

## Healing Service – Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June

### Opening prayer

We gather here in your presence Lord  
**In our need and bringing with us the needs of the world**  
We come to you, for you come to us in Jesus  
**And you know by experience what human life is like**  
We come with our faith and with our doubts  
**We come with our doubts and with our fears**  
We come as we are because you invite us to come  
**And you have promised never to turn us away**

### The Collect

Heavenly Father,  
you anointed your Son Jesus Christ  
with the Holy Spirit and with power  
to bring to us the blessings of your kingdom.  
Anoint your Church with the same Holy Spirit,  
that we who share in his suffering and victory  
may bear witness to the gospel of salvation;  
through Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
**Amen.**

### Readings

Psalm 139:1-12

O Lord, you have searched me and known me.  
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from far away.  
You search out my path and my lying down,  
and are acquainted with all my ways.  
Even before a word is on my tongue,  
O Lord, you know it completely.  
You hem me in, behind and before,  
and lay your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
it is so high that I cannot attain it.

Where can I go from your spirit?  
Or where can I flee from your presence?  
If I ascend to heaven, you are there;  
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.  
If I take the wings of the morning  
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,  
even there your hand shall lead me,  
and your right hand shall hold me fast.  
If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me,  
and the light around me become night',  
even the darkness is not dark to you;  
the night is as bright as the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.

Luke 4.16-21

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'

And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'

*Sermon (Rev Theresa Jones)*

For decades the parish of Shirley has exercised the church's ministry of healing. Through winter months and summer months we've gathered once a month on a Wednesday evening in the cold, or in the heat, to pray for those who are sick in our parish and for anyone else for whom we seek health and wholeness.

Of course with the outbreak of Corona Virus and closed churches, we can no longer do that. However, now more than ever we have a responsibility to pray, and although we can't offer laying on of hands for healing or anointing, as we're recommended to do in the New Testament Letter of James, we can still continue to pray for those who are sick or suffering in any way. We do this because we believe God knows us through and through, knows our problems, our concerns, our heartaches and our pains. As we heard in the reading from Psalm 139, the writer, King David, acknowledges God's constant awareness of all his activities, even of the times when he sits down, stands up, lies down; whatever he's doing. He believes that even in the remote parts of the universe God would still be with him and about him; there is no escaping God's scrutiny. If that's the case, then God must be acutely aware when something is wrong with us.

In the Gospel reading, from St Luke, we hear that Jesus has arrived in Nazareth, where he had been brought up. Although he starts off very well, reading from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah, informing the congregation in the synagogue that he's been anointed by God to make a difference in the lives of all, he very soon arouses their wrath.

Later in the chapter the people in the synagogue want to know why he doesn't perform miracles right here where they are, in his home town of Nazareth. He goes on to say that no prophet was ever welcomed in his own home town.

He tells them that in the days of their prophets not everyone who was sick was healed and he quotes the case of Naaman the Syrian who was healed of leprosy but points out that there were plenty of other people with the same problem who weren't healed. He adds other examples as well. Angry with this attitude, we find a little later in the chapter, the people driving him out of town. Like many of us the people in the synagogue wanted to hear what they wanted to hear.

I'm sure, like me, there are many who are delighted to hear that our lockdown guidelines are being lifted a little. It will be good to have a couple of people in the garden, family maybe or a friend. We wanted to hear that. But no doubt there are other things we want to hear that are not available to us. Some long for the pubs and restaurants to open, to be able to go to church again or maybe to get to the hairdresser's. But we have to be content in this 'waiting' mode.

Often it's like that when we seek God's healing for something that's wrong with us and we just want it to go away. That's understandable. We have, hopefully, sought the advice of our doctor and taken any prescribed medication. But we can do more. We can pray. For ourselves, for others, and for people in the medical profession, knowing that God is aware of us and our needs.

What we have to do is bring those needs, in the Name of Jesus, to the mercy seat of God. It's important to come with faith and trust, it's important to be patient and to wait for the help we long. Often it's a case of just being upheld day by day in our weakness, of looking for signs of hope and progress or maybe just resting in the promises of God, a couple of which are: 'I will never leave you or forsake you' or maybe one from the writings of the prophet Isaiah: 'I have carved you on the palms of my hands, you are ever before me'. As the psalmist King David realised, we are never out of the view of God.

May God bless you and bring you and those for whom you pray health and peace. Amen.

### *Prayers of Intercession*

Holy God, in whom we live and move and have our being,  
We make our prayer to you, saying,  
Lord hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Grant to all who seek you  
the assurance of your presence, your power and your peace.  
Lord hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Grant your healing grace to all who are sick  
that they may be made whole in body, mind and spirit.  
Lord hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Grant to all who minister to the suffering  
wisdom and skill, sympathy and patience.  
Lord hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Sustain and support the anxious and fearful  
and lift up all who are brought low.  
Lord hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

*We read the names of those who are on the Guild healing list*

Loving and healing God,  
hear the prayers of your faithful people  
Hear us Lord of life.  
**Heal us and make us whole. Amen.**

*Prayers of Penitence*

The gospel calls us to turn away from sin  
and be faithful to Christ.  
As we offer ourselves to him in penitence and faith,  
we renew our confidence and trust in his mercy.

Cast your burden upon the Lord  
**and he will sustain you.**  
In returning and rest  
**you shall be saved.**  
In quietness and trust  
**shall be your strength.**

**Most merciful God,  
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
we confess that we have sinned  
in thought, word and deed.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart.  
We have not loved our neighbour as ourselves.  
In your mercy  
forgive what we have been,  
help us to amend what we are,  
and direct what we shall be;  
that we may do justly, love mercy,  
and walk humbly with you, our God.  
Amen.**

God, the Father of mercies,  
has reconciled the world to himself  
through the death and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ,  
not holding our sins against us,  
but sending his Holy Spirit  
to shed abroad his love among us.  
By the ministry of reconciliation

entrusted by Christ to his Church,  
receive his pardon and peace  
to stand before him in his strength alone  
this day and for evermore.

**Amen.**

*The Ministry of Healing*

Be with us, Spirit of God;  
**Nothing can separate us from your love.**

Breathe on us, breath of God;  
**Fill us with your saving power.**

Speak in us, wisdom of God;  
**Bring strength, healing and peace.**

The Lord is here.  
**His Spirit is with us.**

In confidence let us pray to the Father  
For the coming of the kingdom among us:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name;  
your kingdom come; your will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the Kingdom the power  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.**

Praise God who made heaven and earth,  
**who keeps his promise for ever.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God,  
**who is worthy of all thanksgiving and praise.**

Blessed are you, sovereign God, gentle and merciful,  
creator of heaven and earth.  
Your Word brought light out of darkness,  
and daily your Spirit renews the face of the earth.  
When we turned away from you in sin,  
your anointed Son took our nature and entered our suffering  
to bring your healing to those in weakness and distress.  
He broke the power of evil and set us free from sin and death  
that we might become partakers of his glory.  
His apostles anointed the sick in your name,  
bringing wholeness and joy to a broken world.  
By your grace renewed each day  
you continue the gifts of healing in your Church  
that your people may praise your name for ever.  
By the power of your Spirit may your blessing rest  
on those we pray for today;  
may they be made whole in body, mind and spirit.  
Hear the prayer we offer for all your people.  
Remember in your mercy those for whom we pray:  
heal the sick, raise the fallen, strengthen the fainthearted  
and enfold in your love the fearful and those who have no hope.  
In the fullness of time complete your gracious work.  
Reconcile all things in Christ and make them new,  
that we may be restored in your image, renewed in your love,  
and serve you as sons and daughters in your kingdom.  
Through your anointed Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord,  
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit  
we lift our voices of thanks and praise:

**Blessed be God, our strength and our salvation,  
now and for ever. Amen.**

*A time of silence as we bring before God ourselves and others we know who  
are in need of his healing touch*

In the name of God and trusting in his might alone,  
receive Christ's healing touch to make you whole.  
May Christ bring you wholeness  
of body, mind and spirit,  
deliver you from every evil,  
and give you his peace.  
**Amen.**

*A prayer for all who are ill or fearful in these times of confusion and uncertainty*

God of compassion,  
be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.  
In their loneliness, be their consolation;  
in their anxiety, be their hope;  
in their darkness, be their light;  
through him who suffered alone on the cross,  
but reigns with you in glory,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

The almighty Lord,  
who is a strong tower for all who put their trust in him,  
whom all things in heaven, on earth, and under the earth obey,  
be now and evermore your defence.  
May you believe and trust that the only name under heaven  
given for health and salvation  
is the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

*Blessing*

Watch now, dear Lord,  
with those who wake or watch or weep tonight,  
and give your angels charge over those who sleep.  
Tend your sick ones O Lord Christ,  
rest your weary ones,  
bless your dying ones, soothe your suffering ones,  
pity your afflicted ones, shield your joyous ones,  
and all for your name's sake.

**Amen**

And now may the God of hope  
fill us with all joy and peace in believing,  
that we might abound in hope  
in the power of the Spirit

**Amen**