



First United Methodist Church of Hanford

Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.



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Sunday 17th May 2020

This short act of **Easter worship** has been produced for you. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, I am here to worship you. I join with Christians all around the world, and with all the company of heaven, to offer you my praise.

Hymn: "Because He Lives (Amen)"

I believe in the Son
 I believe in the risen One
 I believe I overcome
 By the power of His blood

 Amen, Amen
 I'm alive, I'm alive
 Because He lives
 Amen, Amen
 Let my song join the one that never ends
 Because He lives

 I was dead in the grave
 I was covered in sin and shame
 I heard mercy call my name
 He rolled the stone away

 Amen, Amen
 I'm alive, I'm alive
 Because He lives
 Amen, Amen
 Let my song join the one that never ends

Because He lives
 I can face tomorrow
 Because He lives
 Every fear is gone
 I know He holds my life my future in His hands...

Matt Maher

Let us pray together

Loving God, we come, each of us just as we are, with hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, and lay them all before you

Help me to know that you are with me now. Grant me the assurance that, in your love, you receive me, accept me and forgive me.

Give me a thankful heart for all that you have done for me through your Son, Jesus Christ, and let your Holy Spirit guide me as I worship you.

Today's Gospel Reading:

John 14:15-21

Time to Reflect

Jesus and his disciples are at supper and Jesus has told them he is going to leave them. The disciples are, quite naturally, anxious and confused. Jesus speaks to them words of comfort and encouragement. He will ask the Father, who will give them another Helper, who will stay with them for ever.

The Greek word given as “Helper” is very hard to translate. Different versions of the Bible use “Comforter”, “Advocate” or “Counsellor”. The meaning behind the original Greek is of someone who is called in to help in time of need.

Jesus is speaking of the Holy Spirit, whom he calls “another Helper”, because the Spirit will work in a different way from himself. Jesus has been physically present with his disciples. They could see him at work, and listen to his teaching. As a human being, Jesus has been subject to the constraints of time and place. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, will be with Christ’s followers all the time, wherever they may be.

Jesus promises the Holy Spirit to all who love him and keep his commandments. They will not be left alone. Whether they are aware of it or not, the Spirit will be there to guide them and strengthen them.

Having told them the Father will send another Helper, who will be with them and in them, Jesus says that he himself will come back to his disciples. They will see him and he will be in them. After he was raised from the dead, he did indeed return for a while in a visible form, but when his appearances ceased, his followers knew they would never be alone. God who had been present with

them, incarnate, in Jesus Christ, would be present with them as Holy Spirit.

Wherever you may be now, be assured of the presence of the Spirit of the Living God. The Lord is here. His Spirit is with us.

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

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

Remember before God our church and all its people. Give thanks that its mission continues even if it cannot meet for worship at present. Pray that the Holy 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.

Remember before God our world and its leaders. Pray for peace, for a just and sustainable use of its resources and for 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 the vulnerable. Ask God to bless and strengthen them.

Remember before God people you know who particularly need your prayers at this time: family members, friends, neighbours, fellow church members, people you would normally meet regularly but from whom you are now separated. Think of those who are ill, or anxious, or

grieving. Pray that the presence and power of the Holy Spirit may surround and sustain them.

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how you can be part of the answer to your prayers.

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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 in Jesus' name.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: Listen to: Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me (Hymn # 393)

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 prayer of blessing

May God the Father bless us;
May Christ take care of us;
May the Holy Spirit enlighten us all the days of our life. The Lord be our Defender and Keeper of body and soul, both now and for ever, to the ages of ages. **Amen.**

Based on Liturgy by John Barnett
Adaptation Rev. Pablo Rovere

Ways to give to support your church:

Please mail gifts to First UMC of Hanford,
505 N. Redington St, Hanford, CA 93230

Give online at:

<https://onrealm.org/fumchanford/-/give/now>

John 14:15-21 (NIV)

“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 beⁱⁿ 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 realize 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.”