

Worship at Home

10th May 2026

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Format and editing by the South Devon Circuit



Call to worship

Welcome to our Worship at Home service. As you read the prayers, hymns and reflection, you will be joining others in the South West Peninsula District in worshipping and praising God.

Prayer of approach

Lord, not only do we come to worship you because we must, but because we want to, and you want us to.

We come not because we are worthy, but to give you the love and glory you deserve. So, Father, bless everyone again today who meets for worship, wherever they are. **Amen**

STF 28: Jesus calls us here...

Jesus calls us here to meet him as, through word and song and prayer, we affirm God's promised presence where his people live and care. Praise the God who keeps his promise. Praise the Son who calls us friends. Praise the Spirit who, among us, to our fears and hopes attends.

Jesus calls us to confess him
Word of life and Lord of all,
sharer of our flesh and frailness,
saving all who fail or fall.
Tell his holy human story,
tell his tales all may hear,
tell the world that Christ in glory
came to earth to meet us here.

Jesus calls us to each other,
vastly different though we are;
creed and colour, class and gender
neither limit nor debar.
Join the hand of friend or stranger,
join the hands of age and youth,
join the faithful and the doubter
in their common search for truth.

Jesus calls us to his table
rooted firm in time and space,
where the Church in earth and heaven
finds a common meeting place.
Share the bread and wine, his body,
share the love of which we sing;
share the feast for saints and sinners
hosted by our Lord and King.

John L. Bell (b.1949) and Graham Maule (b.1958)

Let us pray together

Father, you are greater than anything we can imagine, more wonderful than our deepest joy, more powerful than anything we have known.

Yours is the authority that is always intended to create.

Yours is the sovereignty that holds all things in the palm of your hand.

Yours is the love that continually seeks to bring everyone, everywhere, into the joy of perfect fellowship with you, and we have come to lay our lives before you, as we declare we love you, our God.

Father, we praise you for you demonstrate your authority, sovereignty and love in the life, death and resurrection of your Son, Jesus. **Amen**

Gospel reading: John 14: 15-21

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

"If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realise that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them."

Reflection

At supper, Jesus told his disciples that he was going to leave them, and quite naturally, they are anxious and bewildered.

Jesus speaks to them words of encouragement and comfort by saying that his Father-God-will send them someone to take his place, another helper, who would stay with them for ever.

The Greek word for "helper" in the Good News Bible is very hard to translate, but other translations use "Comforter", "Advocate", or this one "Counsellor". The meaning behind the original Greek is of someone who is called in to help in times of need. Jesus is speaking of the Holy Spirit, whom he calls "Another helper", because the Spirit will help and work in different ways from himself.

In chapter 16 and verses 5-16, we read of "the work of the Holy Spirit". This conversation, between Jesus and the disciples, is not long before the crucifixion and resurrection, so we hear Jesus telling the disciples again what was going to happen to him.

The disciples have been with Jesus all the time and had seen him at work, and they had listened to his

teaching. As a human being, Jesus had been subject to the constraints of time and place. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, will be with the followers of Jesus ALL the time, wherever they are.

Jesus promises the Holy Spirit to all who love him and keep his commandments.

They will not be left alone

Whether or not they were aware of it or understood what Jesus said, we don't know. And that is the same promise made to humans today: with us **all** of the time.

The Spirit will be there to guide, strengthen and encourage ALL generations. Do you feel that the Spirit has helped you in this way?

Having told the disciples that the Father will send another helper, Jesus tells them that he will be coming back, and they will see him, and this is what we celebrated last month on Easter Day, the glorious Resurrection. But he was only with them physically for a few days.

God, who had been present with them, incarnate, as Jesus Christ, would be present with them as Holy Spirit. This might be difficult for some people to understand, but this is where faith comes and enters the scene. Wherever you and others are now, be assured of the presence of the Spirit of the living God.

The Lord IS here. His Spirit IS with and in us.

Take time to reflect...



StF 395: Spirit of the living God

**Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Break me, melt me, mould me, fill me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.**

Daniel Iverson (1890-1977)

A time of prayer

Ask God, our heavenly Father, to make the presence of the Holy Spirit real to you now.

Invite him to guide you as you pray.

- ✦ Remember before God your local church and all its people. Give thanks that its mission continues in your area. Pray that the Spirit may direct its work and strengthen all its members in the tasks to which they are called.
- ✦ Pray for the wider church that by word and action it may proclaim to the world God's love in Jesus Christ. Pray for peace, for a just and sustainable use of its resources and for the greater recognition of our responsibility to care for all creation.
- ✦ Give thanks for those who work to combat disease: for scientists, doctors, nurses, and all who care for the sick; the aged, and for the vulnerable. Ask God to bless and strengthen them.
- ✦ Remember before God people you know who are particularly in need of your prayers today: family members, friends, neighbours, fellow church members, people you meet.
 - *Think of those who are ill, or anxious because they are waiting for results of tests, or are grieving through the loss of a loved one.*
 - *Pray that the presence and power of the Spirit will surround them and sustain them.*
 - *Maybe someone you have prayed for would love to receive a phone call from you.*

As God blesses you, so may you be a blessing to others. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father ...

StF 383: Holy Spirit, gift bestower

**Holy Spirit, gift bestower,
breathe into our hearts today.
Flowing water, dove that hovers,
Holy Spirit, guide our way.
Love inspirer, joy releaser,
Spirit, take our fears away.
Reconciler, peace restorer,
move among us while we pray.**

**Holy Spirit, Christ proclaimer,
wisdom bringer, light our way.
Fire that dances, wind that whispers,
Holy Spirit, come today.
Ease disturber, comfort bearer,
move among us while we pray.
Truth revealer, faith confirmer,
rest within our hearts today.**

From Church Hymnary, 4th edition 2005.

Blessing

May the blessing of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit be with us now and forever.

Amen