

## Worship at Home - 17 May 2026

A short act of worship for use in people's homes prepared by Karen Frost.

### **Call to worship<sup>1</sup>**

The Spirit of God says come; the Christ in our midst says come; the Lord of Light says come, and we come O Lord, to follow in your way and worship you this day.

**Amen.**

### **Hymn                      65 STF – Sing of the Lord's goodness, Father of all wisdom**

1 Sing of the Lord's goodness, Father of all  
wisdom,  
come to him and bless his name.  
Mercy he has shown us, his love is for ever,  
faithful to the end of days.

*Come then, all you nations,  
sing of your Lord's goodness,  
melodies of praise and thanks to God.  
Ring out the Lord's glory,  
praise him with your music,  
worship him and bless his name.*

2 Power he has wielded, honour is his  
garment,  
risen from the snares of death.

His word he has spoken, one bread he has  
broken,  
new life he now gives to all.

3 Courage in our darkness, comfort in our  
sorrow,  
Spirit of our God most high ;  
solace for the weary, pardon for the sinner,  
splendour of the living God.

4 Praise him with your singing, praise him  
with the trumpet,  
praise God with the lute and harp ;  
praise him with the cymbals, praise him  
with your dancing,  
praise God till the end of days.

Ernest Sands (b. 1949)

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### **Prayer<sup>2</sup>**

Lord God, as we come to worship today, we each come with our own troubles, knowing you didn't promise us a life without trials. We come before you, acknowledging your presence. We cast our cares on you because you care for us.

**Amen.**

Most holy and powerful God, we marvel how you called us to your eternal glory in your Son, Jesus Christ. We are reminded of all he went through for us. We await your glory being revealed in fullness. We praise you for the glimpses we already see.

We adore you.

*(period of quiet reflection)*

**Amen.**

Lord, we know we should be ready for whatever life throws at us. But we aren't always. And sometimes, when help is offered, we brush it off.

## **Forgive us, Lord, and fill us with your hope.**

Sometimes we haven't been alert. We ignore the suffering and needs of others. Sometimes we think our trials are unique, forgetting others who are suffering.

## **Forgive us, Lord, and fill us with your hope. Amen.**

Our loving God, you know our every thought, our every move, before we do. When we are truly sorry for our wrongdoing you wait for us with open arms. So, now, as we have confessed our sins, you bless us with your forgiveness and give us your strength to carry on. **Amen.**

## **Hymn                      297 STF – Christ is alive! Let Christians sing**

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| 1 Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.<br>The cross stands empty to the sky.<br>Let streets and homes with praises ring.<br>Love, drowned in death, shall never die. | Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,<br>and lives, where even hope has died.  |
| 2 Christ is alive! No longer bound<br>to distant years in Palestine,<br>but saving, healing, here and now,<br>and touching every place and time.                      | 4 Women and men, in age and youth,<br>can feel the Spirit, hear the call,<br>and find the way, the life, the truth,<br>revealed in Jesus, freed for all.   |
| 3 In every insult, rift and war,<br>where colour, scorn or wealth divide,   | 5 Christ is alive and comes to bring<br>good news to this and every age,<br>till earth and sky and ocean ring<br>with joy, with justice, love, and praise. |

Brian Wren (b. 1936)

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## **Bible reading<sup>3</sup>                      1 Peter 4: 12-14; 5.6-11**

### **Suffering for Being a Christian**

<sup>12</sup> Dear friends, don't be surprised by the terrible things happening to you. The trouble you are having has come to test you. So don't feel as if something strange were happening to you. <sup>13</sup> Instead, be joyful that you are taking part in Christ's sufferings. Then you will have even more joy when Christ returns in

glory. <sup>14</sup> Suppose people say bad things about you because you believe in Christ. Then you are blessed, because God's Spirit rests on you. He is the Spirit of glory.

<sup>6</sup> So make yourselves humble. Put yourselves under God's mighty hand. Then he will honour you at the right time. <sup>7</sup> Turn all your worries over to him. He cares about you.

<sup>8</sup> Be watchful and control yourselves. Your enemy the devil is like a roaring lion. He prowls around looking for someone to swallow up. <sup>9</sup> Stand up to him. Remain strong in what you believe. You know that you are not alone in your suffering. The family of believers throughout the world is going through the same thing.

<sup>10</sup> God always gives you all the grace you need. So you will only have to suffer for a little while. Then God himself will build you up again. He will make you strong and

steady. And he has chosen you to share in his eternal glory because you belong to Christ. <sup>11</sup> Give him the power for ever and ever. Amen.

## **Reflection<sup>2</sup>**

Did you see on TV or hear about the London Marathon a few weeks ago? Fifty nine thousands runners and walkers took part. Many raised money for good causes, some ran in costumes, such as a dinosaur, a prawn, a man carrying a fridge; then there were the elite runners, who set off at the front of the field, competed for a prize and this year, a course record, as Sabastian Sawe finished in 30 seconds under 2 hours. For everyone involved it will have been the culmination of a lengthy process of planning, training and monitoring their nutrition, water and rest levels.

A common theme in the stories posted after these events is the pain and difficulty of the run itself balanced against those things that have helped individuals to push through and keep going to the end of the race. Some share of a hardship they have overcome personally, which has led them to pursue the goal of running a marathon. Others talk of the charitable cause that they are raising money for and how the importance of making a difference for those in need helps them to push on and keep going to the end.

Most often, however, runners mention how important it has been to have their family or friends waiting to cheer at specific points on the route and how general members of the crowd offering their support are what spurs the runners on. From personal experience of being in the crowd (no, I didn't run the race!) ten years ago, cheering on our son George, the atmosphere is incredible and all of us lining the race route call out the names or some type of identifier of those running past us to encourage them.

This is similar to what we see in many sports where records are usually broken in the context of a race or competition environment. Athletes attest to the ambience of the event – often the crowd cheering and the energy that creates – as the reason why they could push themselves to achieve more than they might have managed in training.

In Peter's letter, he makes clear that he is unsurprised at the struggles his readers are going through and he is not suggesting that they can expect God to end these troubles. Instead, he encourages them to stand firm in their faith and to endure knowing that God is in control and will ultimately prevail and save them. As runners in the race of faith, perhaps we should also consider whether we are looking for encouragement to keep going or for ways to make the difficulties end? And are we aware of the struggles of those running alongside us? Family, friends, carers, neighbours? We might want to consider how we might be more like the crowd on marathon day, cheering and supporting others to keep going as they face struggles. Perhaps we need to be encouraged to keep going. Who could do that for you? What

might that support and encouragement look like if we're members of a community, or in caring for those in everyday life?

## Hymn                    **STF 415 The Church of Christ, in every age**

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| 1 The Church of Christ, in every age<br>beset by change but Spirit-led,<br>must claim and test its heritage<br>and keep on rising from the dead. | a partner in Christ's sacrifice,<br>and clothed in Christ's humanity.  |
| 2 Across the world, across the street,<br>the victims of injustice cry<br>for shelter and for bread to eat,<br>and never live until they die.    | 4 For he alone, whose blood was shed,<br>can cure the fever in our blood,<br>and teach us how to share our bread<br>and feed the starving multitude. |
| 3 Then let the servant Church arise,<br>a caring Church that longs to be   | 5 We have no mission but to serve<br>in full obedience to our Lord :<br>to care for all, without reserve,<br>and spread his liberating Word.         |

Fred Pratt Green (1903–2000)

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### **Prayers for all God's people**

Creator God, we bring to you the needs of your world as we pray together.

We pray for peace in the world: in the Middle East, remembering especially Gaza, West Bank and Israel, Iran, Ukraine, Russia, South Sudan and many other countries that don't ever reach the news headlines. May the leaders of those lands negotiate peace with words rather than fighting, bombing and starvation of people.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our own country: for our national and local government leaders. May wisdom and justice prevail in the difficult decisions they have to take.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our local community wherever we live: for those we care for and those who care for us, for voluntary organisations and all faith communities. May we work together to show Christ's love to those around us and may we be willing to accept care for ourselves.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for ourselves: may each of us know we are loved by you, as a child of God, that we are precious to you and that we recognise you will always be alongside us on life's journey.

Lord, we bring all our prayers to you, our risen Saviour. **Amen**

You may now wish to say out loud the **Lord's Prayer** in a language or version you prefer.

## Hymn                    317 STF – At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow

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|---|---|
| 1 At the name of Jesus<br>every knee shall bow,<br>every tongue confess him<br>King of Glory now.<br>'Tis the Father's pleasure<br>we should call him Lord,<br>who from the beginning<br>was the mighty Word. | to the throne of Godhead,<br>to the Father's breast ;<br>filled it with the glory<br>of that perfect rest.  |
| 2 Humbled for a season,<br>to receive a name<br>from the lips of sinners<br>unto whom he came,<br>faithfully he bore it<br>spotless to the last,<br>brought it back victorious<br>when from death he passed : | 4 In your hearts enthrone him ;<br>there let him subdue<br>all that is not holy,<br>all that is not true ;<br>crown him as your captain<br>in temptation's hour :<br>let his will enfold you<br>in its light and power. |
| 3 Bore it up triumphant<br>with its human light,<br>through all ranks of creatures<br>to the central height,  | 5 For this same Lord Jesus<br>shall return again,<br>with his Father's glory,<br>with his angel train ;<br>all the wreaths of empire<br>meet upon his brow,<br>and our hearts confess him<br>King of Glory now.         |

Caroline Maria Noel (1817–1877)

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## Blessing

May the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit remain with you and those you love, this day and forever more. **Amen**

## Acknowledgements

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