

**St John's, Bourne End  
worshipping together while we are apart**

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020**

*I suggest that if there is more than one of you, you choose someone to read the words in normal print and all join in with the words in bold or if you are alone, you silently read the words in normal print and say the words in bold out loud. Try not to rush through the words but allow some time for God to speak to you and you to hear him.*

*Remember, although we may be physically apart, we are together in spirit as we worship God together for we are all part of God's family at St John's.*

*Rebecca*

***Gathering***

O Lord, open our lips  
**and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

O God, make speed to save us.  
**O Lord, make haste to help us.**

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.**

Praise the Lord.  
**The Lord's name be praised.**

*Pause to allow us to experience God's presence with us*

***Confession***

God so loves the world that he gave his only Son, Jesus Christ to save us from our sins, to be our advocate in heaven and to bring us to eternal life.

*Take a moment to bring to mind those things you wish to confess to our heavenly Father this morning?*

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
we have sinned against you  
and against our neighbour  
in thought and word and deed,  
through negligence, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.**

**We are truly sorry  
and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past  
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life  
to the glory of your name.  
Amen.**

Listen to what the Bible says: 'If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.'

1 John 1.8-9

***Collect***

**Merciful Lord, you know our struggle to serve you:  
when sin spoils our lives and overshadows our hearts,  
come to our aid and turn us back to you again;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Praise**

**Pause to reflect**

*Now say these verses from Psalm 66*

**Shout for joy to God, all the earth**

**Sing the glory of his name;  
make his praise glorious.**

**Say to God, 'How awesome are your deeds!**

**So great is your power  
that your enemies cringe before you.**

**All the earth bows down to you;**

**they sing praise to you,  
they sing the praises of your name.'**

Psalm 66.1-4

**Pause for thought**

Today we are continuing our series on *Who are we? Who God says we are and what it means* by thinking about the fact that we are witnesses. Who are some of the people told to you about Jesus or were important in you becoming a follower of Jesus?

**Readings**

Acts 1.12-26

Mark 5.1-20

This is the word of the Lord  
**Thanks be to God**

**Who are we? We are witnesses: Andrew Wilcock**

**Talk**

Who is God calling you to witness to? How might you (safely) share God's love with others this week?

**Creed**

Let us declare our faith in God.

**We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family  
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us  
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
Amen.**

**Prayers**

***Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.***

1 Peter 5.7

Let's spend some time praying. You might like to include some or all of these things in your prayers:

- Our leaders, scientists, health workers and all working to help us navigate the coronavirus crisis

- Our neighbours and community as they face the effects of the crisis
- This Mothering Sunday, we give thanks for our mothers and all the women who have witnessed to us about Jesus. We remember those who will not see their mother today because of the virus
- Our church family: may we grow nearer to God and to one another during this crisis
- Our family and ourselves

*Now, why not make yourself a cup of tea or coffee and then ring someone from St John's for a chat?*

We bring all our prayers together by praying the prayer that Jesus taught us:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.**

***Closing prayer***

*Why not picture the people from St John's who you would normally see on a Sunday and pray this blessing for all of your church family?*

**The LORD bless us and keep us;**

**the LORD make his face shine on us and be gracious to us;**

**the LORD turn his face towards us and give us peace. Amen.**

Based on Numbers 6.24-26