *“We can’t suppress the Jesus way in order to sell the Jesus truth. The Jesus way and the Jesus truth must be congruent. Only when the Jesus way is organically joined to the Jesus truth do we get the Jesus life.”*

Let us live the Jesus life in all its fullness.

Let us pray:

Loving God,

The needs are so great and our words inadequate.

Help us in our prayers for the world.

We pray for freedom for the oppressed, healing for the sick,

Comfort for the distressed.

We pray for wars to cease and justice to come.

(silence)

Lord, may our lives be signposts to you. The way, the truth and the life.

Amen.

Hymn 346 Singing the Faith

1] Christ is the world's Light, Christ and none other;
born in our darkness, he became our Brother.
If we have seen him, we have seen the Father:
Glory to God on high.

2] Christ is the world's peace, Christ and none other;
no one can serve him and despise another.
Who else unites us, one in God the Father?
Glory to God on high.

3] Christ is the world's life, Christ and none other;
sold once for silver, murdered here, our brother-
he, who redeems us, reigns with God the Father:
Glory to God on high.

4] Give God the glory, God and none other;
give God the glory, Spirit, Son and Father;
give God the glory, God with us, my brother:
Glory to God on high.

Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000)

Blessing:

The peace of God be in your heart

The grace of God be in your words

The love of God be in your hands

The joy of God be in your soul

And in the song that your life sings. Amen