

Easter 2020

Hearsall at Home

Hello, and welcome to Hearsall at Home.

We hope that you listen to this service either on a Sunday morning, or at another time, and you will worship, sing, pray and reflect on the scriptures along with all of us.

A written copy of the service is also available as a download on our website, so if you know anyone who would like that please let us know.

So sit down, relax and prepare yourself to worship God with us.

Easter Day 2020
Dying to Live!

Call to worship

Our call to worship is drawn from Isaiah 25: 6 - 8. The prophet pictures death as a great shroud of death draped across humanity, and foresees a day when that shroud will be destroyed.

On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare
 a feast of rich food for all peoples,
a banquet of aged wine –
 the best of meats and the finest of wines.
On this mountain he will destroy
 the shroud that enfolds all peoples,
the sheet that covers all nations;
he will swallow up death for ever.
The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears
 from all faces;
he will remove his people's disgrace
 from all the earth.
The Lord has spoken.

On this Easter Day in troubled times we celebrate that, as prophesied in Isaiah, Death has been defeated through the mighty resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hymn

Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia,
our triumphant holy day; alleluia,
who did once upon the cross; alleluia,
suffer to redeem our loss; alleluia!

Hymns of praise then let us sing; Alleluia,
unto Christ our heavenly king; alleluia,
who endured the cross and grave; alleluia,
sinners to redeem and save: alleluia!

But the pains which he endured; Alleluia,
our salvation have procured; alleluia,
now above the sky he's King; alleluia,
where the angels ever sing: alleluia!

Let's hear from Matthew's gospel an account of that great day of Christ's resurrection of which we have just been singing.

Scripture reading 1

Matthew 28: 1 - 10

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

2 There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. 3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. 4 The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

5 The angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6 He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples: "He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him." Now I have told you.'

8 So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. 9 Suddenly Jesus met them. 'Greetings,' he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshipped him. 10 Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.'

Prayer of adoration & wonder

A prayer by Kathy Galloway of the Iona Community:

Christ our life,
you are alive
 in the beauty of the earth
 in the rhythm of the seasons
 in the mystery of time and space.

Alleluia!

Christ our life,
you are alive
 in the tenderness of touch
 in the heartbeat of intimacy
 in the insights of solitude.

Alleluia!

Christ our life,
You are alive
 in the creative possibility
 of the dullest conversation
 the dreariest task
 the most threatening event

Alleluia!

Christ our life,
You are alive
 to offer re-creation
 to every unhealed hurt
 to every deadened place
 to every damaged heart,

Alleluia!

You set before us a great choice.
Therefore we choose life.
The dance of resurrection
soars and surges through the whole creation.
It sets gifts of bread and wine upon our table.
This is grace, dying we live.
So let us live. **Amen!**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come; your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our sins
as you forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours.
Now and forever. Amen.

Let's lift our voices again as we sing together our next Easter hymn: See What a Morning.

Hymn

See what a morning, gloriously bright
With the dawning of hope in Jerusalem;
Folded the grave-clothes
Tomb filled with light,
As the angels announce Christ is risen!
See God's salvation plan, wrought in love,
Borne in pain, paid in sacrifice,
Fulfilled in Christ, the Man, for He lives,
Christ is risen from the dead!

See Mary weeping: 'Where is He laid?
As in sorrow she turns from the empty tomb;
Hears a voice speaking, calling her name:
It's the Master, the Lord raised to life again!
The voice that spans the years,
Speaking life, stirring hope,
Bringing peace to us,
Will sound till He appears,
For He lives, Christ is risen from the dead!

One with the Father, Ancient of Days,
Through the Spirit
Who clothes faith with certainty,
Honour and blessing, glory and praise
To the King crowned
With power and authority!
And we are raised with Him,
Death is dead, love has won
Christ has conquered;
And we shall reign with Him,
For He lives, Christ is risen from the dead!

Behind closed doors

For Behind Closed Doors this week we travel to Germany to hear from Lee Phillips. Along with his wife Sarah, Lee usually works with the mission organisation SIM in Benin. Currently they are taking some family time in Germany as they await the birth of their fourth child later this month. Let's hear how the Phillips family are coping behind closed doors in Germany.

Good morning Hearsall. Thank you for this opportunity to speak to you on such a special day. We are grateful that you have reached out to us and that we can share with you. My name is Lee Phillips and with my wife Sarah, we were members at Hearsall several years ago now before we moved to West Africa, to Benin, where we serve as missionaries.

That said, at the moment we are behind closed doors in Germany as we've started a period of home assignment . We'd hoped to be visiting friends and churches and sharing what God is doing in Benin, although a lot of that is on hold, or we are doing that remotely as we are now this morning.

In our house things are never dull even if it is in lockdown. Germany started with the lockdown a little bit earlier than the UK, although it's maybe not as severe in that we are still able to go outside as a family and there are no stipulations on how much

time we can spend outside. In the mornings we get up and have our breakfast together, and instead of sending the children off to school, we're doing home school.

God has prepared us for that already in that we used to do home school most of the time in Benin anyway, although it is a little bit different now in that I'm at home too, working from my home office in my bedroom, so I shut myself away and the kids are at the dining table or in the living room learning ... We can hear each other and pop in on each other. So we have some extra special family times really, although as you can imagine family times also include family meltdowns, or at least one or two members of the family are having meltdowns about the job that they need to do or that they just want to go outside to play.

Going outside to play is a real privilege. We are in a country setting, woods on one side, a golf course on the other side, and as I said there are no stipulations on how much time we can spend outside, so the kids most of the time are playing outside which means for me I can quietly get on with my work in my bedroom.

I am continuing to work for Benin while I'm in Germany and we are thankful for stable internet connections and good phone connections so that I can talk to people, send emails and we can share resources in that way. And I'm also working for the German mission a couple of days a week as well. All this through zoom, skype, whatsapp and telephone calls is possible despite the lockdown, and again we are so thankful for that.

We have noted that as a family we still do need our rhythms, otherwise we do tend to get a bit cranky, so we have built structure around how the kids do their schooling, so they do that in the morning with set break times, and set eating times, so they know where they stand and when they've finished they can go outside. For myself I realise that if I've spent all day in the house then I'm probably not the most fun person to be with in the evening so I try to get out for a run some time during the day.

As I record this Sarah is in the garden tidying up, as new life is coming into the garden as spring has definitely arrived in the last few days in German. One thing that we've found very hard is that our German family are just around the corner and yet we're not really able to see them much. We were able to see Sarah's mum and dad the other day; we went for a walk and they met us there and we sat at separate ends of a picnic table so at least we could speak to them, even if we couldn't embrace them or get too close to them.

We've enjoyed a bit of extra time to be able to read books or talk together but with the kids around and the nights being shorter and the days being longer we haven't found that we've had lots of extra time on our hands, but generally we see that God has prepared us in that we are all together and we have done homeschooling before.

So thank you for listening. I've enjoyed sharing with you a bit this morning and all being well we will see a lot of you in the summer when we can come over and visit. With our love. Bye bye.

Intercessions

Our prayers are written and led this week by Linda Wallace. At the time of recording these prayers, the Rev Maurice Markham was in hospital seriously ill, he has since died. Our thoughts are with his wife Helen at this time of sadness.

Shall we come together in prayer...

Lord, we celebrate your power and give thanks for your glory which we have seen in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord. We praise you, not only because you died to be our Saviour, but also because you rose again, to be our Lord. That you were not only risen from the dead, but also you're alive and present with us. We praise you for the utter determination of your love to touch our hearts, to change our lives and to gently but firmly call us to follow your Son.

Forgive us when our worship is not filled with joy and celebration.

Forgive us when our lives are not flooded with thankfulness and our lips and lives give you little praise sometimes.

Lord, by your Holy Spirit, help us to praise you everywhere and every day, forever.

Father, in these challenging times when we are troubled by the virus which is plaguing all corners of the globe, forcing us into isolation and separating us from those we love, help us to take stock of the things that are really important in life: Love, friendship, the beauty of nature and reaching out beyond our comfort zone to those who need care, support and compassion.

We thank you for all those who work in the front-line services at this difficult time. The wonderful NHS staff, those working in social care and nursing homes, food producers and suppliers and the supermarket staff. For the police, fire, ambulance and security services, and for all those who take risks every day for our benefit. May your love surround them and may they stay strong and healthy in the days to come.

In a moment of quiet, we lift them to you now.

We pray for our families, friends and our church family, that they will stay positive in the knowledge that we are all in this together, and that our thoughts and prayers are with one another.

We pray for people everywhere who are anxious, lonely, ill and afraid. By your grace, may you bless and keep us all in your loving care. In our hearts and minds we bring them to you Lord.

Father, we pray for those on low incomes who are struggling to provide food for their families. For people who rely on benefits, the payment of which has been delayed because of the pandemic and who feel that they have no-one and nowhere to turn for help. We pray that their predicament will be highlighted and that they will find the support they need at this time.

We lift them to you now Lord.

We pray for any we know to be in particular need. For those who are sick and those who are dying; for those who mourn and for those who are hurting; for those who are confused and for those who are caring. We think especially of Maurice Markham who died this week, and his wife Helen; and Kay Fearn after the recent death of Mike.

Because of Christ's resurrection we can now know that he is with us in the pressures we face, the pain we bear and the darkness that can sometimes overwhelm us.

We give thanks that we have been able to listen to Lee's reflections today. We ask your blessings on the Phillips family and pray for the safe arrival of their baby due very soon. We lift them to you Lord.

We pray for ourselves and for all the challenges and pressures and all the opportunities for witness and service, even in these unusual times, in the coming week. May the miracle of the power of God hold our lives/ Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers. And all God's people said, **Amen!**

Offering

Let us pray... Lord you came and gave health to the lame, sight to the blind, dignity to the oppressed, hope to the despairing, and life to the dead. Make us generous in our own giving and use our gifts of money, time and skill, to church and to others, to share your love for us all. Amen.

A couple of years ago, the occasional Hearsall choir, led by Fran, sang *This Joyful Eastertide*. We're going to hear a recording of that now - but please, sing along!

Hymn

This joyful Eastertide,
away with sin and sorrow!
My Love, the Crucified,
has sprung to life this morrow:

*Had Christ, who once was slain,
not burst His three-day prison,
our faith had been in vain;
but now has Christ arisen,
arisen, arisen;
but now has Christ arisen!*

Death's flood has lost its chill
since Jesus crossed the river;
Lover of souls, from ill
my passing soul deliver;

My flesh in hope shall rest
and for a season slumber
till trump from east to west
shall wake the dead in number:

And now we hear our second Bible reading.

Reading 2

Colossians 3: 1 - 4

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Homily

Dying to Live!

Well I wonder whether you've had it - I don't mean the virus, I mean that sick feeling in the stomach, as bad news after bad news seeps into our system. I've tried not listening to bulletins more than once a day, but the phone pings, and the pandemic death toll arrives in my pocket.

It's not just numbers any more, is it? People we know, people we love, are sick and dying. And, instead of gathering together for mutual comfort, we're left apart, each in our own little houses, some of us completely alone.

Those disciples in Matthew's gospel must have felt a similar feeling: an uneasy cocktail of mortal fear, relative isolation, bitter disappointment and gnawing grief. But Jesus came and stood among them and gave them hope.

Our reading from Colossians views the resurrection of Christ as a personal event in the life of the believer! Resurrection is not so much a doctrine - not even a hope - it's a lifestyle, a way of being.

Since then you have been raised with Christ...

So: this is personal: **you** have been raised...

And this is present condition: you **have been raised**.

But there can be no resurrection unless there has previously been a death. If we were to read further into Colossians chapter 3, we'd see the kinds of things that have died: immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, greed, rage, malice, slander, filthy language and lying...

But what makes us immoral, or greedy or slanderous? Surely it's the ego's restless search for its own security and advancement! What dies in the Christian is not a long list of bad behaviours, to eliminate one by one, but, at root, a sense that to matter, we must advance our own cause at the expense of others.

Greed is an obvious example of that. Stock-pilers take more than they need because they regard themselves as more important than others and they feel insecure. But all of the other vices mentioned could come down to the same problem: The egotistical sense that we matter more than others.

Christians have learnt to trust that they matter to God just as they are, right now. They don't have to spend days of remorse agonising about the past. They don't have to spend fretful nights consumed with anxiety about the future. As Rumi put it in one of his poems: why stay on the torturer's rack of the past and the future? Colossians says resurrection is more about the present than it is about the past or the future.

A person who learns how to live well is a person who has already, in some deep sense, died. We no longer need to find love in the wrong places for love is given to us in Christ. We no longer need to grasp security in earthly things, for our security lies in the gratuitous presence of God. We no longer need to fight to make ourselves important, for our very names are written on the palm of Christ's hands.

And that utter security is the root of the Christian virtues mentioned from verse 12: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness and love. So we learn to die, in order that we rise again in Christ, today. Resurrection now!

Christ's own example makes it plain. He does not cling to earthly life, but gives it up and on the third day he rose again. This week we've been aware of some good people dying from coronavirus. That's very hard for those who are left behind to accept.

Yet a Christian living the resurrection life dares to trust in the midst of all the suffering and fear, that since they already died, the life they live endures forever, for the life they live is the life of Christ, who rose again on the third day.

As we drift through this period of isolation, we may feel we are dying to live again. Well some have indeed died. But is it possible that, this Easter Day, Christ calls us all to die to our fears, our desperation, to all that makes us untrusting and small-minded? Is it possible that Christ calls us to live his resurrection life now? Is it possible that, in living that way, any fear of our physical death might fade away, for the life we are living is the life of Christ, and his life endures forever?

A couple of years ago my lovely wife Ruth died from pancreatic cancer. Our next item is a video made by our youngest son Thom, in which he explores how to live the resurrection life after an experience of grief; how, as Sydney Carter put it, to dance with the devil on your back.

Testimony Video from Thom: *Dance then!*

*Dance, then, wherever you may be.
I am the Lord of the dance said he.*

Hello, and welcome to the Fuelcast. I'm Thom from Café Church Bristol.

Today, I want to talk to you about one of my favourite worship songs. It was sung at my wedding. I have the first line of the chorus tattooed on my arm as both a public declaration of my marriage and a personal reminder of all of the meaning in the iconic song.

Initially, the main meaning I took from this song was to be myself. If I want to dance, I will! I need to let myself feel joy and express it to the world!

More recently, I've been thinking about the words in a different way, looking through the lens of some of the more difficult experiences I've had.

*I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black.
It's hard to dance with the devil on your back.*

My mum passed away two years ago. She had a short battle with an aggressive cancer, and she died 7 weeks after a more or less out-of-the blue diagnosis. The day after she was diagnosed I went to see her in hospital. When I was sitting alone with her, I cried. I told her I was sorry; that I shouldn't cry. What she said back has stuck with me. She told me it was ok to cry now, because we were going to laugh later.

Which we did, more than once.

Now, my mum never really approved of tattoos. Above all else she wanted me to be myself, but I think she would secretly have been happier if me being myself didn't involve any body modification. The reason I'm telling you this is because one day in hospital, she told me that she had a tattoo. It was a dot on her stomach, acting as a target for radiotherapy. Despite the medical necessity, it was absurdly out of character for her to have a tattoo.

A week or so later, I showed her my newest tattoo - a small heart, less than a centimetre tall, in exactly the same place. I really wasn't sure how she would react. I had, after all, permanently altered my body more or less on a whim. When she saw, however, she laughed. We both laughed. A lot. In a crowded cancer ward.

That was our way of dancing, when the sky had turned black.

I won't bore you with the details, but as a family we laughed like that more than I would have expected.

*Dance, then, wherever you may be
I am the Lord of the dance, said he*

Our God is the lord of dance. The lord of laughter. The lord of joy, happiness and music.

He is telling us it's ok to dance. It's ok to laugh. It's ok to feel joy, to feel happiness, and to sing.

Not just when the sun is shining, but when the sky turns black. When the devil is on our backs. When we can't see how we can fight back against despair, pain, hopelessness and death, there is one thing we can do. One weapon God has given us that can't be taken away. We can dance. We can laugh. We can sing. We can feel joy and happiness.

That doesn't mean we have to - sometimes it's just too hard. But when we can, it's ok. The Lord of the dance is telling us it's ok.

*They buried my body and they thought I'd gone
But I am the dance and I still go on*

Dancing still goes on. Laughter still goes on. Joy, happiness and music still go on. They may be buried sometimes, under a mountain of grief, stress or fear. But they don't stay that way. They still go on, and they come back.

*They cut me down and I leapt up high
I am the life that'll never never die*

Dancing will never die. Laughter will never die. Joy, happiness and music will never die.

For me, this line goes hand-in-hand with a line from a great Easter hymn:

*Up from the grave He arose,
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes*

God's triumph is dancing. God's triumph is laughter. God's triumph is joy, happiness and music.

That is how we triumph over despair. Over fear. Over hopelessness. Over death. We triumph over death, not just by rising in glory to spend eternity with God, but by triumphing over our grief in this life. By living on and honouring the loved ones who have left us, picking up their legacy and continuing their dance.

*I'll live in you if you'll live in me -
I am the lord of the dance, said he*

Am I in God, or is God in me? Colossians 1:27 says "...the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory", yet Colossians 2:10 says "and in Christ you have been brought to fullness...". How can it be both?

It's hard to rationalise this idea, but much like Einstein's hard-to-rationalise theory of Special Relativity - which tells us that time itself slows down when travelling at great speed - it is a truth which holds the universe together. Getting in touch with this deeper reality - that we and those we love, even those who have died - are absolutely and totally safe in God is exactly what it means to dance with the devil on your back. Christ is holding us in the palm of his hand, and nothing can ever change that. Dance, then, wherever you may be, because wherever you may be, you are always in Christ and Christ is always in you.

God bless you all, and have a great day.

Dance, then, wherever you may be... Maria and Frances show us how it's done!

Dance

Maria and Frances

Thank you for that beautiful dancing, Frances and Maria. As we approach our time of Holy communion, we sing our next hymn, *I stand amazed in the presence*.

Hymn

I stand amazed in the presence
Of Jesus the Nazarene,
And wonder how He could love me,

A sinner condemned, unclean.

*How marvelous! How wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous! How wonderful!
Is my Savior's love for me!*

For me it was in the garden,
He prayed: "Not my will, but Thine."
He had no tears for His own griefs,
But sweat-drops of blood for mine.

In pity angels beheld Him,
And came from the world of light
To strengthen Him in the sorrows
He bore for my soul that night.

He took my sins and my sorrows,
He made them His very own;
He bore the burden to Calv'ry,
And suffered, and died alone.

When with the ransomed in glory
His face I at last shall see,
'Twill be my joy through the ages
To sing of His love for me.

Home communion

Invitation

We have many tables around and beyond our church fellowship, each with bread and each with wine. But these many tables remind us of the one table of the Lord, and in our separate homes we see together in broken bread and poured wine symbols of his life shed for us on the cross and raised again on the third day. The Risen Christ is present in your home and in mine, and among all his people who meet to worship this Easter Day. This meal is for all whose hearts are open to him and for those who would seek his healing, comfort and salvation during this time of pandemic.

Prayer of preparation

We pray together. Lord, we acknowledge our weakness at this strange time in global history. You see into each of our hearts and draw close when we reach out to you in our fear, grief, pain or anger. We are each of us sinners. We have thought and said and done things that do not reflect your coming kingdom of justice, peace and love.

Forgive us and renew us through the sacrificial love of Jesus, our Saviour and Lord. Amen.

Prayer for loving unity

Lord, we thank you for all our church friends. Thank you, that, though we are separated physically, we are close spiritually. We take a moment to remember some of our sisters and brothers in Christ at Hearsall Baptist Church.... Unite us all ever deeper in the bond of love, we pray. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

And Lord we thank you for our other friends, and for family, in this country and beyond. We take a moment to remember family and friends, physically distant, but held close in our hearts. Unite us all ever deeper in the bond of love, we pray. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

And Lord we thank you for other churches, near and far, in this country and others. We take a moment to remember other church families... Unite us all ever deeper in the bond of love, we pray. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

That you that, though we are many, yet we are one, for we all share in the one bread. Amen.

Scripture words

8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. 10 The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. 11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. (Romans 6: 8 - 11)

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live for ever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.' (John 6:51)

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures... (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

Words of Institution

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' 25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (1 Corinthians 11: 23 - 26)

Prayer of thanksgiving

Thank you Heavenly Father for the gifts of bread and wine distributed around our homes today. Let the bread that we eat today speak to us of the body of your Son, broken for us to make us whole. Let the wine that we drink today speak to us of the blood of your Son, shed to cleanse us from our sin. And as we eat and drink, may we commune with you and with one another, for we know that nothing can separate us from your love. Amen.

Sharing the bread

As the bread is lifted up...

Jesus said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in memory of me."

Let us each eat the bread with our bodies in our own homes and our hearts united in love.

We eat together.

Sharing the wine

As the cup is lifted up...

In the same way after supper, Jesus took the cup and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

We drink together.

Post-communion prayer

Christ had died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!

Heavenly Father, we give you thanks and praise, that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory.

May we who share Christ's body live his risen life;

we who drink his cup bring life to others;

we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world.

Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us, so we and all your children shall be free, and the whole earth live to praise your glory. Amen.

Our closing hymn celebrates the victory of love through the resurrection of our beloved Saviour. Love has surely triumphed!

Hymn

The women took their spices
to anoint the man they loved
whose life had been cut short
by the ones who clung to power.
But look: the tomb was opened
with angels at its door
saying "Far not, for he has risen!"
He's alive forevermore!

*Love has surely triumphed!
Jesus lives again!
His life is freely offered to us all!*

Cleopas and his friend
were dejected on the road,
sadly talking over
the demise of their dear Lord,
when he drew close beside them
explaining God's great plan
then they finally knew him
as he broke the bread again.

It seemed the dream was over;
the disciples locked their door
afraid of all the violence
that had killed the man they loved.
But Jesus stood among them
and showed his hands, his feet.
He ate the fish they offered
and blessed them with his peace.

So when your hope seems over
and your dreams have died away;
when love seems well-defeated
and evil powers hold sway,
take heart for he is with us
our hope will dawn again
to energise our living
with death-defying power!

The Grace

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ;
the love of God;
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all
now and always. Amen.

Sung blessing

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you
wherever he may send you;
may he guide you through the wilderness,
protect you through the storm;

may he bring you home rejoicing
at the wonders he has shown you;
may he bring you home rejoicing
once again into our doors.