

Cradle Coast Uniting Churches
Worship at Home - Lent 5A 29 March 2020

We gather as God's people

CAL TO WORSHIP

Breathe into us - hope, faith and joy
Breathe into us - compassion, truth and holiness
Breathe into us - reconciliation, justice and peace
Breathe newness of life - as we worship today
in this place and in many places
joined by your Spirit of comfort and hope. **Amen**

SONG-POEM *TiS 780 "May light come into your eyes"*

May light come into your eyes,
may hope spring up in your heart,
may peace guide all of your mind,
and keep you in God, and keep you in God. *Mandy Treagus 1955-;*
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PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(From Psalm 130)*

Out of the depths we cry to you, O LORD.
Lord, hear our voice!
Let your ears be attentive to the voice of our pleading!
If you, O LORD, if you took our faults and wrong actions
into account, Lord, who could stand before you?
But in you there is a deep well of forgiveness,
so that you may be held in holy awe.
We wait for you, O LORD, we wait with deep longing,
and in your word we stand, waiting in hope.
Our deep longing for the Lord
is more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who wait for an end to the night.

GOSPEL READING

John 11:1-45

REFLECTION I am the resurrection and the life

In John's Gospel story about the raising of Lazarus, we are being prepared for Jesus' death and resurrection.

Lazarus dies and is buried while Jesus is absent. After a period of days, Jesus comes to a situation of death. He then speaks the words used at countless Christian funerals: *"I am the resurrection and the life. They who believe in me, though they die yet shall they live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die."* (Jn 11:25-26)

Jesus backs this up with the command: "Lazarus come out!" And the dead man comes out of his tomb, restored to life."

This story was very precious to early Christians. When Jesus was raised from the dead on Easter Day, with him came the promise that we too will be raised. *"Because I live, you shall live also."*

Yes! Our hope is that because Jesus lives we will live also! Maybe not literally bones, but our spiritual body, our personality, will certainly live again. Resurrection is a gift. That is what we live and breathe right now!

Death is still very real. It still comes to us as it has from the beginning. It still makes us anxious. It still separates us from those whom we love. But death is not the final word. The last word is always with the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of Life.

What is like to die? None of us will know till it happens! We can't even begin to imagine how this will be. How will we live

with God in that timeless spiritual world beyond death? None of our words can express this adequately.

But we can all rely on Christ's words of grace to us:
*"I am the resurrection and the life. They who believe in me,
though they die yet shall they live,
and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die."*

We respond to God's Word

SONG-POEM *TiS 239 "Jesus the Lord said"*

Jesus the Lord said, I am the life,
the resurrection and the life am I,
the resurrection and the life am I,
the resurrection and the life am I,
Jesus the Lord said, I am the life,
the resurrection and the life am I,

Anon., Urdu song, tr. C. Dermott Monahan 1906-57 alt.

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PASTORAL PRAYER (inspired by Ezekiel 37: 1-14)

God of all compassion and consolation,
your breathe new life into dry bones and weary souls.
Pour out your Spirit upon us, and lift our tired spirits.
Help us to live by the Spirit on this journey towards Easter

Holy God, inscribe your law on our hearts
so that we may be the body of Christ.
Help our hands to hold the sick and suffering.
Help our feet to walk with the poor.
Help our ears to listen to those who live in despair.

God, you know our faults and yet you promise to forgive.
Keep us in your presence and give us your wisdom.

God open our hearts to gladness, call dry bones to dance,
and restore to us the joy of your salvation.

We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ,
who gave us a special prayer:

***THE LORD'S PRAYER 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,
and forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.***

***Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.***

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

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

Go now to follow Jesus on the way to the cross;
Go on to receive that new life he offers to all who believe
May the breath of God give you life
May the compassion of Jesus Christ shape your life
May the power of the Holy Spirit stimulate your life

SONG-POEM *TiS 780 "May light come into your eyes"*

May light come into your eyes,
may hope spring up in your heart,
may peace guide all of your mind,
and keep you in God,
and keep you in God.

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