

Give to the world your deep peace, and help us overcome the oppression and violence that destroys lives. We pray especially for those nations tinged with hatred and injustice, and look to a world in which all may have enough.

Christ who calls us, **hear our prayer.**

Comfort and hold all who are sick and sorrowing, and give your wisdom and peace to those who care for them. We pray for all who feel isolated. In their uniqueness, they may also feel alone. This is most of us, some of the time, but it is some of us most of the time. God of encounter, may we all turn with love and interest towards those who have been isolated.

Christ who calls us, **hear our prayer. Amen**

(Roots - All Saints)

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn [StF 504 / H&P 739](#) **May the mind of Christ my Saviour**

Closing Prayer for All Saints Day:

Lord of heaven's reach, of earth reborn;
you call us from starless graves to sing under infinite skies:
we praise your name for those who have walked this way
unheralded and unnumbered but known to you,
their beginning, their end, their joy in life;
give us the same grace to be unbound and take the step of faith;
through Jesus Christ, the alpha and omega.

Amen.

(Steven Shakespeare, Prayers for an Inclusive Church 2008)

Acknowledgements: Thank you to Diane for preparing our worship this week. Scripture quotations marked (CEV) are from the Contemporary English Version Copyright © 1991, 1992, 1995 by American Bible Society. Used by Permission.

Worship at Home for Sunday November 1st 2020

Prepared by Diane Coleman, Castle Eden Circuit

Call to worship

You that are righteous, rejoice in the Lord and praise his holy name.

Hymn [StF 746](#)

Or [H&P 814](#)

**For all the saints who showed your love
For all the saints, who from their labours rest**

Opening prayers

(adapted from Roots)

Creator God, for the smell of autumn leaves, for the bright colours of berries and fruits, for the brilliance of stars and the blaze of fire, for the taste of toasted marshmallows and jacket potatoes, **I praise and thank you.**

Eternal God, for times of remembrance, for times of rejoicing, for times of reflection, for times of reunion, **I praise and thank you.**

Loving God, for opportunities to worship freely together, for opportunities to serve you freely together, for opportunities to question and debate openly, for opportunities to make decisions by free will, **I praise and thank you.**

Lord God, for the good news of who Christ is, for the insights from your living word, for your promises to us made known in Jesus, for the gifts of your Holy Spirit enlivening your Church, for your eternal love, for your unlimited graciousness to each and every one of us, **I praise and thank you.**

Lord, we know we get things wrong, and so we call to mind now things we need to confess, and ask God's forgiveness....

God is faithful and just, and forgives all those who truly repent.

Hear then his word of grace: 'Your sins are forgiven'.

Amen. Thanks be to God

You may choose to dedicate your weekly offering at this point, in response to God's unfailing generosity and grace.

Reading: 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13 (CEV)

My dear friends, you surely haven't forgotten our hard work and hardships.

You remember how night and day we struggled to make a living, so that we could tell you God's message without being a burden to anyone. Both you and God are witnesses that we were pure and honest and innocent in our dealings with you followers of the Lord. You also know we did everything for you that parents would do for their own children. We begged, encouraged, and urged each of you to live in a way that would honour God. He is the one who chose you to share in his own kingdom and glory. We always thank God that you believed the message we preached. It came from him, and it isn't something made up by humans. You accepted it as God's message, and now he is working in you.

Reflection

November is a month of remembering. It starts with All Saints Day on the 1st, preceded the night before by All Hallows eve (which has more recently been reinvented as Hallowe'en), then on to All Souls day on the 2nd. Time to remember not only the great examples of people of faith, but also to call to mind the happy memories of departed loved ones and friends, knowing they are now free from pain. Some churches hold a service for the recently bereaved at this time of year, and in this year we particularly remember the many deaths in this pandemic year.

Of course, we 'Remember, remember the fifth of November' recalling the near miss back in 1605 when a plot to blow up king and parliament was foiled. This escape from disaster evolved into a night of bonfires, fireworks and fun.

This is followed by the 'eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month' when we remember those from the armed forces who gave their lives in various conflicts. Remembrance Sunday has its sombre side but, alongside recalling the effects of war, we give thanks for the selfless sacrifice of the armed forces and the essential workforce at home, and we pray for peace.

Paul is remembering how he first exemplified the good news to the Thessalonians. He settled down with the people, earning his own living, and tried to live out his life in a way that is just, loving and converting. In recalling the way in which he supported himself he reveals that it was while working

alongside them that he proclaimed the gospel to them.

This was a young church in a Roman influenced society. It was vulnerable and exposed, their faith was at odds to the authorities, for they worshipped Jesus not the Emperor. Their faith, it seems, was holding, and their love for one another remained strong, but what of hope? In this letter he is offering words of affirmation and encouragement to them, reminding them of their history and reinforcing the hope he had shown them.

Like Jesus, Paul matched his deeds to his words, urging and encouraging the Thessalonians to do likewise. He didn't want them to think of the gospel as something only he could give them, and he was delighted when they recognised God at work through him.

I wonder if we enable other people to have real hope in the future, nurturing their faith rather than dwelling on the problems they encounter? Do we get down to it, get alongside them and work with them as we live out our faith in daily life together?

Our challenge is to live the life God has given us, so that we too can become examples, channels, for God's word and work.

Pause for personal reflection

(You may wish to play some quiet music at this point.)

A prayer of intercession

Across the ages you, Jesus, have called women and men to follow you, and to walk in the way of righteousness and truth. We praise you for the witness of Christians in every generation, for those who have served you, those who taught the Gospel to the people, for the ones who struggled for the poor and oppressed and those who have died a martyr's death.

Christ who calls us, **hear our prayer.**

Bless your followers today, we pray. We remember all who make sacrifices to serve you, and your persecuted disciples in many lands. Strengthen their faith in the time of need. Grant them hope in the teeth of despair, and the love that knows no boundaries.

Christ who calls us, **hear our prayer.**