

Morning Worship

Preparation

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

**Loving Lord,
fill us with your life-giving,
joy-giving, peace-giving presence,
that we may praise you now with our lips
and all the day long with our lives,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Cast your burden upon the Lord:

And he will sustain you.

Create in us clean hearts O God:

And renew a right spirit within us.

Cast us not away from your presence:

And take not your Holy Spirit from us.

Give us the joy of your saving help:

And sustain us with your life-giving Spirit.

Blessed be the Lord day by day:

The God of our salvation who bears our burdens.

We confess our sins.

**O King enthroned on high,
filling the earth with your glory: holy is your name,
Lord God almighty.
In our sinfulness we cry to you
to take our guilt away,
and to cleanse our lips to speak your word,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

May the God of all mercies cleanse us from our sins, and restore us in his image to the praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Praise

O Lord, open our lips:

And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Let us worship the Lord:

All praise to his name.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be for ever. Amen.

The word of God

A reading from Paul's letter to the Colossians

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you must also forgive.

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

A reading from the Gospel of Luke

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that many will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed- and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

A reflection from Rev Joy Cousins, Vicar of St Mary's Eaton Bray

Today is Mothering Sunday which is a day of mixed emotions for many of us. Since my Mum died nearly 10 years ago, I have found it a day of mixed blessings: lots of good memories but also sadness that we are no longer together on earth.

The current coronavirus crisis has thrown our way of life into turmoil. It has led to fear, panic buying and genuine concern about lost livelihoods, school closures and what the future will hold. In the midst of such uncertainty, there is also an increased sense of neighbourliness, of reaching out (virtually) and of how we can best support one another through this crisis.

The Bible is always a source of inspiration for Christians. I am particularly heartened by the fact that people in the Bible went through times of war, persecution and pestilence- and came out the other side. We have a wonderful treasure trove of Scripture which faces reality, but is also encouraging. God is with us whatever we may face.

Our reading today is from Colossians. Paul wrote to the Colossian Christians from prison. They were a newly formed church in Asia who needed encouragement and Christian teaching. Paul tells them that they are now a new creation in Christ Jesus. This means that their relationships with one another need to be totally transformed to reflect the characteristics of Jesus.

Paul uses the titles which were given to Israel in the Old Testament- 'chosen', 'holy', 'beloved'- and applies them to the Colossian Christians. In response to being God's holy, chosen and beloved people, they must clothe themselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. These qualities will enable them to act to each other as God in Christ has acted to them.

There are echoes of the Lord's Prayer as Paul urges them to 'forgive each other just as the Lord has forgiven you.' His words also reflect Jesus' teaching on love for God and neighbour. In addition they are to be thankful. Whatever our predicament, it is always possible to find something to be thankful for. The Colossian Christians are to 'sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs to God.' We can also sing to God, thought sadly not together at present. But we can still raise our voices in song.

The passage ends by urging people that 'whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.'

Although we are living in troubled times, we can still live out our Christian lives by doing everything according to the way of Christ. We

can bring all our fears and anxieties to God in prayer, knowing that he hears us and will answer us. We can trust God for the past, the present and the future.

Our faith

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, who made all things?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ, who redeemed the world?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in his Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God?

We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the church.

This is our faith.

We believe and trust in one God:

Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayers

We take the time to pray for:

- The church and its witness in our villages and throughout the world
- Our nation, our government and all in authority
- The world and all those who suffer injustice
- The coronavirus outbreak and all those affected by it
- Those who care for children as mother
- Those who are sick in mind, body or spirit
- Those who have died and those who grieve
- Ourselves and what we will do this week

A prayer for the coronavirus pandemic

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort

knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen.

*We join together with Christians throughout the world in the prayer
that Jesus 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, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Conclusion

God of compassion,
whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary,
shared the life of a home in Nazareth,
and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself:
strengthen us in our daily living
that in joy and in sorrow
we may know the power of your presence
to bind together and to heal;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, Amen.

*We end with the words of the Grace, an ancient Christian prayer of
fellowship, remembering that although we are not together in person,
nothing can separate us from the love of God found in Christ Jesus
our Lord.*

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all evermore. Amen.**



*If you would like us to pray for you during this time of stress and
anxiety, please leave a prayer request on the website email address
or contact Joy (vicar@stmaryseatonbray.org.uk)*

Reverend Joy Cousans
Reverend Stephen Burge