

Christchurch – Sunday 6th September 4pm



*This service is based on the 2020 Methodist liturgy:
'Beyond Exile: A service to celebrate a return to public worship'*

THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

God's grace and peace are with us
Let our hearts be filled with joy!

Gracious God, you are our host and guest.

**We gather today, in your house,
knowing that you are with us.**

As you have welcomed us,
help us to be a welcoming community.

**Send your Spirit to blow through our worship
as a breeze blows through the open windows
of a long-closed house.**

Amen

PRAYER OF PRAISE

God of creation, Source of all being
the heavens declare your glory
and the earth is your handiwork.
For the diverse beauty of all you have made;
we offer you our praise.

God of salvation, Eternal Word,
you came amongst your people,
and made yourself vulnerable
to the risky business of human living.
we offer you our praise.

God of life, Holy Spirit,
you move in the church and in the world,
calling the least and the lost
into a deeper fellowship of love.
we offer you our praise.

**God of all grace,
Accept our praise,
and help us to live as your people in the world. Amen.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins,
trusting in God's mercy and forgiveness.

Silence

For those times when we have lost sight of your love,
despairing for ourselves and the world

Heal us, God, and grant us a new beginning.

For those times when we have lost perspective,
putting our own concerns before the needs of your world.

Heal us, God, and grant us a new beginning.

For those times when we have taken for granted
the gifts that you have given to us.

Heal us, God, and grant us a new beginning.

For those times when we have chosen to ignore injustice,
and neglected those in need.

Heal us, God, and grant us a new beginning.

God has heard our confession,
loves us still and, through Christ,
offers healing and a new beginning.

Hear then, Christ's gracious words:
"Your sins are forgiven."

COLLECT

Loving God, you built your church,
the body of Christ, as living stones.
As we gather in your house today,

help us to remember that we are your church in every place.
Unite us in your Son, and send us out in the power of your Spirit,
to witness in your world. **Amen**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Matthew 18: 15-20

Reflection

HYMN StF 712 *We read together:*

Put peace into each other's hands
 and like a treasure hold it;
protect it like a candle flame,
 with tenderness enfold it.

Put peace into each other's hands
 with loving expectation;
be gentle in your words and ways,
 in touch with God's creation.

Put peace into each other's hands,
 like bread we break for sharing;
look people warmly in the eye:
 our life is meant for caring.

As at communion, shape your hands
 into a waiting cradle;
the gift of Christ receive, revere,
 united round the table.

Put Christ into each other's hands,
 he is love's deepest measure;
in love make peace, give peace a chance
 and share it like a treasure.

Fred Kaan

MARKING LOSS – A LITANY OF LAMENT

We thought we knew how the world was meant to be.
Day followed night, every week had a Sunday,
and that was the day for church.

How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

We thought we knew how the world was meant to be.
We made our plans, held our meetings,
kept the roof on the church and the show on the road.

How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

We thought we knew how the world was meant to be.
We would see colleagues, friends and loved ones again,
and we would embrace, laugh and share stories as we always have.

How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

And now, we know something new.
We know that the world is not ours to control,
and that our plans are confounded by the smallest microbe.

God is teaching us a new song, for a new land.

And now, we know something new.
We know that church is not committees, agendas and buildings,
it is us, in homes, streets, hospitals throughout the world.

God is teaching us a new song, for a new land.

And now, we know something new.

We only have today with those we love, today is the day to say, 'I love you', to mend an argument, to hold on tight.

God is teaching us a new song, for a new land.

PRAYERS FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

In the face of so much loss,
we turn to you, Loving God,
praying for comfort and strength.

We hold before you the precious losses that we have named today.

Be with us in the days ahead, as we try to make sense of a new way of living.

In the face of so much fear,
we turn to you, Loving God,
praying for hope and confidence.

We are your people, gifted with the assurance of your love.

Be with us in the days ahead, as we work out how to serve this present age.

In the face of so much need,
we thank you, loving God,
for all who have given their skill, time and commitment,
to care for those who have been ill, vulnerable and isolated.

Be with us in the days ahead, that we might share your love with all.

Loving God,
hear our prayers and fill us with your Spirit,
that we might be your people in the world. Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven...

THE PEACE

Please stand

We are the Body of Christ.

In the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.

Let us therefore keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

We greet one another in the name of Christ.

Please remain in your places, and make eye contact with others in the congregation. Please do not shake hands!

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Please be seated and during communion remain in your seats. When we come to share communion, the elements will be brought to you.

Please take a wafer, without touching any others; similarly, please take a single glass, without touching any others. If you prefer not to share communion at this time, that is OK – we are glad that you are with us.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

In the beginning of all that is,
You, God, in relationship, three in one,
formed a diverse and complex creation.
You created us in your image,
one part of the story of your love for all that you have made.

Through the teachers and prophets of old,
matriarchs and patriarchs,
the story of your love was told, offered, and written.
Your people have not always understood the story,
or lived as those who know that they are loved.
We have turned away from the truth,
ignoring you, damaging the earth and hurting our neighbours.

You continued to love us and so, at great cost,
sent Jesus Christ into the world,
to teach us again what it means to live in your way.

Through Christ's life, death and resurrection,
we can know for ourselves, the story of love, faith and salvation.
Through your gift of the Holy Spirit, sent in your Son's name, you
continue to lead us into truth and give us power to tell your story
throughout the world.

And so, with all the messengers of heaven, we join in the ancient song:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessèd is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

On the night before he died,
Jesus took bread and gave you thanks.
He broke it and gave it to his friends, saying,
'Take this and eat it. this is my body, given for you.
Do this to remember me.'

After supper, Jesus took the cup of wine,
gave thanks and gave it to his friends, saying,
'Drink this, all of you.
This is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for all people
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this in remembrance of me.'

And so, God of love,
we remember that Jesus died and rose again to make all things new,
and we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Dying, you destroyed our death,
Rising, you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.**

Through him, accept us as a living sacrifice,
a people for your praise.

Send your Holy Spirit
that these gifts of bread and wine
may be for us the body and blood of Christ.

Unite us as his body,
that we might offer his love to the world in mission and service,
until, joining the whole company of heaven,
we are brought into the presence of your eternal glory,
through Jesus Christ, your Son.

**Through him, with him, and in him,
in the power of the Holy Spirit,
we celebrate again the story of your love
and offer our service and praise.
To you be glory for ever and ever. Amen**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

*The presiding minister breaks the bread in the sight of the people in
silence.*

Jesus, Lamb of God, **have mercy on us.**
Jesus, bearer of our sins, **have mercy on us.**
Jesus, redeemer of the world, **grant us peace.**

THE SHARING OF THE BREAD AND WINE

Jesus said: 'I am the bread of life.
Those who come to me shall not hunger
and those who believe in me shall never thirst.'

While we share communion, we listen to: StF 651

Lord of life, we come to you.
Lord of all, our Saviour be.
Come to bless and to heal
With the light of your love.

Catherine Walker

Katherine and I will bring the wafers to each person in their own seat.

The body of Christ keep you in eternal life.

We eat together.

I will bring individual glasses to each person in their own seat.

The blood of Christ keep you in eternal life.

We drink together.

The elements that remain are covered with a white cloth.

PRAYERS AND DISMISSAL

Silence

Let us pray

**Loving God,
as we have shared your holy gifts,
join us again in the bonds of unity
and strengthen us for service,
that we might witness to your love
and serve you all our days.
In Christ's name. Amen.**

The presiding minister says:

The blessing of God,
the Creator, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace in the power of the Spirit
to live and work to God's praise and glory.
Thanks be to God. Amen.

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